

Summary record of the meeting of the sub-committee on Animal Welfare held on 26 September 2000 in Brussels adopted 26 March 2001

List of Participants

MEMBERS

Dr. P. Le Neindre (chairman), Prof. D. Broom, Prof. Dr. J. Hartung, Prof. P. Jensen, Dr. D. Morton

APOLOGIES

Prof. M. Verga, Dr. R. Dantzer

COMMISSION

Mr. J. Moynagh

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted as proposed.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting of the subcommittee

The summary record of the meeting of the Sub-committee of 3 March 2000 was adopted.

3. Declarations of interest

No member reported any conflicts of interest relating to the items under discussion

4. Progress report and discussion on:

- Animal Welfare aspects of the farming of animal for fur production

The sub committee reviewed progress on this draft report. The topics covered and the report structure were discussed. The working group has amassed considerable information on these species and the farming practices and welfare issues involved. In all, six species are being reported on. While, a considerable amount of work had been completed, several months work remained. Consequently it is likely that the reports would be ready in the early part of next year, which is on schedule.

5. Progress report and discussion on:

- Animal Welfare aspects of the farming of cattle for beef production

This report is at a similar stage to the report on the welfare aspects of fur production. Unlike more intensive systems such as broiler production, there is a wide variation in farming methods throughout the EU depending on climate, topography and tradition. The list of welfare problems identified by the working group was circulated and discussed. Several more meetings of the working group would be necessary but it is anticipated that the draft report should be ready for submission to the sub committee for discussion at its first meeting in 2001.

6. New Question: Transport of Animals

A new question concerning transport of animals was discussed. The Committee has been asked to report on animal transport in general. In particular the following issues should be addressed: loading densities, travelling times (including an evaluation of the stress involved in unloading and reloading animals), welfare of animals on board roll-on roll-off vessels, transport of horses, methods for evaluating stress and poor welfare during transport. This will be a major report.

7. Miscellaneous

Under miscellaneous, the committee discussed the harmonisation of risk assessment being carried out by the Scientific Steering Committee. The sub Committee also discussed topics that the Committee could usefully tackle in the future.

a. Risk analysis working group

The Chairman reported on the working group of the Scientific Steering Committee dealing with the harmonisation of Risk Assessment methods. A text setting out the scientific basis for assessing animal welfare was discussed with a view to its inclusion in the working document which is being prepared by the SSC group. It was noted that all disciplines had developed risk assessment methodologies which agreed on the basic principles but which were then adapted to suit the specific needs of the area.

b. Future work

The subcommittee also discussed its output and noted that it had the capacity to respond to additional questions, if required by the Commission. In particular, questions outside the usual areas of farm animal welfare could be usefully addressed. Such topics included;

- welfare of laboratory animals (use of primates in research, training of workers, reuse of animals),
- welfare of pet animals (dangerous dogs, selection of genetic defects),
- welfare of new farm animals (ostriches, ...),
- welfare of genetically modified animals in laboratories and in production units.