



UPDATE ON EFSA'S ANIMAL WELFARE ACTIVITIES

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BIOHAW unit EFSA

OUTLINE

- ✓ **Present engagement with stakeholders** that EFSA has developed in the Animal Welfare
- ✓ **Ongoing activities on mandates received by EC**
 - ✓ Welfare of Beef cattle
 - ✓ Welfare of turkeys
 - ✓ Welfare of animals kept for fur production (mink, chinchilla, fox, raccoon dog)
 - ✓ Welfare of horses
 - ✓ Stunning & killing: small ruminants & horses
 - ✓ Stunning & killing new methods: high expansion foam & diathermic stunning
- ✓ **Call for project & collaboration by EFSA**



ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR AW MANDATES

1. Expression of interest + public meeting

- Set up a pool of SH for regular engagement.
- Present the mandate; discuss its opportunities and challenges.
- Listen to the views of SH as from the start.
- Identify individual contributors to be invited to ad-hoc technical hearings of the EFSA working group.

After mandate acceptance

After the public meeting

2. Call for evidence

Shortly after the public meeting, EFSA will hold a structured collection of the data/information at SH's hand to support risk assessment. SH input will be made public.

3. Ad-hoc technical hearings

SH who have submitted relevant data or information may be invited as hearing experts in the meetings of the EFSA working group.

Throughout the mandate

4. Targeted consultation

EFSA may require additional input on specific parts of the draft opinion. The consultation would target the pool of SH involved in the previous steps. SH input will be made public.

Before adoption (if needed)

5. Public webinar

- Present the EFSA opinion.
- Foster the understanding of EFSA's conclusions/recommendations.
- Close the feedback loop with SH by explaining how their input was considered/taken on board in formulating EFSA's opinion.

After publication



Consultation of EFSA Networks (AW and scientific NCPs)

EFSA AHAW Network exercise for ABMs at slaughter (**beef & turkeys**)

Throughout the mandate & with specific exercises

EFSA AHAW Network exercise on mutilations (**beef and turkeys**)



ON-GOING ANIMAL WELFARE MANDATES



Art 29. F2F: Beef cattle-Scientific Opinion



Art 29 and Art 31. F2F: Welfare of turkeys Scientific Opinion and Scientific Report



Art. 29: Applications: Scientific Opinions Diathermic Syncope and nitrogen foam stunning



F2F: Welfare of equids: 2 Scientific Opinions and 1 Scientific Report



Art 29. On-farm killing of horses



Art 29. On-farm killing of small ruminants



Art 29. Slaughtering of horses



F2F: Welfare of fur animals





Beef Cattle



THE MANDATE: BEEF CATTLE



The **European Commission** requested EFSA to give an independent view on the protection of beef cattle (*Bos taurus*), which includes:



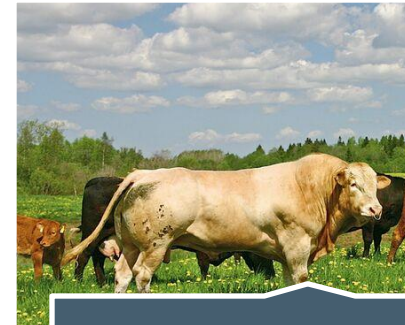
Un-weaned suckler calves



Suckler cows/heifers



Fattening cattle



Breeding bulls



End of career suckler cows



End of career dairy cows

- This mandate **does not cover the welfare of veal calves**, nor the welfare of **calves born on dairy farms** that are slaughtered for beef (up to 6 months of age) as they have been covered in a dedicated Scientific Opinion.



EFSA APPROACH TO THE MANDATE ON BEEF CATTLE



EC Mandate requests to EFSA

Article 31 in accordance to Regulation (EC) 178/2002 – **Technical Report**¹

Article 29 in accordance to Regulation (EC) 178/2002 – **Scientific Opinion**²

Methodological guidance for the development of animal welfare mandates in the context of the Farm to Fork Strategy

EFSA AHAW Panel, 2022

¹<https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2023-00648>

²<https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2023-00647>

Mandate received and accepted
31 July 2023

Call for evidence
(Dec 2023-Jan 2024)

Risk assessment deadline
30 June 2025



Involvement of stakeholders from an early stage



THE MANDATE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

ToR 1 (Technical report – Art.31)

- A **review of the most common husbandry systems and current practices** for beef cattle on farm

ToR 2 (Scientific opinion – Art.29)

- Identify the **most relevant welfare consequences**
- Describe suitable **ABMs** to detect and monitor the most relevant welfare consequences on farm
- Provide **qualitative or quantitative recommendations** to **prevent or mitigate** the **welfare consequences**

ToR 3 (Scientific opinion – Art.29)

