

Welfare standards for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries

The ASEAN-Australia Development Cooperation Program (AADCP) is producing new animal welfare standards for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, (ASEAN) countries, and a recent module has been published on the welfare of layers, broilers and ducks. The module's justification for the guidelines is that not only is global trade in chicken and chicken products increasing as trade becomes freer, but also that consumers are increasingly requiring assurance that chicken products are produced and handled in a manner that provides good welfare and does not harm the environment. These societal changes have resulted in retailers wanting industry compliance with good animal husbandry practices (GAHP) and increasing legal protection for animal welfare and other issues.

The GAHP guidelines and standards are intended to cover more than just animal welfare so this particular module also includes issues such as bio-security, husbandry, the environment, and health and safety of farm workers.

The guidelines begin by providing the OIE definitions of animal welfare and the OIE guiding principles for animal welfare. Further sections specify in detail animal welfare standards for broiler chickens, layer hens and ducks and how management should be provided to deliver environmental sustainability. The standards are largely provided as performance standards, for example that "Temperature in sheds must be maintained within a range that ensures good health and welfare of the chickens" rather than the engineering standard approach of specifying an acceptable temperature range. The document also provides general considerations for poultry transportation and slaughter, and animal welfare standards and management approaches with respect to environmental sustainability for chicken and duck farms. Annexes provide additional information including a self-assessment checklist for poultry producers.

ASEAN Good Animal Husbandry Practices (GAHP) – Animal Welfare and Environmental Sustainability Module for Layers, Broilers and Ducks (2017). A4, 111 pages. Available at <http://aadcp2.org/wp-content/uploads/Final-ASEAN-GAHP-Module.pdf>.

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Report on the incidence of bovine tuberculosis in cattle in 2013–2016

The UK Animal Plant & Health Agency (APHA) has published a Report on TB incidence in cattle comparing three UK areas in Gloucestershire, Somerset, and Dorset where badger culling licences have been issued with ten comparison areas where no licences were issued. The incidence of TB in cattle was also monitored in 2-km buffer

areas surrounding the intervention areas and compared to incidence in similarly defined areas around the comparison areas. All areas were compared for the three years prior to culling and the first three years since culling began in Gloucestershire and Somerset, and the first year since culling began in Dorset. The primary outcome used to compare the three areas were TB breakdowns per 100 herd years at risk unadjusted for additional factors which affect TB risk. TB breakdowns were defined as having occurred when more than one reactor was found at a TB test or only one reactor was found at a TB test and:

- Lesions that are typical of TB are identified at the post mortem inspection;
- A laboratory test has demonstrated the presence of *Mycobacterium bovis* (bovine TB);
- The herd has been classified as OTFW in the previous three years;
- The herd is next to another herd which has been classified as OTFW in the previous six months;
- A disease risk to that herd has been identified by the APHA; and
- Any combination of the above circumstances.

The analysis showed different distributions of TB breakdown incidents between the intervention areas. In one area (Gloucestershire), the incidence rate remained lower in the intervention area than the comparisons area while, in another, the incidence rate prior to culling was higher than in comparison areas, although this declined after culling. Overall, however, there were no significant differences between the combined central areas of the intervention areas and the comparison areas or between buffer areas of intervention and comparison areas.

The Report draws attention to the complexities of assessing effectiveness, noting "The long-term value of information from monitoring industry-led culling will depend on the conduct of the cull, the number of areas eventually licensed and the extent to which other parts of the TB control policy remain stable. Continued delivery of the intervention in these areas, and further roll out of the intervention to other areas will enable better assessments to be made of the longer-term impact of the policy on TB incidence in cattle." The Report also points to the need to control for confounding factors in future analyses of longer data-sets.

Report on the Incidence of Bovine Tuberculosis in Cattle in 2013–2016: Three Years' Follow-up in Areas of Somerset and Gloucestershire and One Year of Follow-up in Dorset of Industry-led Badger Control (September 2017). A4, 47 pages. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643492/tb-badger-control-third-year-analysis.pdf.

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