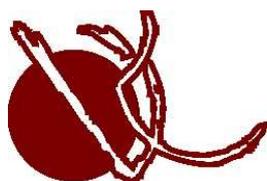


EurSafe News

European Society for Agricultural and Food Ethics



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Editorial

Dear EurSafe Members,

Summer is a great time for relaxation and for reflection. This issue of the EurSafe Newsletter invites you to spend some time thinking about the human-animal relation, in particular those aspects of it dealing with “Taking animal lives” which is the theme of the June Newsletter.

To take someone’s life is generally considered as the most serious harm one can inflict on another. This attitude is reflected in legislation where deliberate killing is rewarded with the law’s most severe punishments, which in some countries even include death penalty. However, this only applies if the “someone” is a fellow *Homo sapiens*. Each day an enormous number of animals are routinely killed for food and other products. According to FAO statistics for 2004, a total of 260 billion tonnes of meat was produced across the globe that year. On top of that, a huge (but unknown) number of animals are killed in research,

some are killed for sport and pleasure, and another countless number of wild animals are killed as a result of other human activities, ranging from mouse trapping to those causing more fundamental changes in the environment like deforestation and urbanisation.

While the killing of all these animals is generally (although not unanimously) accepted in society, taken to be unavoidable and largely unproblematic, the human-animal relationship is still ambiguous. When looking further into the issue, it turns out that not all reasons are considered equally good reasons to terminate an animal's life. A Dutch study suggests the existence of a fundamental and underlying shared cultural understanding within our Western society that animals should not be killed gratuitously (Swabe et al. 2005). It also suggests that a 'respect for life' is a guiding principle which informs people's understanding and actions with regard to killing animals. Killing is only socially sanctioned when it is carried out to achieve a clear and specific objective, and when no reasonable alternative exists. The species in question is also of importance (just think of how the dog and the rat are perceived), as is the reason why an animal is kept; how animals are socially constructed plays an important role in how we regard them.

Also *how* the animal's life is taken is considered of importance. This is illustrated by the work of the OIE (the World Organization for Animal Health) to establish world-wide standards for animal welfare. The first areas of concern, regulated in 2005, were the welfare of animals during transport and slaughter. The strong feelings around religious slaughter also reflect this – the discussion is not as much about whether or not the slaughter should take place but about how it should be carried out.

The profound moral conflict inherent in the human relation to other animals is something our species appears to have struggled with since pre-historic time. It is

even argued to be a primary driving force in the evolution of religious ideologies and practices throughout human history. For example, the monotheistic religions, such as Judaism, Islam and Christianity, tend to depict animals as secondary creations designed primarily to serve the interests of humans. Thus, these belief systems (as well as ritual acts, for example in relation to slaughter) lifted the direct moral responsibility for animals from the (human) individual – and gave way to the development of large scale animal agriculture of the kind we know today.

This issue of the EurSafe Newsletter includes contributions dealing with some of the problematic aspects related to the killing of animals. The first is a report from the field: John Moffitt, a British veterinary officer, gives a first-hand account of experiences during the Foot and Mouth Crisis in the United Kingdom in 2001. He participated in the giant mass-destruction of animals that took place to prevent the spreading of disease – for primarily economic reasons. The second contribution deals with a currently hot topic in the EU: religious slaughter and animal welfare. Helena Röcklinsberg presents a constructive approach to how democratic agreements can be reached regarding an issue where strong beliefs and opinions clash. The last contribution might shake up some minds among us. It brings the discussion away from established positions like “veganism” or “pro-traditional family farming” and introduces the idea of *non-killing animal husbandry* as a way to solve some of the problems faced by agriculture today. Certainly not a shocking thought for people familiar with Indian philosophy and way of life, but try to sell it to a European farmer or politician...

The September issue of the EurSafe Newsletter will be dedicated to the theme “Ethics and political consumerism” with issue editor Tassos Michalopoulos (a.michalopoulos@tudelft.nl). Please direct all contributions to him by August 15, 2008.

I hope you all will enjoy this issue of the newsletter, as well as a relaxing and refreshing summer break!

Vonne Lund
Issue editor

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Thematic Section ‘Taking animal lives’

Destruction of Livestock: the methods used during the FMD outbreak in the UK in 2001

John Moffitt

This paper provides the ‘first hand’ experiences of a veterinary surgeon who worked during the Foot and Mouth Crisis in the United Kingdom in 2001. The challenges faced when culling / killing red meat animals for disease control purposes are considered, along with the problems in organisation and logistics required to complete the operation. In 2001 few of the veterinary surgeons who were carrying out the field work had seen foot and mouth disease as a clinical entity, so not only did they have to be able to diagnose they also had to deal with the consequences of that diagnosis. The methods used for culling cattle and sheep in Cumbria and Yorkshire in 2001 are explained and the summary highlights the key points faced ‘in the field’, under difficult conditions, in the matters of planning and implementation.