- The assessment of **animal-based measures collected in slaughterhouses** to monitor the level of welfare on farm for fattening cattle.

a. Welfare assessment of housing conditions in relation to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flooring and bedding • Space allowance • Water access • Nutrition and feeding • Extreme environmental heat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental enrichment • Lack of outdoor access • Mixing of cattle
b. Welfare of cattle kept at grass considering:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outwintering • Nutrition and feeding • Water access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedlots
c. The risk to the welfare of suckler cows and calves in relation to weaning of suckler calves.		
d. The risk to welfare associated with the mutilation of cattle including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castration • Disbudding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dehorning • Tail docking
e. The risk to welfare associated with breeding strategies and genetics in relation to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyper-muscularity • Dystocia and caesarean section • Polledness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternal ability • Temperament
f. Decision-making criteria for the euthanasia of cull dairy and suckler cows being kept for the production of beef.		



ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY: CALL FOR EVIDENCE BEEF CATTLE

Start date:
7 December
2023



End date:
31 January
2024

<https://connect.efsa.europa.eu/RM/s/publicconsultation2/a0ITk0000001qhJ/pc0742>



n. of inputs (comments/attachments)
received by country

Topics of interest

- Beef cattle population
- Husbandry systems
- Production stages
- Cattle housing
- Flooring
- Minimum space allowance
- Water access
- Feeding and nutrition
- Lack of outdoor access
- Tethering of beef cattle
- Environmental enrichment
- Calving facilities
- Mutilations: castration, disbudding, dehorning, tail docking
- Breeding and genetics: Hyper-muscularity, dystocia, C-sections, Polledness, maternal ability and temperament

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY: AHAW NETWORK MEETING

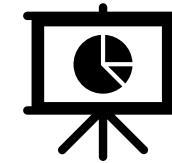
Questionnaire on mutilations performed on beef cattle in EU Member States

Topics of interest

- **CASTRATION:** procedure involving the physical removal or inactivation of the testicles of a bull.
- **TAIL DOCKING:** husbandry practice used within both dairy and beef farms, which consists in the removal (through amputation or by other means) of a portion of the tail.
- **DISBUDDING:** procedure performed in dairy and beef calves, in which horn-bud growth is prevented through tissue cauterization.
- **DEHORNING:** procedure performed when the horn-buds growth has already progressed and that involves cutting out the horns and removing all horn-producing tissues.

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/auth/login>

? 11 questions
per mutilation



18 MSs
submitted their
responses

- Belgium
- Czechia
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Italy
- Luxembourg
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Poland
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Sweden
- Switzerland





Turkeys



EC MANDATE REQUEST TO EFSA ON THE WELFARE OF TURKEYS ON FARM



**Mandate Received
and accepted**
3 October 2023

Call for evidence
(Dec 2023-Jan 2024)



**Risk assessment
deadline**
31 December 2025



EC Mandate requests to EFSA

Article 31 in accordance to **Regulation (EC) 178/2002–
Technical Report¹**

Article 29 in accordance to **Regulation (EC) 178/2002–
Scientific Opinion²**

¹<https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2023-00648>

²<https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2023-00647>





THE MANDATE – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Request 1 (Technical report – Art.31)

A **review** of the most common **husbandry systems** and **current practices** for **keeping turkeys *Meleagris gallopavo gallopavo*** on farm, covering **turkeys of all ages** in the EU.

Request 2 (Scientific opinion – Art.29)

Assess:

Request 3 (Scientific opinion – Art.29)

Assess and identify the **relevant welfare consequences** of the housing systems and the risk factors and practices described in **Request 1 and 2**, by using **animal-based measures** for the assessment of these welfare consequences;

Request 4 (Scientific opinion – Art.29)

Assess and provide qualitative and, where applicable, **quantitative recommendations** to prevent or mitigate the welfare consequences on farm identified in **Request 3**;

Request 5 (Scientific opinion – Art.29)

Assess and define suitable **animal-based indicators** collected at the **slaughterhouse** to monitor the level of welfare of turkeys on farm.

