

The EU Reference Centre of Animal Welfare (EURCAW) was established in 2018 by DG SANTE to support EU Member States on issues related to the pig welfare legislation. As part of its activities, EURCAW-Pigs organises annual meetings with a Reflection Board, including representatives of the pig supply chain, related professional organisations and civil society organisations. The Reflection Board is informed about the activities of EURCAW-Pigs and is asked to reflect on them and to support the Centre with technical information.

This third Reflection Board meeting was organized online (MS Teams) on 24th of November 2022, and the Board was represented by 7 delegates. The meeting was opened at 14:00h and closed at 16:30h.

Welcome

The participants were welcomed by Hans Spoolder, director and coordinator of EURCAW-Pigs. He gave an update of EURCAW-Pigs activities, and reminded of 'Chatham House Rule' for the discussions during the Board meeting. This implies that "participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the connection of the speaker(s) nor that of another participant may be changed or revealed". In addition, every participant shortly introduces themselves.

EURCAW-Pigs' achievements & plans

During the previous Reflection Board meeting the Centre's achievements and plans were presented in each of the five activity areas required by law (Art 96 of 'The Official Controls Regulation'), as part of the Work Programme (WP) 2021-2022. During this Reflection Board meeting some of the planned activities for the WP 2023-2024 were presented and discussed. The new WP has not been shared yet, as it still needs to be approved. Therefore the participants are reminded of not sharing any content further.

Activity 1: Coordinated Assistance

Hans Spoolder continued with presenting the sub activities as part of activity 1 'Coordinated Assistance'. These include an intensified collaboration between the three EURCAWs, roadshows in the member states and talks about the few Questions to EURCAW (Q2E) that we received. Hans also talked about the previous meetings with the member states and the MS officials.

Points of discussion:

- ✓ What could be the reason for the low number of Q2E's this year? In the previous years EURCAW asked actively for Q2E's. It could be that we need to be more pro-active again or that most questions have already been answered. It is also suggested that the answers are not completely liked and too general, as an interpretation of legislation is not allowed. The inspectors might be disappointed by this. It is suggested that while meeting the member states during the roadshows they could be asked about this and we can see how they interpret and handle situations.

Activities 3: Science

Lars Schrader coordinates this activity and presented the reviews that were already made during the current WP. He continued with the planned indicator factsheets and the different knowledge sections and reviews to be made.

Points of discussion:

- ✓ For the review on alternatives for stalls in sows it would be nice to have some examples put in the review and how to rebuild existing farms. There are already some farmers who are using new housing systems, which might be used as 'inspiring examples'. EURCAW will contact the delegate who suggested this.

Activity 2: Indicators

Lars Schrader coordinates this activity and presented the latest indicator factsheets that were already made during the current WP. He continued with the planned iceberg indicator factsheets to be made.

Points of discussion:

- ✓ Currently, a problem is that these factsheets are used in abattoirs to indicate if animals were fit for transport, while this should have happened on the farm. A lot can happen for an animal between leaving the farm and arriving at the abattoir. However, information about the welfare of the animals can be handed back to the farmer for improvement.

Activity 4: Training

Jan Tind Sørensen coordinates this activity and presented about evaluations of previous training activities, about on farm interviews with inspectors and the training guides in progress from the current WP. He continued with the further field studies, training guides and videos on communication to be made.

Points of discussion:

- ✓ Positive reactions are given on the interviews on the farm as this has not been done often before. Different situations can be put into perspective and the resilience of the inspectors is very important. Just make sure that there is a good geographical spread in where interviews are taken.

Activity 5: Dissemination and communication

Marko Ruis coordinates this activity and presented the renewed website, contact with inspectors via a Community of Practice and podcasts, and the translation of the factsheets.

Points of discussion:

- ✓ Community of practice is a very good setting. Just be careful to not give all the power to one person. Make sure to switch the role of moderator.
- ✓ The start-up of the podcasts are very nice as the inspectors spend a lot of time in the car. They are however only for the English speakers, so it would be nice if they can also come in different languages.
- ✓ The menus on the website should be refined a bit, as it took a lot of time of searching and scrolling through the website. Videos were also difficult to find.

Closing



Hans Spoolder thanked the Board for their feedback and suggestions, and closed the meeting at 16:30h. All participants will receive the notes of the meeting and have the opportunity to improve them prior to publication.

EURCAW-Pigs, December 2022

Annex 1. List of participants

EURCAW-Pigs Reflection Board (RB)

European Forum of Farm Animal Breeders (EFFAB)

COGECA

European Federation of Animal Health Services (FESASS)

EAPHM – European Association Porcine Health Management

Eurogroup for Animals

VIER PFOTEN International

EURCAW-Pigs

Hans Spoolder

Lars Schrader

Jan Tind Sørensen

Marko Ruis

Marith Booijen