

**Welfare<sup>®</sup>**  
**Quality** Science and society improving animal welfare

Farmers' perspectives on welfare monitoring  
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The Farmer juries

- 10-12 pig farmers (varying subsectors, age/gender, farm-size, production method)
- In the Netherlands, Norway and Italy
- for 2 full days in October 2008
- To discuss with input of animal and social scientists
- About animal welfare, the working of the WQ monitoring tool and its implementation

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Results

1. Areas of agreement
2. Areas of concern and resistance
3. Discussion process
4. Lessons learnt




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## 1. Agreement

- Definition of animal welfare as reflected in principles and criteria
- Prioritizing health and bodily fitness
- But recognizing the relevance of behaviour and feelings
- In favour of objective, animal-based monitoring
- Addressing citizen concern
- But avoiding sentimentality.

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## 2. Concern and resistance

1. Objectivity of measurements & scores:
  - risk of subjectivity for criteria 9 -12
  - context-dependency of results
  - interrelation of criteria and scores
2. Accountability for results
  - dependency on supply chain partners & markets
  - limits within intensive systems and business economy
  - unpredictability of animal-based measurements
3. Politics of animal welfare
  - Assessment as first step towards more regulation
  - Using assessment for blaming and shaming farmers

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## Discussion process

Difference between countries  
in discussion process

- calm in Norway, more agitated in Italy and especially the Netherlands -

reflects the different societal context and  
but also forecasts  
potential barriers in the implementation  
process

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### Discussion in NL

farmers  
 What IS animal welfare:  
 Professionals : sentimentalists  
 → cooperation

citizens  
 Calculation of animal welfare scores  
 Offender: prosecutor → obstruction

scientists

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### Lessons learnt (1)

1. Need to address farmers concerns:
  - More information about measurements and scoring
  - More information about costs and benefits of monitoring and welfare improvement
2. Need to recognize the politics of animal welfare
  - Monitoring animal welfare is not just a matter of information - when animal welfare enters the political battlefield.

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### Lessons learnt (2)

Farmers care about animal welfare; it is part of their professional ethics and pride.

They are ready to improve and monitor animal welfare but need to stay in business.

They want to be treated as a partner in animal welfare, not an offender.

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*Thank you very much for your attention*



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