<p>a. for <u>turkeys kept for meat production, turkey breeders and poults</u>, the risk to welfare posed by the following risk factors and practices:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the type and condition of the litter, type and presence of enrichment, availability and condition of outdoor space (including covered veranda), 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> space allowance, environmental (ammonia, CO2, temperature) and light conditions, group size mixed keeping of males and females.
<p>b. for <u>turkeys kept for meat production</u>, the risk to welfare posed by the following risk factors and practices:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the final weight, average daily weight gain, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the practice of thinning the practices of feed and water restriction.
<p>c. for <u>turkey breeders</u>, the risk to welfare posed by the following risk factors and practices:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> age of onset of breeding, nest conditions, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> artificial insemination, the practices of feed and water restriction.
<p>d. the risk posed by the <u>hatchery conditions</u>, on the welfare of turkeys of all ages relevant;</p>		
<p>e. the risk to welfare associated with <u>beak trimming and other mutilations</u> where performed (e.g., de-toeing and de-snooding);</p>		
<p>f. the <u>breeding and genetic traits</u> that improve and/ or impair welfare.</p>		



AIM OF THE PUBLIC CALL FOR EVIDENCE

1. Husbandry systems

2. Breeding

3. Stocking density

4. Environmental conditions and environmental enrichment

5. The practice of mutilations

6. Separations of toms and hens

7. The practice of thinning

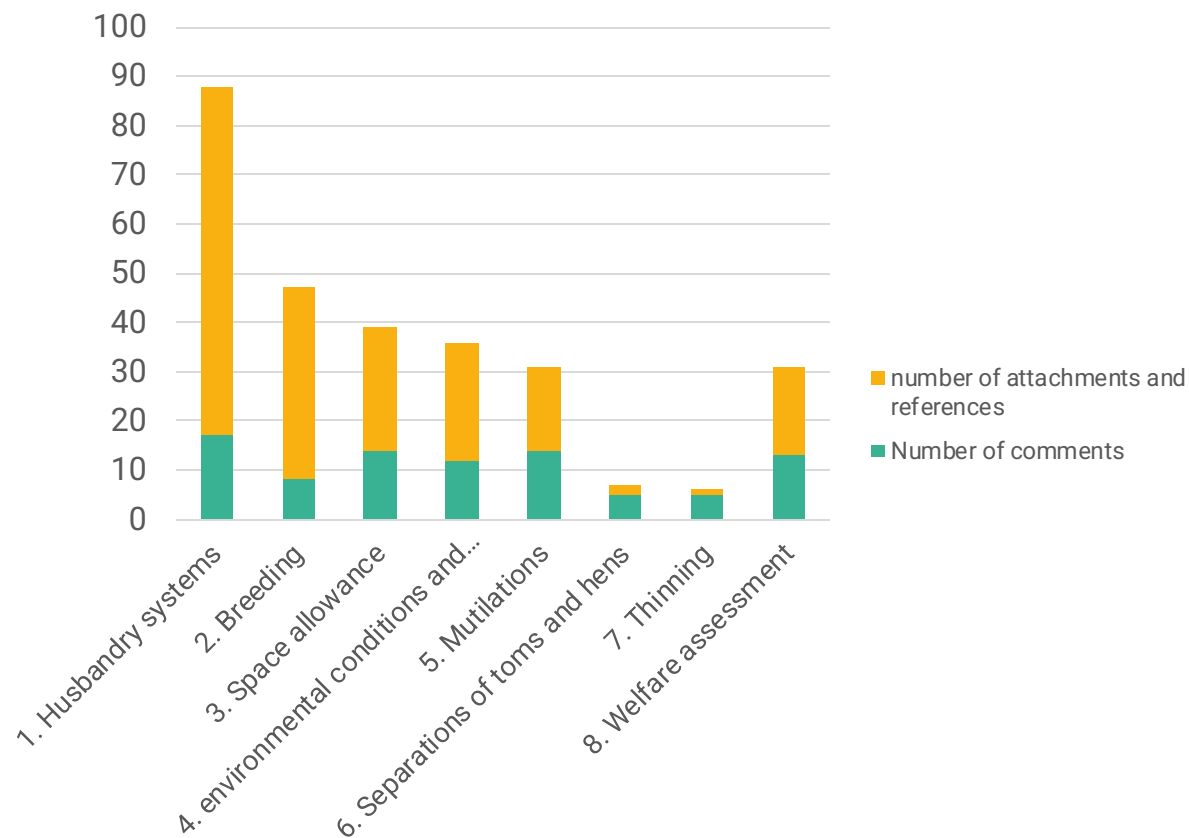
8. Welfare assessment in turkey farming



OVERVIEW OF OUTCOME OF THE PUBLIC CALL FOR EVIDENCE