Scale of outbreak

Pyres were a common sight in parts of Cumbria during March and early April in 2001. They were the result of the culling of large numbers of livestock for disease control, the Foot & Mouth Outbreak in 2001. In Great Britain that year there were 2026 Infected Premises, along with 8131 premises defined as Dangerous Contacts, of which 3369 premises were culled as

Contiguous Premises. At the peak of the crisis, during the third week in March 2001, almost 300 cases were confirmed, the scale of culling can only be described as ‘enormous’.

The author of this paper worked as a Temporary Veterinary Inspector for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (now Defra), from the 10 March 2001 based at the Carlisle Animal Health Office (Disease Control Centre). That centre alone dealt with 891 confirmed cases, the first case in Cumbria on 28 February 2001, the last case on 30 September 2001. During 2001 he spent time on over 70 premises where culling of livestock took place. Prior to 2001 the author had experience working in abattoirs and had assessed slaughtermen prior to providing them with certificates of competence, so he was at least aware of the welfare standards required for the stunning and killing of animals. Under field conditions, however, life was not quite so straightforward. Once disease had been confirmed either on the basis of laboratory samples or clinical grounds the field veterinary surgeon had set in motion a sequence of events that would culminate in the culling and disposal, by whatever method, of the susceptible livestock on that premises.

After confirmation the veterinary surgeon had potentially very little time before livestock would be culled, although in the early days of the outbreak, in late February, March and early April, the procedures for valuation and culling were inevitably not as well organised and some delays were experienced. As the senior government official on site the veterinary surgeon was the 'responsible person', so they had to have, or develop, skills they may not have used before. The learning curve was very steep. Organisational skills, management skills and communication skills were vital, and at the heart of it all the veterinary surgeon had to remember that for the farmer and his/her family it was a stressful time. Not only were 'strangers' arriving on their premises and removing animals that were infected or exposed to disease, the farmers had to face up to an uncertain with their way of life, at least in the short term, destroyed. The situation called for a sensitive approach, with calmness and rational thinking to be used.

During the time between the disease investigation and the commencing of the cull, officials had time, sometimes albeit a short time, to consider a location or locations on the farm where animals could be humanely culled. The veterinary surgeon in charge had to consider a suitable site where the culling could take place and arrange for appropriate facilities to be available. For the restraint of the animals, they also had to consider a site that would be suitable for the 'holding' of carcasses in the event of disposal being delayed. In many cases access to the farms was difficult, down narrow lanes or tracks, so it was important to consider how vehicles and disposal lorries could get to the culling site. The veterinary surgeon on the farm had to relay back to the Disease Control Centre what would be required for the particular circumstances on the farm : number of animals to be culled, facilities already available on site, were mobile sheep or cattle pens required, access issues and the number of staff required for managing the handling of the livestock in

safe manner. In some cases the farmer, along with farm staff, would be able to assist, but in other cases those people could not face being present when their stock were culled and we had to respect their wishes.

Priorities and actions

The priorities in 2001 were the safety of all personnel on site ; disease control ; the welfare of the affected livestock and minimising the impact on the environment and the rural economy. A key aspect of this was the welfare of the farmer and his family, it was vital to communicate with the farmer to advise them and let them know what was happening on their farm and with their property. Biosecurity was important, and it was sometimes necessary to restrict the movements of personnel to be able to ensure biosecurity.

A slaughter team was allocated to the affected premises. Depending on the number of animals to be culled the team could be just two persons, but on other farms, where for example the culling of cattle and sheep was to take place simultaneously at different locations two slaughter teams would be allocated. In such cases a second, or even a third veterinary surgeon would be available to monitor each part of the cull.

On farms where the author was in charge he set out to identify the leader of the slaughter team and set the 'ground rules'. A check was made on the hardware, typically captive bolt guns, to ensure they were adequate, ensuring that backups were available in the event of breakdown. Further checks were made to make sure that, when captive bolts were being used, the correct strength or charge of ammunition was available for the species being culled. Slaughter teams were not used to working in disease control / field situations. It became clear early on in the outbreak that some killing teams were not correctly prepared or equipped with spare parts for repairs. Captive bolt guns were liable to break down due to overheating

(remember that in most slaughterhouses the common method of stunning for sheep is by use of electric tongs). Slaughter teams were paid on piece rates, paid for the number of animals they culled, rather than an hourly rate, so in such cases the veterinary surgeon had to ensure that tasks were not rushed at the expense of welfare considerations.

In April 2001 the author was appointed leader of the slaughter advisory team at Carlisle and he was able to provide training for veterinary surgeons prior to them being faced with the challenges of field culls. This training was based on personal experience and that of colleagues, gleaned from discussions held in hotel bars in the evenings. At the end of each on-farm cull a certificate had to be completed by the supervising veterinary surgeon. This certificate logged the number of animals culled by a named slaughter team, but also commented on the way in which the cull was conducted with consideration for animal welfare. Feedback from colleagues enabled the author, as the leader, to audit the slaughter teams and ensure that welfare at killing was safeguarded.

