

## Reports and Comments

### Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC) Opinion on CCTV in slaughterhouses

The UK Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC), an expert committee of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), has published its Opinion on CCTV in Slaughterhouses in response to increasing pressure from lobby groups and others for the introduction of mandatory CCTV use in slaughterhouses.

The report acknowledges that a significant proportion of slaughterhouses already use CCTV (covering 90–98% of animals slaughtered in 2013) and that its use has grown significantly in recent years, driven by support for the technology from NGOs, farm assurance schemes and retailers. Petitions and Early Day Motions calling for mandatory installation of CCTV in slaughterhouses have been put to Government in recent years but none have led to a formal debate or legislation.

The Opinion covers a range of issues including the drivers for CCTV use, the benefits and limitations of CCTV use, the challenges for business operators installing and using CCTV, the legal and ethical issues of observing workers remotely and the long-term impact of CCTV use. The Opinion was based on a written consultation, information from relevant industry and legislative bodies and the published scientific literature.

FAWC believes that CCTV offers a range of benefits for both observation and recording of slaughterhouse operations. The benefits include the ability to store footage for lengthy periods of time, the potential for footage to be used as a training tool, the ability to monitor inaccessible places (eg inside gas-stunning systems) and the fact that CCTV is unobtrusive to both operations and the animals. Significantly, it also increases public trust in slaughterhouse procedures.

FAWC acknowledges that there are limitations to the use of CCTV and emphasise that the technology cannot replace direct oversight of personnel especially during, for example, training. Major limitations include image quality, the breadth of vision (ie the context), the security of recorded footage and the potential for inconsistencies in the analysis of footage. It is also as yet unproven whether CCTV results in any improvement in welfare compliance.

Emphasising that CCTV should only be used “as an adjunct and accompaniment to physical observation and supervisory presences” and that the installation of CCTV should not be used as a reason for any reduction in physical observation, FAWC concludes that CCTV should be installed in all areas of the slaughterhouse where live animals are kept and where animals are stunned and killed.

**Farm Animal Welfare Committee (FAWC) Opinion on CCTV in Slaughterhouses** (February 2015). A4, 22 pages. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fawc-opinion-on-cctv-in-slaughterhouses>.

*NR Williams,*

*HSA*

### AWIN welfare assessment protocols: donkeys, goats, horses, sheep and turkeys

The culmination of a four-year long project co-funded by the European Commission, these five assessment protocols have been produced by a network of animal welfare scientists, veterinarians and other stakeholders working across Europe and elsewhere, for the Animal Welfare Indicators (AWIN) project.

Building on previous work by the Welfare Quality® project (<http://www.welfarequalitynetwork.net>), AWIN sought to develop on-farm protocols for assessing the welfare of farmed animals not covered in this previous project, with a particular focus on pain assessment and recognition. This was challenging because the species that the AWIN project addressed: donkeys, goats, horses, sheep and turkeys are less well researched than those of the Welfare Quality® (pigs, poultry, dairy and beef cattle). In addition, the conditions in which the species are kept are more heterogeneous.

Much of the methodology, concepts and use of language in these protocols will be familiar to those who have read those produced by Welfare Quality®. Each AWIN protocol is broken down into (at least) five sections. The material contained within the Introduction, Aims and Preliminary information is, in the main, similar for each protocol and deals with the preliminary information that is relevant for applying the protocol. The real core of each protocol are the 4th and 5th sections. In the 4th section, the assessment protocol for the species in question is outlined, both for an initial quick screen (level 1 assessment) and a second more in-depth and robust assessment. In the 5th, the procedure by which an outcome for the assessed farm is generated is detailed, including the decision process to determine whether it is necessary to conduct a more in-depth (level 2) welfare assessment. The protocols also contain Appendices in which the recording sheets to collect data are given.

The protocols are animal-based and seek to assess the welfare of the relevant species predominantly through observation of groups of individuals — although there are elements of handling in most of the protocols.

The assessment protocols are quite specific, with age and/or production goal influencing their validity. For example, the donkey protocol is suitable only for those over a year old, the horse for horses over five years old that have been used for different activities, and the sheep for adult females over a year old kept for milk and/or meat.

Each of the protocols gives advice on how to prepare to carry out the assessment and details how the protocol should be carried out, including how many animals should be assessed (dependent upon numbers kept on the farm), which assessments should be carried out outside or within

an enclosure and the order that different indicators of welfare should be assessed. Even though many of the same indicators are used to collect information on individual and group welfare for most of the species, the order in which they appear in the assessment protocol may differ.