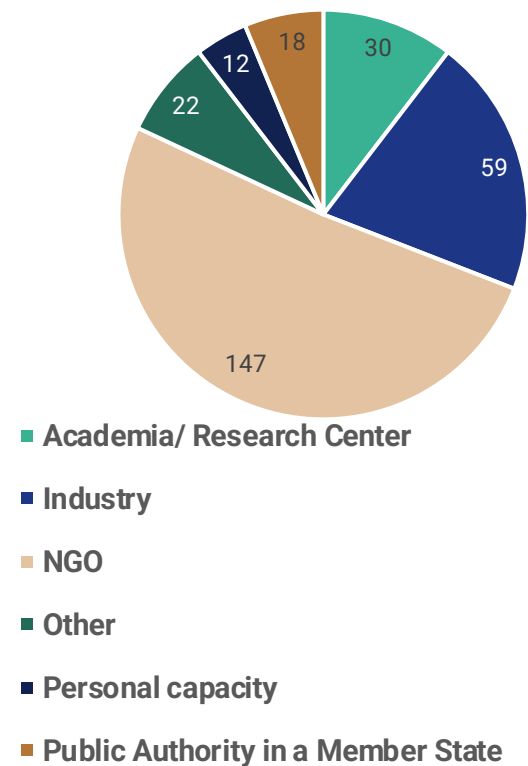
Number of inputs received per section

- **288 contributions (comments and publications)** from 24 stakeholders in the 8 sections from 8 countries



Number of comments, attachments received per stakeholder type

- Half of the inputs were submitted by NGOs, followed by industry





Animals kept for fur production

MANDATE ON THE WELFARE OF FUR ANIMALS ON FARM



EU Legal background



There is currently no specific EU animal protection legislation covering these animal species



Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes applies

Previous Scientific outputs



SCAHAW, 2001 – The welfare of animals kept for fur production

Mandate Received and accepted

5 December 2023

Risk assessment deadline

28 February 2025



Mink – *Mustela vison*



Foxes:

Red Fox - *Vulpes vulpes*



Arctic Fox - *Vulpes lagopus*



Raccoon Dogs - *Nyctereutes procyonoides*



Chinchillas - *Chinchilla laniger*

ART. 31 SCIENTIFIC REPORT



TOR1a

Biology of the species

- Literature review (by external contractor and WG experts)
- Information received from the call for evidence
- Expert knowledge

First draft started

TOR1b

Production cycle, husbandry systems and farm practices

- Literature review (by external contractor and WG experts)
- Information received from the call for evidence
- Expert knowledge



ART. 29 SCIENTIFIC OPINION



Tollgate 1

Preparation of APRIO approach, to be finalized by the WG to be sent for approval at the plenary in May

TOR2a

Setting up the **exercise for the selection of the highly relevant welfare consequences**

- Identification of scenario to be assessed
- Identification of background information to be used
- Test the tool to be used for the exercise

TOR2b

Assess if highly relevant welfare consequences can be prevented or substantially mitigated under current husbandry systems and farm practices.