Killing methods

On-farm killing reduced the killing methods available for use. Additionally for reasons of avoiding disease transmission it was not feasible or desirable to bleed animals once they had been stunned to ensure their death. "Stunning and pithing" was the preferred choice for most cattle and sheep. Plastic (disposable) pithing rods were available for cattle (they had the added advantage of plugging the wound and minimising the leakage of cerebrospinal fluid, which posed a potential BSE risk) Metal pithing rods were manufactured and used to ensure that sheep were killed efficiently.

There were cases where 'alternative' methods had to be used to cull livestock to ensure their welfare at killing. Guidance was given to veterinary surgeons in the field that

animals identified as being heavily infected when the disease was diagnosed should be culled without delay (in some cases this meant culling before the official valuer was on site). In practical terms this meant that veterinary surgeons attending report cases had to carry adequate sedative and barbiturate injection to enable this procedure to be carried out.

Once into March the lambing season in Cumbria was in progress and arrangements had to be made to ensure the welfare of these young animals, the use of the captive bolt was not appropriate. Lambs were injected with barbiturate, intra-cardiac. It appeared to be a humane way of carrying out a procedure that was distressing for many people. Where large numbers of lambs were to be culled in this manner veterinary students were sometimes able to give these injections, under the direct supervision of a (qualified) veterinary surgeon.

The use of 'free bullets' to kill livestock was the other method used in 2001. Whilst slaughtermen with experience in the use of captive bolts were more readily available, there were circumstances where the use of trained marksmen with rifles / pistols and free bullets were necessary. There were situations where bulls, reared for beef and kept indoors, had to be killed with free bullets. There were obviously health and safety issues in these cases. In these cases the veterinary surgeon had to rely on the experience and skill of the marksmen. Once cattle were let out to grass in May 2001 there was more call for free bullets to be used to kill suckler cattle. Marksmen would use a vehicle as their 'base' and, accompanied by a veterinary surgeon, would carry out the task. 'Fallen' animals were checked as soon as possible after being shot

Key points for the culling of animals in the field

In summary, the author considers the key points for planning and implementation of

the culling of animals 'in the field' for disease control as follows :

- Firstly as much time as possible should be allowed for the organisation prior to commencement of the cull to ensure that appropriate handling facilities are in place to ensure the safety and welfare of animals (and personnel).
- Secondly, optimum location of site for culling on farm must be established considering methods to be used to remove carcasses for disposal.
- A method of cull should be established to fit in with conditions that prevail on site and species being culled, e.g., options to use sedation prior to injection or stunning, use of injection alone for young animals, use of free bullet to be considered. Consider, for welfare purposes, the order in which animals should be killed e.g., young animals first
- Finally overall supervision of the cull should, wherever possible, be by a person with experience of having worked in an abattoir. This enables closer supervision of slaughtermen to ensure that culling is carried out in a humane manner and in accordance with welfare at slaughter legislation
- On-farm culling of livestock will be extremely stressful for farmers and their families as well as for professional staff and their colleagues and it is important to recognise this when dealing with livestock owners. A calm and professional but yet empathetic approach is usually best.

Animal welfare and mass-culling

To many people the concept of killing livestock on farm may seem to be inhumane as far as animal welfare is concerned. For disease control purposes there was no option in 2001, live animals could not be moved off affected premises. It is the opinion of the author that the welfare of animals that had to be killed was safeguarded at all times. When (non disease affected) food producing animals are taken from the premises of origin to a slaughterhouse for killing for

human consumption they have to be transported from the farm of origin, sometimes passing through a market, before they reach the abattoir. Whilst legislation is in place to protect animals in transit, in markets and at abattoirs the conditions to which livestock are subjected in many cases, whilst being compliant with legislation, may be far from optimal. Transport distances may be considerable, animals may be mixed with groups from other farms and at the abattoir they may be held in a 'hostile' environment before they are handled by 'strangers' at the time of killing.

During 2001 the author had the opportunity to see animals killed without any need for them to be transported away from the farm, by licenced slaughtermen under the supervision of veterinary surgeons and in an environment that was familiar to the livestock. As a veterinary surgeon, with concern for animal welfare, it is the opinion of the author that killing of livestock on farm was ethically acceptable, not only for the purposes of disease control, but also from the viewpoint of animal welfare.

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Religious slaughter in the triangle of freedom of religion, animal welfare and decision procedure

Helena Röcklinsberg

Religious matters, as well as animal welfare issues, often evoke strong feelings and reactions when debated. In any heterogeneous community with common legislation, such as the European Union, communication and decision-making concerning traditions and religious issues easily becomes difficult. This is partly due to different interpretations of “freedom of religion” and acceptance of religious expressions among nations and subgroups. A special challenge lays in the communication of different views of daily life issues in different religions, such as clothing and education, and even more so when policy decisions or legislation is to be made. A further daily life issue with inherent religious tensions is food, where religious or ritual slaughter of husbandry animals deserves special consideration.

