

# **Subgroup on AW at the time of killing – electric prods**

Fourth meeting, 20 June AM

Input to discussions

# Problems

## 1) Applying an electric shock to the animal

## 2) Lack of clarity in conditions of use

*The use of instruments which administer electric shocks shall be avoided **as far as possible**. In any case, such instruments shall only be used for adult bovine animals and adult pigs which refuse to move, and only when they have **room ahead of them** in which to move. The shocks shall last no longer than one second, be adequately spaced and shall only be applied to the muscles of the hindquarters. Shocks shall not be used repeatedly if the animal fails to respond.*

## 3) Entry into individual restraint unit

# Problems

## 4) Animals that refuse to advance

### New conditions

Routine animals: destabilized by new environment

Bovine animals: structured herd → individuals in a batch

Porcine animals: walking shoulder to shoulder → single-file chute to enter the restrainer

**Own history:** human-animal relationship, handling

→ Individual variations / new conditions = some stubborn animals

# How will the situation evolve without EU action?

**L**ack of clarity in conditions of use = challenge to a proper use

**D**ecline in use, the momentum may continue:

- Structural work carried out over the last 10 years (create all the conditions for the animal to advance )
- Training of operators on animal behavior (ethologist; non-contact interaction with the animals to encourage them to advance)
- Alternatives, such as flags, plastic paddles or sticks = primary aids
- Indicator = number of time the e.p is used:
  - Observation → third party AW audits, AWO controls
  - Possible use of new counting tools
  - help to pilot AW, continue improvement, causes analysis if necessary

**Option : Prohibit the use of electric prods for any species to reduce animal suffering, in the light of new scientific evidence.**

### **Impact on the problems**

Prohibition would avoid applying an electric shock to the animal

**But** the reluctance of animals to enter an individual restraint unit and, more generally, stubborn animals would remain

### **Impact on stakeholders**

**Prohibition will not eliminate blocking situations**

Recourse to non-effective primary aids to manage blocking situations means:

- Blocking situations last (even if all visual distractions are removed)
- Risk of inappropriate handling with regard to **human safety and animal welfare**

# Refining the regulation

**Objective :** more precise rules for a shared interpretation of the practices to be encouraged (use strictly limited, as a last option, and to specific situations)

**E**lectric prods may be used in the following cases:

- Animals refuse to move, **in the absence of visual distraction**, when they have sufficient room ahead of them (except to enter individual restraint equipment); **sufficient room = length of animal** (*necessary and sufficient distance because the animal cannot see beyond*)
- Only on bovine and porcine animals whose weight becomes potentially dangerous to humans (**> average human weight**)

To be described in **a standard operating procedure**: conditions for recourse to the use of e.p, monitoring

**E**lectric prods may be optimized: what would be the lowest effective voltage level?