

The Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare Report 2021

2021 Report Glossary

Androsterone – an androgenous steroid hormone and pheromone formed in the testes from the breakdown of progesterone, excreted in the urine and plasma of entire (i.e. non-castrated) male pigs, and responsible for boar taint and unpleasant odour/taste to meat

Animal welfare – the physical and mental wellbeing of animals and the freedom to express behaviours that are important to them; the Farm Animal Welfare Council adopted the Five Freedoms (see below) to demonstrate the attributes of good animal welfare.

Basic farm assurance – certification schemes that ensure certain standards of safety and quality are met (on-farm), often including some animal welfare standards similar to the legislative requirements of the market(s) in which they operate

Barren battery cage (or: conventional cage) – a cage used to house several laying hens, usually providing space equivalent to less than an A4 sheet of paper per hen; provision is limited to food and water; barren battery cages are prohibited by EU legislation although they are common in other parts of the world

Beak trimming – removal of part of the beak (laying hens, parent broilers and turkeys) using a hot blade, secateurs or an infra-red beam. Infra-red is the only method permitted in England; in the EU no more than a third of the beak may be removed

Broiler chickens – chickens reared for meat

Cage-free eggs – eggs from laying hens not reared in production systems featuring cages. Cage production systems for laying hens are known by various names, including: battery cages, conventional cages, furnished cages, enriched cages and colony cages. Combi-cages, or combination systems are a type of production system which can function either with or without close confinement of the hens in cages, and therefore should not be considered a true cage-free system

Castration – by scrotal incision, removal of the testes that are cut or torn at the spermatic cord (pigs, cattle), using a rubber ring or bloodless castration method (sheep, cattle). Generally done without anaesthetic or post-procedural pain relief

Cephalosporins – medicines that kill bacteria or prevent their growth. Cephalosporins are a newer class of antibiotics and are often seen as an alternative to penicillin

Cloning – the process of producing genetically identical individuals using donor DNA and a surrogate mother. In farm animals, cloning may be used to create copies of high-yielding animals for breeding whose progeny

may then be used in food production. The majority of cloning is performed with cattle, but pigs, goats and sheep have also been subject to the procedure. Animal welfare concerns associated with cloning include risks associated with the surgical procedures undergone by the donor and surrogate animals, high rates of pregnancy loss and juvenile deaths, birth complications, and potential loss of genetic diversity

Close confinement – provision of very limited space, representing inadequate space to allow an animal to move around or express normal patterns of behaviour

Coccidiostat – a pharmaceutical agent that acts upon Coccidia parasites commonly found in animal intestines

Concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) – also known as a factory farm, a CAFO is a production process for meat or dairy that confines many cattle at high stocking densities. The animals have very little room to move and the land is bare of vegetation so, instead of grazing, feed is brought to the animals

Disbudding – removal of the horn buds in young animals (calves, kids) using a hot iron or chemical cauterisation

Dehorning – removal of the horns of adult animals by cutting or sawing

Desnooding – removal of the snood of a turkey, the fleshy part hanging from the forehead and over the beak

Dry sows – sows in the herd other than those during the period of farrowing (giving birth) and lactation (this includes pregnant sow and sows awaiting impregnation)

Farm animal welfare – see animal welfare, where farmed animals refer to those animals reared for food, fibres and other commodities

Farrowing crate – a metal cage used to confine a single sow during farrowing (birth) and lactation; the crate is designed to limit the crushing of piglets when the sow lies down and does not allow the sow to turn around or engage properly with her piglets

Feedlot – an intensive animal feeding operation used to fatten livestock prior to slaughter. Animals such as pigs, sheep or cattle are confined in small areas and supplied with a high protein feed

Fin fish – so-called ‘true fish’, this term is used to distinguish fish with gills, fins and a backbone from other aquatic animals such as shellfish and jellyfish

The **Five Freedoms** outline an acceptable state (outcomes) for welfare on-farm, in transit and at slaughter, and includes elements of health, emotional state, and physical and behavioural functioning. The following provisions, added later, specify practical measures required to secure the freedoms, and to provide a logical framework for assessing the strengths and weaknesses of husbandry systems to minimise negative welfare states:

1. Freedom from Hunger and Thirst - by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour

2. Freedom from Discomfort - by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area

3. Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease - by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment

4. Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour - by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind

5. Freedom from Fear and Distress - by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering

Fluoroquinolones – antibiotics (an antimicrobial) typically used to treat bone, joint and skin infections caused by microorganisms

Food companies – food businesses including producers, processors, manufacturers, food retail and service companies (e.g. restaurants, bars, catering)

Free-farrowing – these systems house pregnant sows, and those with new litters, in larger pens than the sow stall, enabling the sow to move more freely, build and nest, and exhibit other natural behaviours

Free range – free range livestock have access to an outdoor area for at least part of the day, allowing greater freedom of movement

Gait score – a method for assessing lameness in poultry, cattle, pigs, using indicators such as balance, stride length, and the position of the feet

Genetic modification (or genetic engineering or manipulation) – the direct manipulation of an organism's genes using biotechnology

Gestation crate – see sow stall

Gilts – young female pigs that have yet to be pregnant or have their first litter