Ritual slaughter is practiced within Judaism and Islam. Both religions demand that the animal is killed with a sharp knife through a (preferably single) cut of the throat in order to have kosher or halal meat products. Many Muslims accept reversible stunning, e.g., electric stunning or captive bolt pistol, if not directly affecting the heartbeat. This method is widely practiced on cattle and sheep in New Zealand. Most Jews argue that the animal is not “whole and healthy” if stunned, and the slaughterer can’t have eye contact with the animal. One option then is to use so called post-cut stunning, where unconsciousness may come earlier than through bleeding. This is accepted by most Muslims.

The EU-Directive 93/119/EC on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter and killing states that animals bred and kept for the purpose of meat should be stunned before slaughter. “[A]t the time of slaughter or killing animals should be spared any

avoidable pain or suffering”. However, requirements of stunning shall not be applied when certain “methods of slaughter required by certain religious rites” are used (Chapter II, Article 5:2). In this case the religious authority in each state “shall be competent for the application and monitoring of the special provisions which apply” to religious slaughter, and to operate under the responsibility of the official veterinarian (Chapter I, Article 2:8).

In the current discussion of whether this directive should be raised to a regulation, the issue of exceptions from stunning for religious reasons is important to discuss, not least for animal welfare concerns. According to several studies on animal welfare during slaughter without stunning these animals are caused considerable stress and suffering (Dunn 1990; Grandin and Regenstein 1994; OIE 2006), and one can conclude that in this directive religious requirements override animal welfare concerns. There are good reasons, however, to question this exception from the general prescription. Even if certain traditions (including religious habits) are important expressions of freedom of religion, experience of severe suffering or pain by an individual (often not able to take part in the religious dimension, and thus getting no benefit of its own suffering), is worthy of more respect than the human religious experience. In general, respect for freedom of religious expressions doesn’t override the claim of non-maleficence, neither for humans nor for animals. This statement does not imply however, that religious aspects are irrelevant, or that elements of ritual slaughter traditions per se should be excluded. It does, nevertheless, set a limit for the kind of slaughter method that is acceptable, independently of the reasons for using them.

Above this normative issue, a principally interesting junction of three issues arises due to the discussion of the regulative status of the directive, namely freedom of religion, animal welfare and forms of decision-making. In this culturally and religiously heterogeneous context, where religious claims may clash with secular views, caution is called for with regard to communication. The former two issues are explicit value-laden whereas the latter is more of a methodological concern, however not without a value dimension. In the following I'll focus on the third aspect by presenting five criteria for decision-making as a departure point, which is inspired by the Habermasian idea of an ideal discourse. In a decision-making process involving food including religious aspects and perspectives, discussion rules are valuable, formalizing respect for person and argument.¹ A sub-dominant group will most probably feel less committed, both to the discussion itself and also to the implementation of a decision if discussion rules are not followed. To what extent cultural and religious concerns will affect policy is then open to the discussion process.² However, a first prerequisite for engaging in such a discourse is that religion does play a role, and secondly that there is a common goal to find a solution that is respected by all parts and to formulate a

¹ The issue of religious slaughter could also be discussed within the framework of an Ethical Matrix (Mephram 1996), especially for the step of clarification of values among partners. However, focus here is rather on the procedure of discussion within which these values play a role. (See the fifth criterion). Also the Corporate Moral Responsibility-kit (Brom et al. 2006) offers valuable insights and tools for a discussion in a heterogeneous context. Since its aim is to improve food chain value communication from the perspective of the producers, retailers etc it is not directly applicable to the issue of policy discussion regarding religious slaughter.

² For a more comprehensive presentation and discussion of the criteria, see Röcklinsberg 2006.

long-lasting policy that is respected in practice. Hence, there is no doubt that a time-consuming, thorough discussion, following certain criteria, will be needed.

The first criterion is *equal respect for all partners involved*. It might seem self evident, but need to be pointed out in a hierarchical world, not least when religious and secular perspectives and views of life meet. Only when all partners have a genuine opportunity to discuss an issue in a democratic setting can a sub-dominant culture or religion have a realistic possibility of arguing from a respected and equal position. A second criterion is *context sensitivity*, which is essential in order to formulate policies that can be adhered to in practice. It calls for a deeper understanding of different interpretations of a situation and what issue is at stake. Further, it makes it possible to agree on a *shared (not identical) picture of the situation*, which is the third criterion, and enables partners to reach a solid basis for agreement. In order to reach a shared picture and to continue the discussion to a normative level, *respect for each argument, including emotions*, is crucial especially when religious and cultural differences are essential parts of the decision-making process.

A fifth criterion for a formalized discussion is to *relate theoretical perspectives and practical application*. By considering the practical limits of one's theoretical statements a close connection is established between theoretical and practical matters, and both process and policy improve in substance and quality. For instance by starting the discussion with common theoretical values, such as respect for people and autonomy, a minimal common basis can be described. Then each partner has to relate these values to what is considered good practice in the own context, but also, and more important, to push the limits to what would be an acceptable interpretation of the values from one's own perspective.

Following these criteria helps to create a level of communication which is open for suggestions and ideally has similarities with a “brain storming” process. The two criteria on respect are supposed to be underlying, always present. The other three are directly linked to the specific issue at stake and aid the discussion by helping to narrow the issue down to relevant perspectives. Without any claim of comprehensiveness, some challenges and possible outcomes can be sketched as regards the content.