- Not started yet

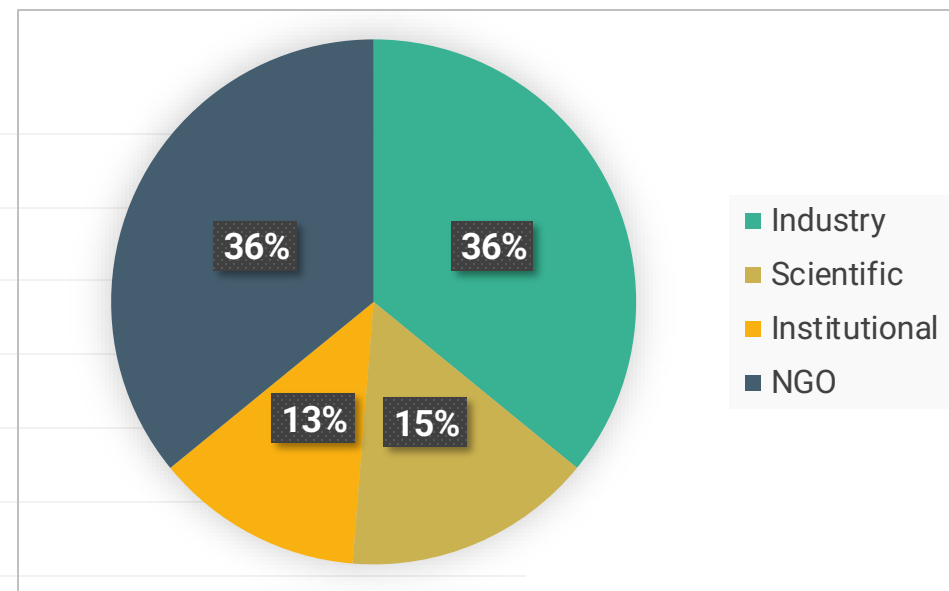
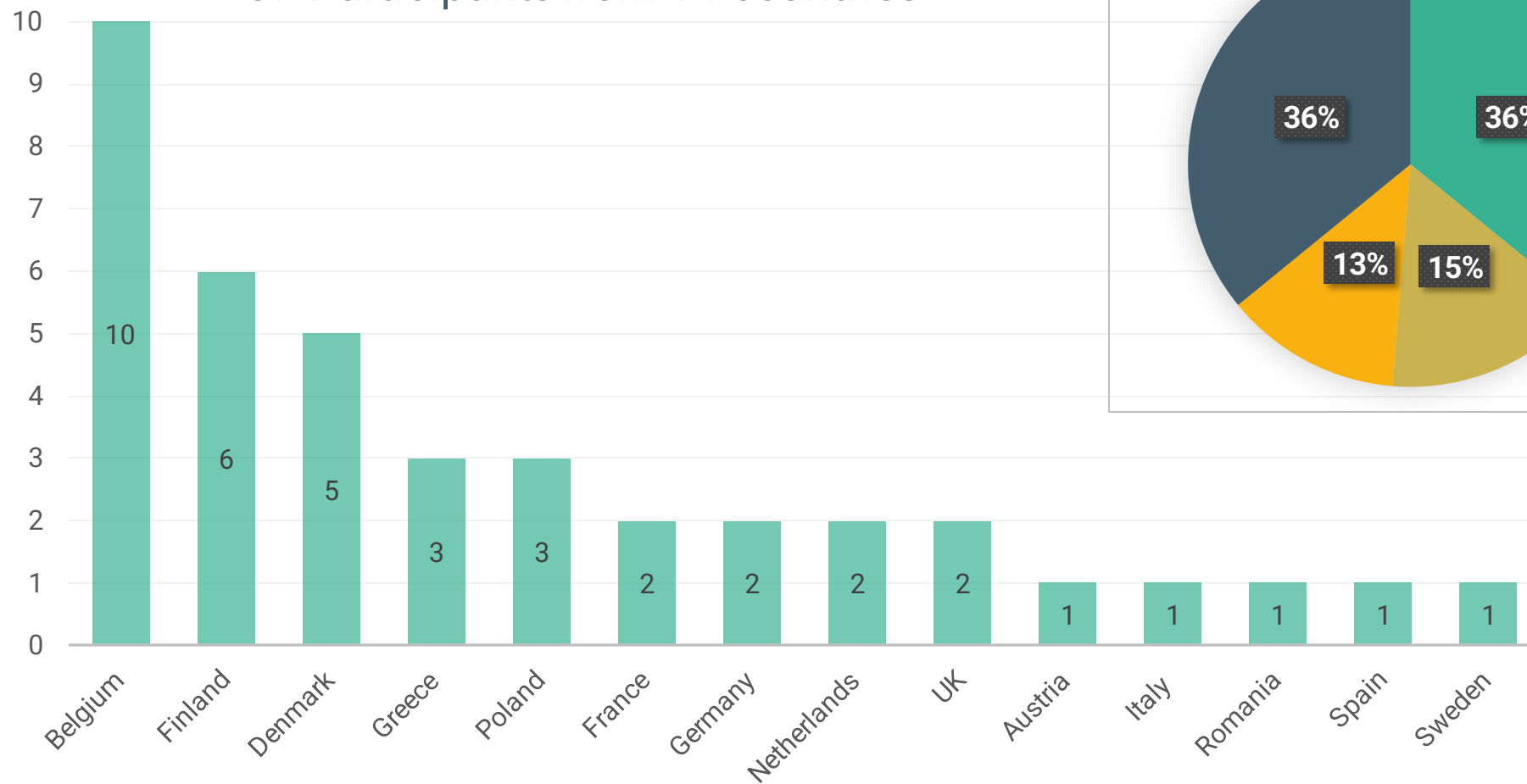


STAKEHOLDER MEETING: ATTENDEES



22nd January 2024

39 Participants from 14 countries



CALL FOR EVIDENCE



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1 (OPEN QUESTIONS)

- **Biology** of the animals
- Farm **practices**
- **Breeding** and reproduction
- Genetics

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2 (HOUSING SYSTEMS)

- Information on current housing conditions
- Regards **mink, foxes, raccoon dogs and chinchilla** kept for fur production **during all stages** of the production cycle.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 3 (WELFARE ASSESSMENT PROTOCOLS)

- **Protocols** used for **assessing the welfare of fur animals on farm.**
- Data available and recorded within the application of a specific protocol. **Raw or non-aggregated data** is especially welcomed.