Growth promoting substances – used to increase the production of animals farmed for food. Examples include the hormone BST used to increase milk production, feed additives to increase meat production (ractopamine) and low dose antibiotics. Antibiotic and hormonal growth promoters are not permitted by EU legislation

In-ovo gender identification (sexing) – a method for identifying the sex of laying hens in the egg, before they hatch, via analysis of the allantoic fluid, aimed at avoiding the routine culling of day-old male chicks

Input-based measures – these refer to the type of farming system (i.e. infrastructure and husbandry) used, including aspects of housing (e.g. cage, barn, space allowance, provision of environmental enrichment, free-range), treatments and procedures, breed use, feeding and health management (e.g. the use of preventative antibiotics), as well as the practices for transport and slaughter

Lairage – holding pens for livestock in slaughterhouses, in which they are placed following transport

Long distance live transportation – any transport of a live animal that exceeds 8 hours, from loading to unloading; welfare has been shown to decrease significantly in journeys lasting more than 8 hours

Mulesing – removal of skin from the hindquarters of sheep breeds with excess folds of skin on their rumps, to manage fly strike. Generally done without anaesthetic or post-procedural pain relief

Mutilation – a procedure that interferes with the bone structure or sensitive tissues of an animal, usually done to manage undesirable behaviour such as tail biting (pigs) and injurious pecking (laying hens). Generally done without anaesthetic or post-procedural pain relief

Outcome-based measures – these are measures of wellbeing, including both physical measures (e.g. lameness and mastitis in dairy cows, gait score and footpad dermatitis in broilers, tail-biting and lameness in pigs, bone breakage and feather coverage in laying hens) but also measures that evaluation aspects of

mental wellbeing (e.g. reaction to humans or novelty, fear, comfort) and behaviour (e.g. time spent lying – resting, ruminating, or being active – foraging, perching, dust bathing, socialising)

Performance – in farm animal welfare is the action or process of achieving an acceptable level of welfare throughout the process of breeding, rearing/finishing, transporting and slaughtering of animals in the food industry. Performance reporting of a company's practices refers to disclosure of a combination of resource/management inputs and indicators from the animals themselves (outcomes), both of which can be recorded quantitatively and objectively. Performance impact refers to the combination of these achievements on animal welfare

Phytotherapy - the study of the use of extracts of natural (plant) origin as medicines or health-promoting agents

Polled breeds – typically refers to breeds or strains of ruminants that are naturally polled (without horns) through selective breeding (as opposed to being disbudded or dehorned)

Pithing – a technique used to immobilise or kill an animal by inserting a needle or metal rod into its brain. Current USA and European Union regulations prohibit importation of beef from cows pithed due to risk of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, or "mad cow") disease

Prophylactic antibiotic use – giving an antibiotic treatment to an animal or group of animals in anticipation of a disease or when there is a risk of infection, rather than treatment when clinical disease has been identified (therapeutic use) or giving treatment when some animals in a group or on a farm are showing signs of illness (metaphylactic use)

Ractopamine – a feed additive used to promote growth promotion and leanness in animals raised for their meat. Ractopamine use has been banned in many countries, including European Union countries, mainland China and Russia

Routine Mutilations – the use of mutilations (see mutilation) on a routine basis, e.g. at a certain stage of production, rather than first addressing the underlying issues within the system and only using mutilations as a risk-based last resort

Sow stall (or: gestation crate) – a narrow metal crate used to confine individual sows for their 16-week pregnancy, without sufficient room for sows to turn around. Sows are generally confined in stalls during insemination and during pregnancy

Stockmanship – the knowledgeable and skilful handling of and caring for livestock in a safe, efficient, effective, professional and low-stress manner

Tail docking – removal of part of the tail (usually up to two-thirds) using a hot docking iron, sharp blade (pigs) or tight rubber ring (lambs, cattle); routine tail docking of pigs is not permitted by EU legislation. Generally done without anaesthetic or post-procedural pain relief

Teeth reduction – reduction of a piglet's 8 sharp needle teeth, shortly after birth, using sharp clippers or pliers (cutting) or shortening with a grinding device; to manage damage to the sow's teats and to other piglets. Routine teeth clipping is not permitted by EU legislation. Generally done without anaesthetic or post-procedural pain relief

Tethering – tying of an animal indoors (usually done to cattle and goats, but also to sows) to a fixed point; tethering prevents an animal from carrying out its normal behaviour, not permitted in the EU for calves (certain exceptions) and pigs

Toe clipping – the removal of the ends of toes, including the whole toenail, in poultry to prevent scratching damage. Generally done without anaesthetic or post-procedural pain relief

Triploidy – triploid fish have one extra set of chromosomes than the natural diploid state, rendering them sterile. Aquaculture using artificially induced triploidy avoids problems such as early sexual maturation and interbreeding between wild and cultured fish. However, triploids may be more susceptible to eye cataracts, temperature stress, deformities, and lower survival rates

Veal crate – a small pen or box to confine a single dairy calf; calves are often tethered in these systems and do not have adequate space to turn around or have adequate social contact. The use of veal crates is prohibited in the EU and some US states

Welfare outcome measures – performance measures directly linked to the physical, emotional and/or behavioural wellbeing of animals