Each of the indicators used to assess welfare are placed within the framework of four welfare principles and 12 welfare criteria developed in the Welfare Quality® project. There are 23 individual indicators listed for sheep, which include: body condition (Welfare principle: Good feeding; Welfare criteria: Appropriate nutrition) fleece cleanliness (Good housing; Comfort around resting), body and head lesions (Good health; Absence of injuries), familiar human approach test (Appropriate behaviour; Good human-animal relationship), etc. Of these, only 15 are used in an initial assessment of welfare, with the extra indicators being used only if it becomes clear that a second in-depth assessment is required because of concerns highlighted in the first.

For each indicator that is to be used in the assessment, a description of it, how it is to be used to assess welfare and how it is to be scored are given, with illustrations as appropriate.

The 5th stage, 'Outcome of welfare assessment' requires the data collected during the initial assessment to be entered into an online data set, via a downloadable app. This then allows a comparison to be made against a reference population and an objective visual and descriptive output to be generated for each indicator, by which the farmer can see how they compare against others. From this, and based upon performance against the reference population, it may be necessary to conduct a more in-depth assessment. For goats, a farm that had animals showing indicators worse than the worst 5% of farms in the reference population for the indicators abscesses, improper disbudding, hair coat condition and/or severe lameness would trigger a level 2 assessment.

Clearly, the length of time it takes to carry out each assessment is an issue and important in encouraging their use. The following are listed as expected times for an initial first-level assessment: goats — 90 minutes for each pen assessed; sheep — 40 minutes for each assessed sub-group; horse and donkeys — 5 minutes per individual. Level 2 assessments are more time-consuming because they involve more indicators and more animals.

The protocol that differs most from the others is the turkey protocol, which assesses the welfare of male and female turkeys reared intensively 1 or 2 weeks before slaughter. It uses an assessment methodology based on transects through the houses in which the turkeys are kept and includes indicators that might be considered to be more subjective than in the other protocols. In addition, unlike

the 2-level assessment process of the other protocols, the turkey protocol does not have a more intensive welfare assessment protocol to be followed if a concern is highlighted by the initial data gathering exercise. Rather, through use of a data recording app that has been developed — the i-WatchTurkey app — a rapid comparison against historical data is made and the app flags up a warning message if the mean incidence of an indicator is significantly above that of the historical mean.

It is worth noting for those who are looking to use these protocols, that each has at its start a disclaimer, prominent in which is the need for training in their use: 'No individual or organisation can be considered capable of applying this method in a robust, repeatable and valid way without appropriate training. Untrained assessors should not use this protocol because the data obtained will not be valid.' In the first instance this training should be sought from the teams that compiled each protocol.

All these protocols are works in progress and it is the intention of AWIN to revise and modify these in light of their use and as more knowledge is gained. More details of the other elements and outcomes of the AWIN project can be found on their website: <http://www.animal-welfare-indicators.net/site/>.

**AWIN Welfare Assessment Protocol for Donkeys** (March 2015). A4, 69 pages. DOI: 10.13130/AWIN\_DONKEYS\_2015. Published by AWIN. Available for download from the Animal Welfare Indicators website: <http://www.animal-welfare-indicators.net/site/>.

**AWIN Welfare Assessment Protocol for Goats** (March 2015). A4, 70 pages. DOI: 10.13130/AWIN\_GOATS\_2015. Published by AWIN. Available for download from the Animal Welfare Indicators website: <http://www.animal-welfare-indicators.net/site/>.

**AWIN Welfare Assessment Protocol for Horses** (March 2015). A4, 80 pages. DOI: 10.13130/AWIN\_HORSES\_2015. Published by AWIN. Available for download from the Animal Welfare Indicators website: <http://www.animal-welfare-indicators.net/site/>.

**AWIN Welfare Assessment Protocol for Sheep** (March 2015). A4, 72 pages. DOI: 10.13130/AWIN\_SHEEP\_2015. Published by AWIN. Available for download from the Animal Welfare Indicators website: <http://www.animal-welfare-indicators.net/site/>.

**AWIN Welfare Assessment Protocol for Turkeys** (March 2015). A4, 45 pages. DOI: 10.13130/AWIN\_TURKEYS\_2015. Published by AWIN. Available for download from the Animal Welfare Indicators website: <http://www.animal-welfare-indicators.net/site/>.

*SM Wickens,*

*UFAW*