1st March - 19th April 2024



CALL FOR EVIDENCE: OUTCOME



- Specific objective 1
- Specific objective 2
- Welfare protocols
- Other type of evidence

39 submissions

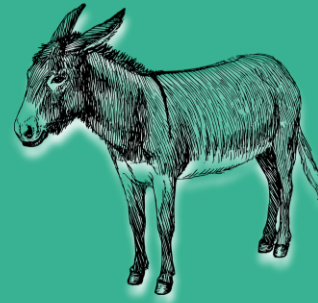


3 confidential
submissions

- 1 joint submission from industry stakeholders
- 17 submissions from NGOs

18 organizations
(~4 *pending*)

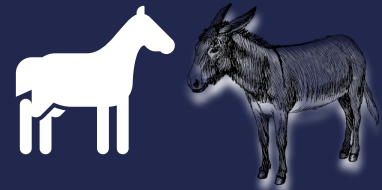




Equidae



EC MANDATE REQUEST TO EFSA ON THE WELFARE OF EQUIDAE



**Mandate Received
and accepted**
3 March 2024

Call for evidence
(summer or after
summer 2024)

**Risk assessment
deadline**
31 December 2026



Stakeholder meeting on the protection of Equidae: horses, donkeys and their hybrids

📅 19 June 2024, 09.00 - 13.00 (CEST)

📍 Brussels, Belgium

[Register now](#)

Deadline: 20 May 2024 - 12:00 (CEST)

Share:



¹ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2024-00188>

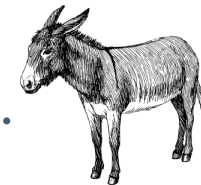


TERMS OF REFERENCE



The following categories of Equidae should be differentiated and properly considered when making scientific recommendations, when relevant:

- **Breeding** Equidae: Equidae kept mainly for breeding.
- **Working** Equidae: Equidae kept mainly for competitive, non-competitive, commercial, leisure or subsistence activity.
- **Production** Equidae: Equidae mainly kept for the production of meat, milk, or other substances and products of animal origin.
- **Horses, ponies, draught horses, donkeys, mules and hinnies.**



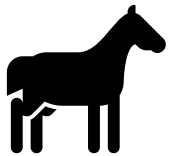
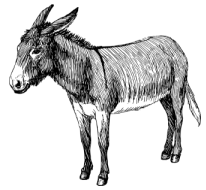
TERMS OF REFERENCE HORSES: TOR 1 & TOR3



- A. The Commission requests EFSA to deliver a technical report (TOR1) and Scientific report (TOR2, TOR3):**
- *TOR 1. Review of the most **common husbandry systems** and current practices for keeping the categories of **Equidae** (horses, donkeys, mules and hinnies) listed above in the EU.*
 - *TOR 3. The assessment of **Animal Based Measures collected in slaughterhouses** to monitor the level of welfare of **Equidae** in establishments (maximum 5 indicators).*



TERMS OF REFERENCE HORSES: TOR 2 SCIENTIFIC OPINION



- 1) Minimum **space allowance**, including for *Equus asinus* and their hybrids
- 2) Design of the **functional areas** of housing (including risks associated with standing stalls and tie-stalls).
- 3) Type of **flooring** and **bedding**.
- 4) Nutrition and **feeding** strategies
- 5) **Water** access
- 6) **Enrichment**
- 7) **Air** quality, **temperature**, and
- 8) **Social** needs,
- 9) **Outdoor** access

Other aspects : mutilations (e.g. tail docking), hoof care, teeth care, breeding (e.g. age, conditions of weaning & foaling, selection of certain phenotypes) collection of blood, human-Equidae interaction & handling, working activity (e.g. age, weight, gestation, duration)





Stunning and killing methods

On-farm killing
small ruminants
June 2024

On-farm killing
of horses
Dec 2024

Slaughter of
horses
Dec 2024



TERMS OF REFERENCES AND PROCESSES CONSIDERED

<p>Process steps to consider in the two mandates: Slaughter and killing for other purposes than slaughter</p>	<p>ToRs</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrival 2. Unloading 3. Lairage 4. Handling and moving (free moving animals only) 5. Restraint 6. Stunning (Stunning/killing) 7. Bleeding 8. Slaughter of pregnant animals (free moving animals only) 9. Emergency killing (outside the normal slaughter line) 10. Unacceptable methods, procedures or practices on welfare grounds 	<p>ToR-1: Identify welfare hazards and their origins (in terms of facilities, equipment, staff)</p> <p>ToR-2: Define ABMs to assess performance on AW</p> <p>ToR-3: Provide preventive and corrective measures (structural or managerial) to address the hazards</p> <p>ToR-4: Point out specific hazards related to species or types of animals (e.g. young, with horns)</p>