The basic disagreement lies in that partners value animal welfare differently, as well as religious slaughter rules. The dividing line doesn't always occur between religious perspectives on the one hand and secular on the other, though. Muslims accepting reversible stunning seem to value animal welfare higher in relation to religious rules, than Jews who don't accept any pre-slaughter stunning. Here these Muslims have more in common with a secular animal welfare perspective than with a Jewish religious perspective.

Three criteria are important for the content; context sensitivity, shared and nuanced picture of the situation and relating theoretical perspectives to practical application. One important element for high level of context sensitivity is scientific knowledge about both animal reactions and welfare during slaughter using relevant methods and the actual circumstances at slaughter (industrial differs from occasional at festivals for example). Further, knowledge about religious traditions related to meat consumption is relevant, as well as of the moral landscape in which each partner exists. (How this information is valued belongs to a final and normative step). It becomes obvious that context sensitivity implies information exchange, and as such is closely related to the next criteria, shared picture of the situation and issues at stake. In order to find the broadest possible basis, different partners' perspectives on religious slaughter have to be presented and compared, and each partner must point out

the parts most crucial to them (such as eye contact with the animal, heart beat, role of prayer etc.). Through a respectful discussion, agreement on a set of “minimal common elements” of a shared picture can be formulated, for example that animal welfare is impaired, that correct handling improves animal welfare in all slaughter methods and that meat consumption is not essential for human health.

The last criterion stresses the importance of continuously relating theoretical value statements to practical application, in order to find each partner's limits regarding acceptable practice. This is thus the criterion for ethical balancing of the aspects presented according to the other criteria. Each partner will describe acceptable actions, relate them to value statements of religious and ethical character, and adjust these poles in comparison with each other. Finally partners will compare these descriptions of acceptable practice with each other, aiming at finding a common denominator, which then may function as basis for a decision regarding acceptable regulation.

Summary and conclusion

In the present EU directive on slaughter, stunning is prescribed, but exceptions for religious reasons are accepted. It is argued that this is problematic as regards animal welfare. In the discussion of whether or not to reformulate the directive to a binding regulation, a thorough discussion has to take animal welfare, freedom of religion and forms of communication into consideration. Focusing on the latter, five criteria are suggested for a respectful decision-making process; equal respect for all the partners involved, context sensitivity, shared and nuanced picture of situation, respect for each argument including emotions, and relating theoretical perspectives and practical application. Through such a process also the other two issues, animal welfare and freedom of religion, are taken seriously, a prerequisite for successful agreements.

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Non-Killing Cattle Husbandry

Patrick Meyer-Glitza

Introduction

"I am the life, which wants to live in the middle of life, which wants to live" Albert Schweitzer said (1990). A decisive way to let other lives live is the choice for a vegetarian or vegan diet. Still, most vegetarians seem not to know and are more or less shocked to hear that their consumption of milk products entails the birth of bull calves for slaughter and that milk cows seldom reach advanced maturity or old age. Few seem to know that in organic farming the situation is only slightly better than in conventional farming (Hörning 2005).

More and more people are becoming vegetarian, about 1.6-8.0 % in Germany (Anon. 2007; 2008). For those who want to become a vegan the transformation process takes about five years, from a vegetarian to a vegan diet (Grube 2007).

What options are available to those lacto-vegetarians who do not want to be involved in the slaughtering of animals and who also

do not want to live (at least at present) without milk products, who may take up "their five years" of diet transformation? Is it possible in our part of the world (a) to keep 'unproductive' old and diseased cattle and to find a role for the bull calves without slaughter (b) as an integral part of the farm, its organism or system, (c) and will there be people who want to support this kind of farming? These and similar questions are dealt with in a PhD-project at the University of Kassel, Department of Bio-Dynamic Agriculture, Faculty of Organic Agricultural Sciences. This article is based on work in progress, preceding the empirical part of the dissertation.

Ahimsa and Cow Protection

Before coming back to the questions above, I would like to draw on the ancient example of cow protection in India, which was given much emphasis by Mohandas Gandhi at his time and put into practice since the 1960's also in the West. For Mahatma Gandhi it is

the inner nature of man and of the animal that is the starting point. Two diverging aspects of animal nature are emphasized: In one way the animal is the violent beast, not able to behave otherwise – at the same time it is a “poem of pity” as viewed in the cow. The cow is a symbol of the weak and dumb (silent) creature. To protect cows makes way for the protection of all other animals. “Cow protection means protection of all that lives and is helpless and weak in the world.” Further: “Man through the cow is enjoined to realize his identity with all that lives” (Gandhi 1959). As violence is the law of the beast, “Non-Violence is the law of our species” (Gandhi 1990). Cultivating and listening to his “small inner voice” (Gandhi 2004), man should live up to his inner truth as non-violence.