High Expansion Foam for Stunning and killing Pigs and Poultry

Scientific
Opinion
June 2024

NEFS METHOD AND MAIN PARTS OF THE SYSTEM

NEFS in containers

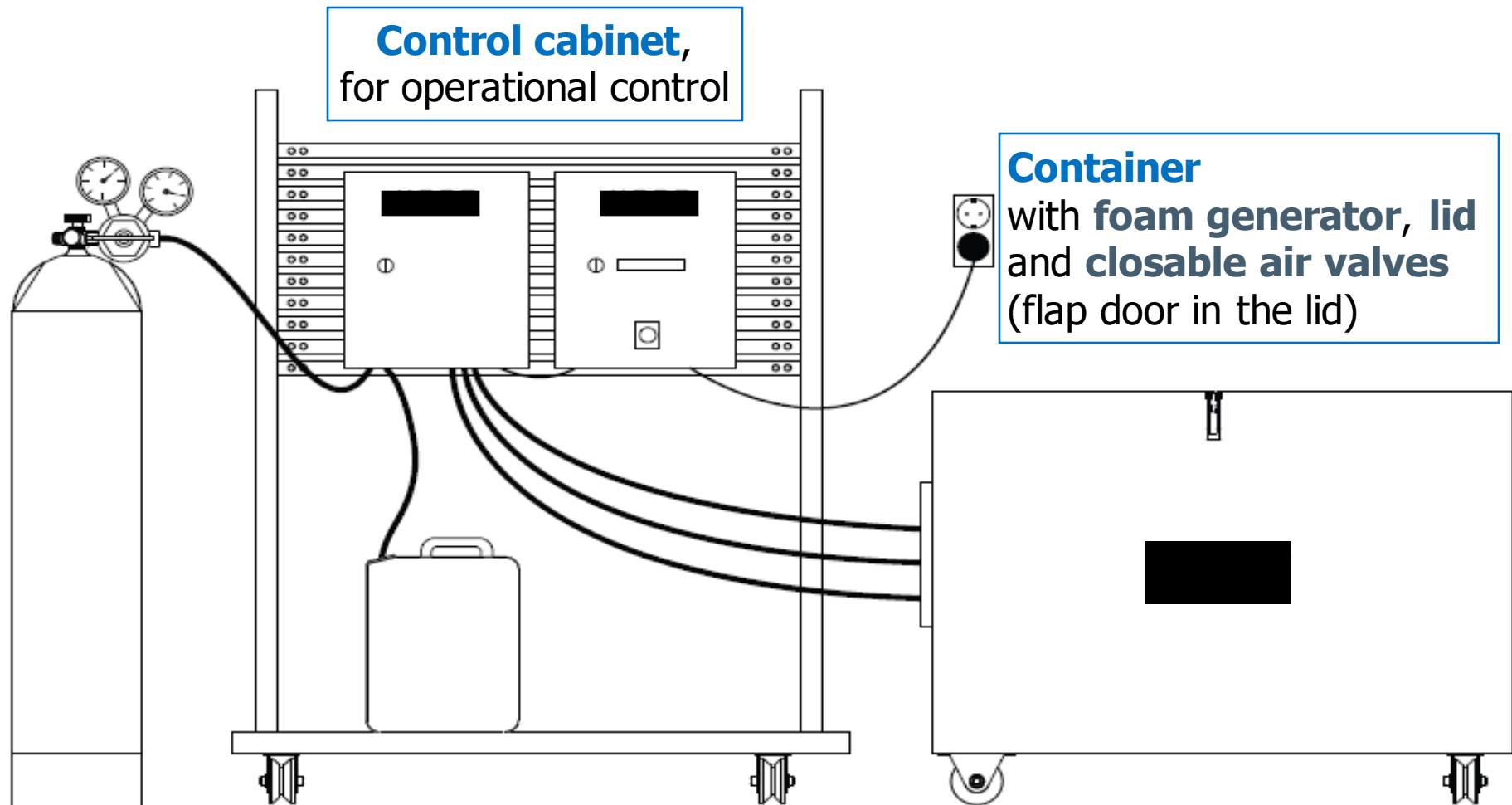
For **killing on-farm, pigs and poultry** in **containers**, for situations **other than slaughter**

NEFS: Nitrogen Expansion Foam System

Distribution cabinet containing pump, gas solenoid valve and preset regulator distributing **gas and foaming liquid** into the container

Control cabinet,
for operational control

Container
with **foam generator**, lid and **closable air valves** (flap door in the lid)