Gandhi had three aims regarding cow protection: (a) to supply the people with sufficient and affordable high quality milk, (b) to improve the welfare of the animals through science and breeding (he strongly criticized the Indian welfare conditions of his time), and to stop (c) the slaughtering and export of cows for meat and leather. To reach these aims he called for a reform of the ancient institutions of Goshalas and Pinjrapoles³, which traditionally keep ill, abandoned and old cows – besides other animals (in Pinjrapoles). These institutions should as far as possible become model-dairies and establish adjoined tanneries to use the products of the dead cow.

Non-killing cattle husbandry

The managing of pastures and meadows, the growing of fodder takes a high toll on wildlife, amphibians and insects (Matheny 2003). Since a vegan diet requires less land to be cultivated compared to a vegetarian or especially an omnivorous diet, it will result

3 In 1927 there were 1500 Goshalas and Pinjrapoles, 1955 twice as much and 1998 about the same amount as in 1955. Burgat (2004), p. 244

in less killing of wildlife. To reduce the toll of husbandry on other animals, nature conservation techniques, such as late and few cuts of meadows, can be of help. But is that enough? Should there be any cattle husbandry?

On the other hand: there are good reasons for keeping cattle in Europe besides the supply of milk-products: manure as nutrient supply and for the enhancement of soil fertility; nitrogen fixation via fodder legume crops as part of a healthy crop rotation⁴ - all of which is especially emphasized in bio-dynamic/organic farming; the cultivation of the landscape; cattle as a cultural force and symbol.

These diverging aspects lead to further questions in the context of Non-killing cattle husbandry:

1. What does it mean for the individual animal, for the herd and the species, when basically only young animals are allowed to live, as it currently is? What happens when the experienced animals and their wisdom are missing?
2. Is it possible to breed for a much longer (flat) lactation with an additional emphasize on robust, healthy animals (a kind of breeding for “life-time achievement” as developed by Barkels and continued by Postler (1999))?
3. Should milk be a by-product of “Ox-Employment”⁵? Could there be an increase in the use of “oxen-power” – comparable to the draft horse movement – supporting soil conservation and extensive energy use?
4. This would imply castration which in itself is a strong intervention in animal integrity. Or should there rather be a

4 It is a debated issue in organic farming what the consequences for the soil fertility are in the long run (e.g., Schmidt 2004 or Lebendige Erde 3/2007 with its thematic main topic: *Ackern, Gärtnern ohne Vieh?*)

5 <http://www.iscowp.org/What%20is%20Cow%20Protection.htm>, accessed June 1st.

- breeding programme for tame bulls – and is that desirable? What would it mean for the integrity of the species?
5. How do we best care for the dying animal? What does it mean to accompany a dying animal?
 6. Should we keep cattle in a mixed zone of reduced ‘production’ and companion?

Economics and land use

You cannot claim for our society as Gandhi did for India at his time: “Cow slaughter will cease if every Hindu understood the economics of cow-protection.”⁶ Non-killing cattle husbandry will cost, and one of the costs will be a significant reduction in milk production, resulting in milk products being something special and expensive. It will depend upon an intensive use of land in terms of acreage needed (Bartussek 2001). The consequence for cattle husbandry would be to raise and keep only enough cattle to allow them to grow old, and for which there is enough carrying capacity. The few examples existing in a Western context which resemble Non-killing cattle husbandry or cow protection seem to have a religious/spiritual background and take place within a community or are supported otherwise. But similar thoughts are present also in our culture. Resembling Gandhi’s view that cow protection is a starting point for the protection of all that is helpless and weak, Andrew Linzey, an Anglican theologian and Director of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics, emphasizes “the moral priority of the weak” (Linsay 1995) as our obligation to serve the weak and helpless animals. As it is the responsibility of the ‘higher’ to serve the ‘lower’, similar to the analogy of Christ serving men, parents serving their children, man should serve the animals.

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EurSafe Executive Committee Update

Just before the summer period, the Executive Committee uses this opportunity to inform you briefly on its current activities. During a meeting on April 9 the Executive Committee reviewed EurSafe's current activities and discussed the strategy for the next years. The Executive Committee defined four fields of interest and importance:

- (a) Teaching
- (b) Network activities, including EurSafe's link with institutional members
- (c) Communication and publicity, including the role of the newsletter
- (d) EurSafe's position with respect to policy issues.

The Executive Committee aims to elaborate on all these fields. Further ideas and activities on these points are in progress. In this process, special attention is given to the teaching activities. The committee considers teaching as one of the core issues of our Society. Therefore, it has been decided

to investigate the feasibilities of starting a working group on teaching. The target of such a group would be to facilitate the exchange of experience on ethics teaching within the EurSafe. Finally, these plans and activities have direct implications for the newsletter. The Executive Committee agreed on the Newsletter's important position in the society's communication. However, together with the editorial board it has been observed that the form and content could be further improved. This process of improvement has already been started. One result can be mentioned already: EurSafe News will become an electronic newsletter (a hard copy will be available on request). As you can see many plans and ideas are being translated to more practical proposals and activities. We hope to inform you on more concrete results in the near future!