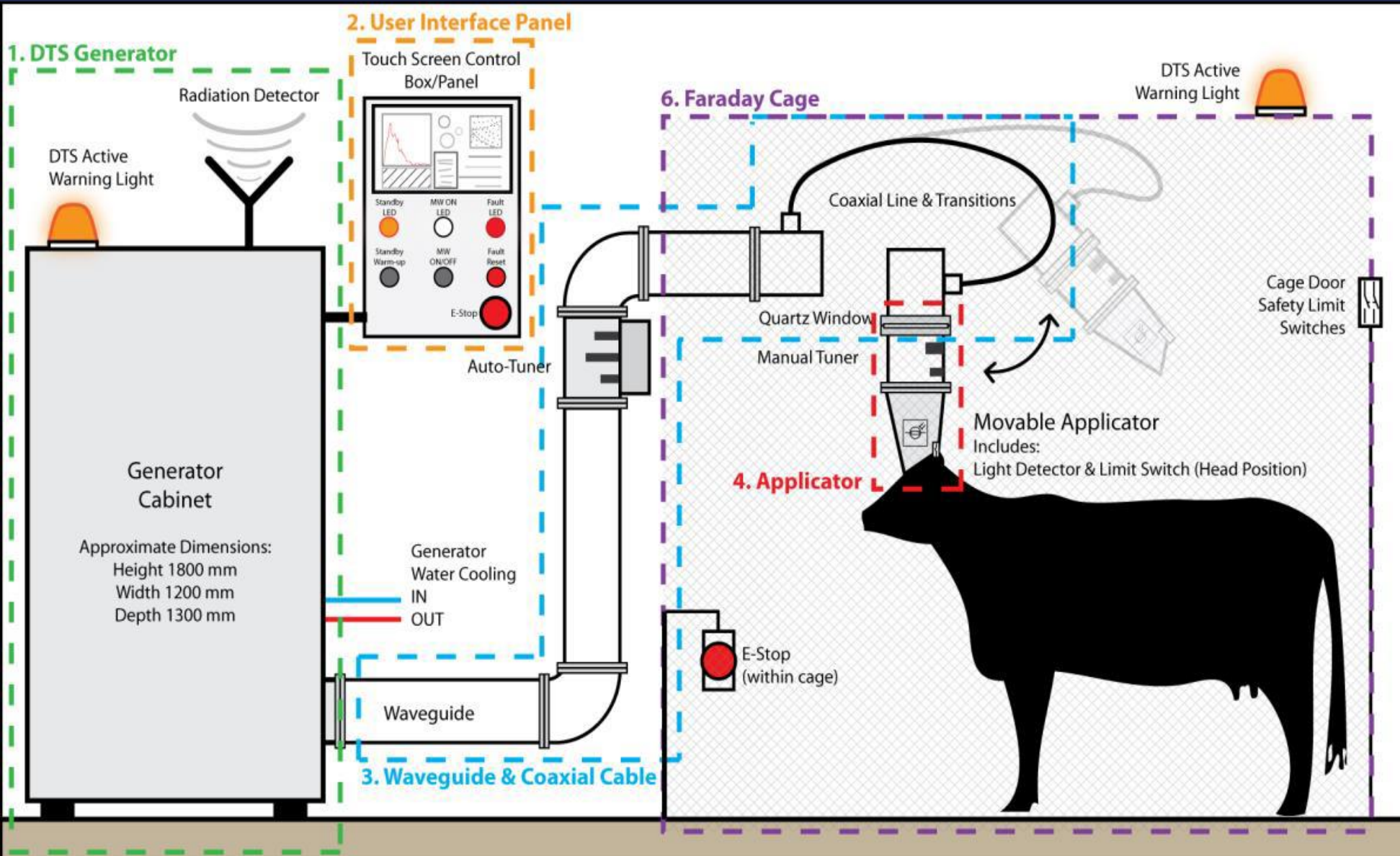


Diathermic Syncope® for Stunning Cattle

Scientific
Opinion



APPARATUS OVERVIEW - DIATHERMIC SYNCOPE FOR STUNNING CATTLE



1. DTS Generator

2. User interface panel

3. Waveguide system

4. Applicator

5. Animal Restraint (not shown in the Figure)

6. Faraday cage



Follow up of Animal Welfare Roadmap AW

-
- Develop and implement a **methodology for quantitative risk assessment** of animal welfare
 - **Strategic data collection** of on-farm welfare indicators

More Welfare: towards new risk assessment methodologies and harmonised animal welfare data in the EU



FOLLOW UP ON ROADMAP AW -ONGOING CALLS - PROJECTS

- **GP/EFSA/BIOHAW/2023/03 Animal care & welfare:** dairy herd welfare indicators. Risk-based model for dairy herd welfare: Field data collection - **Started in April 2024**
- **OC/EFSA/BIOHAW/2023/03:** Developing a methodology to assess **positive Welfare using behaviour-analytic and ethological approaches** - Open Call: closed on 15 May 2024 <https://etendering.ted.europa.eu/cft/cft-display.html?cftId=14842>
- **To Launch 23 May 2024:**
 - **Open grant Call:** Pathway to animal welfare quantitative risk assessment: **piloting a harmonized collection of welfare data in pigs (sows, piglets & gilts) (1.5 m€)**



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