Franck Meijboom, Secretary, on behalf of the Executive Committee, June 2008

Publications

New books

Reconstructing biotechnologies.

Critical social analyses

edited by Guido Ruivenkamp, Shuji Hisano,
Joost Jongerden

2008 – 368 pages (hardback)

ISBN-13: 978-90-8686-062-3

Wageningen Academic Publishers.

Recently published books

Redesigning Animal Agriculture.

The Challenge of the 21st Century

edited by Swain, D.L., Charmley, E., Steel,
J.W., Coffey, S.G.

2007 – 231 pages

ISBN: 978-1-84593-223-7

Wallingford; CABI

Conferences & Symposia

Summer

June 18-20

Cultivate the Future: 16th IFOAM
Organic World Congress (Modena,
Italy)

Organised by the International
Federation of Organic Agriculture
Movements (IFOAM)

www.ifoam.org/events/ifoam_conferences/owc/Organic_World_Congress.html

June 19-21

Prospects and Limits of Naturalism in
Ethics. (Berlin Germany):

Organised by T. Schmidt, Humboldt-
University Berlin.

T.Schmidt@philosophie.hu-berlin.de

June 22-26

4th EPSO Conference 'Plants for Life'
(Toulon - Côte d'Azur, France)

Organised by EPSO and Genetics and
Plant Breeding division, INRA

<http://www.epsoweb.org/catalog/conf2008.htm>

June 25-27

IAMO Forum 2008. International
Scientific Conference on Agri-Food

Business: Global Challenges – Innovative Solutions (Halle (Saale), Germany)
The conference will focus on three global challenges pivotal for developments in the agri-food sector: food quality, bio-energy, and redefinition of agricultural policy
www.iamo.de/forum0/forum2008.html?L=1

June 26

Wie Ethik vermitteln? Modelle, Methoden und Konzepte der Ethikdidaktik (Zurich Switzerland)
www.dialog-ethik.ch

July 3

UFAW Animal Welfare Science conference 2008: Recent Advances in Animal Welfare Science (Birmingham, UK)
Organised by Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW)
www.ufaw.org.uk/quality-of-life.php

July 3-6

Natural Genetic Engineering and Natural Genome Editing (Salzburg, Austria)
Organised by XX
www.naturalgenome.at

July 13-17

ICAR 2008. 16th International Conference on Animal Reproduction (Budapest, Hungary)
Organised by ICAR and The Hungarian Society for Animal Reproduction
www.icar2008.org/index.php

July 14-16

The British Society for Ethical Theory 2008 Conference (Edinburgh, UK)
To be held at University of Edinburgh, UK
www.bset.org.uk/conf.html

July 16-18

International Conference 'Development of Plant Breeding and Crop Management in Time and Space' (Priekuli, Latvia)
priekuli-conference@inbox.lv

July 18-20

ECBB 2008. Fourth Joint European Conference on Behavioural Biology (ECBB) (Dijon, France)
Organized by University of Burgundy, France
www.u-bourgogne.fr/ECBB2008/main.php

July 20-24

ISAG 2008. XXXI Conference of the International Society for Animal Genetics (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)
www.isag2008.nl/

August 5-9

ISAE Dublin 2008. 42nd Congress of the International Society for Applied Ethology (Dublin, Ireland)
www.isae2008.com/index.cfm#

August 12-14

Conference on Bioethics (Egerton University, Kenya)
Organized by the UNESCO Regional Bioethics Documentation and Research Centre at Egerton University, Kenya.
For more information and registration, contact the organizers:
Email: j_kkipkemboi@yahoo.co.uk
Email: mathookoj@yahoo.com

August 24-27

Efficient and Environmentally Friendly Livestock Farming. 59th Annual Meeting of the EAAP (Vilnius, Lithuania)
Organised by European Association for Animal Production
www.eaap2008.org

August 26-29

XIIth Congress of the European Association of Agricultural Economists (EAAE) on 'People, Food and Environments: Global Trends and European Strategies' (Ghent, Belgium)
<http://www.eaae2008.be/default.html>

September 3-8

9th World Congress of Bioethics: The Challenge of Cross-Cultural Bioethics in the 21st Century
(Rijeka - Opatija, Croatia)
www.bioethicsworldcongress.com

September 8-12

6th European Conference on Ecological REstoRation (Gent, Belgium)
Organised by the Research Institute for Nature and Forest and co-organised by the EU Commission (DG Environment), the Flemish Agency of Nature and Forest, and the Flemish Land Agency
www.ser2008.be

September 9-12

18th EUCARPIA General Congress 'Modern Variety Breeding for Present and Future Needs' (Valencia, Spain)
<http://www.eucarpia.org/>

September 10 –13

WAFL-2008, the 4th International Workshop on the Assessment of Animal Welfare at Farm and Group Level (Ghent, Belgium)
Organised by ILVO and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (University Ghent)
www.wafl2008.com

September 16-18

Aquaculture Europe 2008: Resource Management (Krakow, Poland)
The theme - Resource Management - addresses the natural, human and material resources for the sustainable

development of aquaculture

Organised by The European Aquaculture Society (EAS)

www.easonline.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=82&Itemid=1

September 25-27

Annual Meeting of the European Association of Centres of Medical Ethics (EACME): Organizing Bioethics: Challenges for Western, Central, and Eastern Europe (Prague, Czech Rep.)
Organized by EACME
www.eacmeweb.com (click EACME Conference 2008)

Autumn**October 1-3**

Animal welfare at slaughter and killing for disease control – emerging issues and good examples (Gothenburg, Sweden)
The aim of this seminar is to inform and discuss with decision makers in politics and industry about the latest developments in slaughter and killing for disease control with regard to animal welfare, and increase awareness of problems and possibilities.
Organised by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
Contact: Bo Algers, bo.algers@hnh.slu.se

October 12-15

ENDURE first International Conference 'Diversifying Crop Protection' (La Grande Motte, France)
Organised and coordinated by ENDURE
http://www.endure-network.eu/international_conference_2008/

October 20-22

Putting the OIE Standards to Work.
Second OIE Global Conference on Animal Welfare (Cairo, Egypt)
Organised by The World Organisation

for Animal Health (OIE)
www.oie.int/eng/A_AW2008/a_annonce.pdf

October 28-30

The Future of Agriculture – Value or Volume? 5th ‘Horizons in Livestock Sciences’ Conference (Christchurch, New Zealand)
Organised by AgResearch, New Zealand and CSIRO Livestock Industries
www.livestockhorizons.com/index.html

November 4-9

First European Food Congress

Food Production-Nutrition-Healthy Consumers (Ljubljana, Slovenia)
Organized by the European Federation of Food Science and Technology
<http://foodcongress.eu/index.htm>

November 23-28

WCAP 2008. New World; Future World. 10th World Conference on Animal Production (Cape Town, South Africa)
Sponsored by World Association of Animal Production (WAAP)
www.wcap2008.co.za/

Courses

PhD course: Ethics and animals. Connecting the perspectives of science and philosophy

August 24-30 2008
Vilnius, Lithuania
Organised by: NordForsk & the Nordic Network on Agriculture and Food Ethics

Main themes:

- Animals and humans – analysis and relation
 - Animal welfare: Between science and values
 - Ethical issues in animal biotechnology
 - Animals in food production
 - Animal ethics and ethics of nature
- The course will also include sessions with group work, discussions and dissertation presentations.

The course is accredited for 3 ECTS

For program details and other information please see:
www.vetmed.helsinki.fi/english/nordethics

or contact Associate Professor Mickey Gjerris: mgj@life.ku.dk

The 2009 Crane Seminar: Euthanasia as applied to humans and animals

March 23-27 2009
Skara, Sweden
Organised by: Department of Animal Environment and Health, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences

The Crane seminars are post graduate courses which are open to PhD students but also to senior scientists. The seminars usually attract a stimulating mixture of PhD students and more experienced scientists from different disciplines such as biology, psychology, philosophy, medicine, veterinary medicine, and animal science. Crane seminars are organised with 2-3 years interval in Skara in Sweden, each with a specific theme. The idea of the seminar

is to invite three world leading scientists within the theme, each of whom has a slightly different approach to the subject. In the seminar each of the lecturer is offered plenty of time for lecturing and seminars. All lecturers stay for the whole

seminar and can therefore interact with the participants and the other lecturers.

More information is available at:
www.hmh.slu.se

Funding

Capacities

FP7-SCIENCE-IN-SOCIETY-2008-3

Budget: € 4 780 000

Deadline: July 24, 2008 at 17:00:00
(Brussels local time)

Theme: Supporting formal and informal science education in schools as well as through science centres and museums and other relevant means

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=usersite.FP7DetailsCallPage&CALL_ID=117

Cooperation

ERA-NET / ERA-NET PLUS Call 2008

Identifier: FP7-ERANET-2008-RTD

Publication Date: November 30, 2007

Budget: € 29 300 000

Deadline: August 12, 2008 at 17:00:00
(Brussels local time)

Themes: [...] Socio-economic sciences and Humanities

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=UserSite.FP7DetailsCallPage&CALL_ID=87

Research Conferences

2008 Call for Proposals for Conferences to be held in 2010

Themes: [...] Social Sciences and Humanities

Deadline: September 15, 2008, midnight CET

<http://www.esf.org/activities/esf-conferences/call-for-proposals.html>

DAAD (Germans only)

DAAD funds the further academic and personal qualification of outstanding German students, interns and student trainees, (post)graduates, young academics and researchers.

<http://www.daad.de/ausland/index.en.html>

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Editors and themes for next issues

Issue-editor September 2008: Tassos Michalopoulos, "Ethics & political consumerism"

Issue-editor December 2008: Herwig Grimm, "Practice versus theory"

Issue-editor March 2009: team Nottingham, "Veterinary ethics"

Issue-editor June 2009: Mattias Pasquali, "Ethical merits of agriculture types"

Deadline for the next issue: August 15, 2008

You are kindly invited to send any relevant contributions, conference calls, publication reviews, etc. to the editors.