



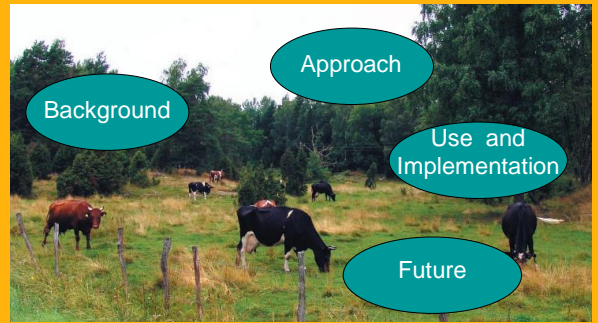
# The European Welfare Quality® Project

Harry Blokhuis

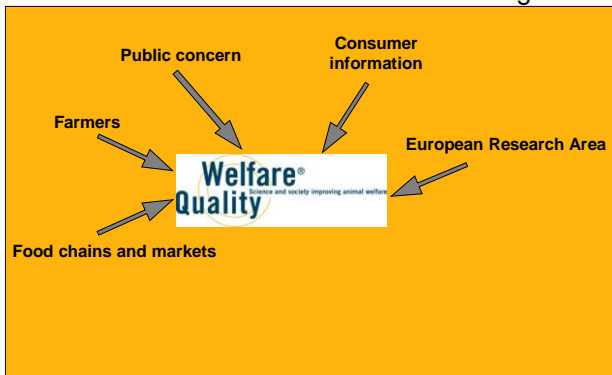
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden



## The Welfare Quality® project



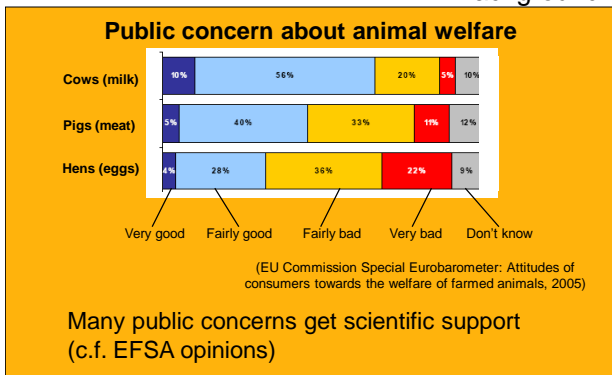
## Background



## Background



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## Background



**General public / Consumers**

- Transparent and animal friendly production
- Product information/guarantees on animal welfare



**Farmers**

- want to take good care of their animals
- recognise the link between good welfare and good economics
- objective system for welfare assessment in EU (worldwide)
- practical improvement strategies



**Food chains and markets**

In quality **food chains and markets**, animal welfare is increasingly an important attribute of an overall conception of food quality

- Measuring
- Accountability
- Communication/marketing



**European Research Area (ERA)**

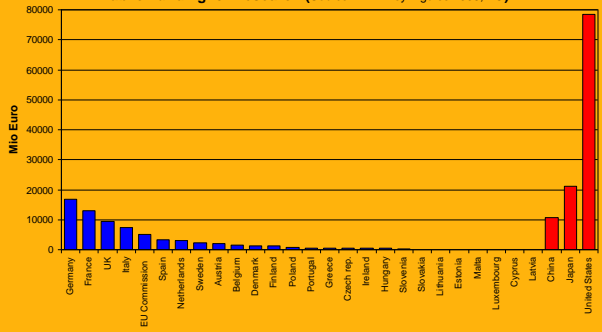
Commissioner Potocnik (May 2005):

*Europe wants to sustain quality of life, its social standards, environmental standards and natural resources, in a global and increasingly competitive environment.*

So we can only compete through knowledge and innovation

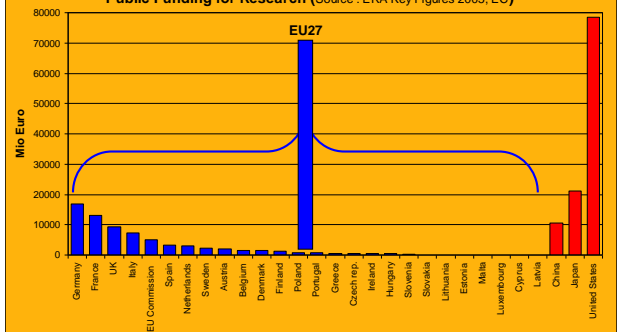
**Need for collaborative research**

Public Funding for Research (Source : ERA Key Figures 2005, EC)

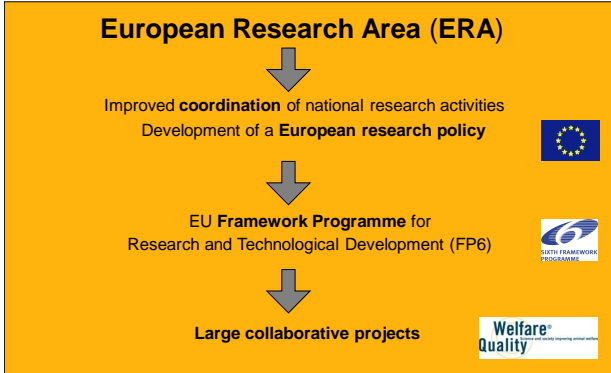


**Need for collaborative research**

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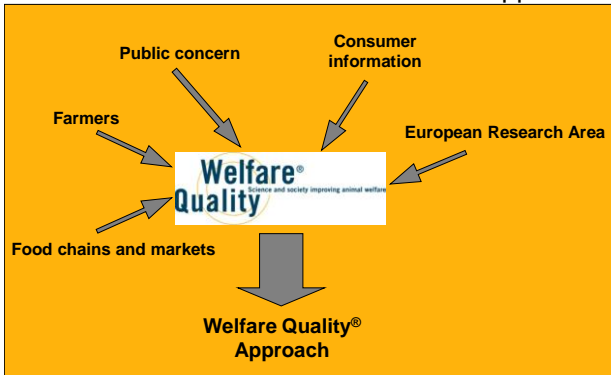
Background



The Welfare Quality® project



Approach



Approach

First discussions of what later became Welfare Quality® started in mid 2002



Approach

Main aims/deliverables:



- Standardised on-farm welfare assessment method
- Standardise animal welfare information method
- Practical strategies to improve animal welfare
- Integration of appropriate expertise in Europe

Integration of animal welfare in the food quality chain:  
from public concerns to improved welfare and transparent quality

Approach

Combining essential scientific expertise



Consumer concern and food choice related to animal welfare

Measuring and monitoring farm animal welfare



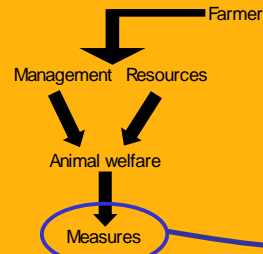
Welfare Quality® Consortium

The Welfare Quality® scientific network

- approx. 250 scientists
- 44 organisations
- 17 countries
- approx. 18 MEURO (15 MEURO from EU)

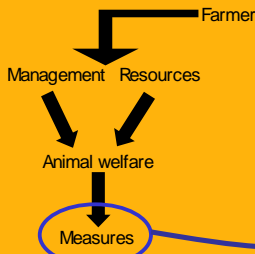


'Thinking model'



Until now mainly measures of design  
 floor type, feeding and drinking space, density

'Thinking model'



Welfare Quality:  
 Animal based indicators

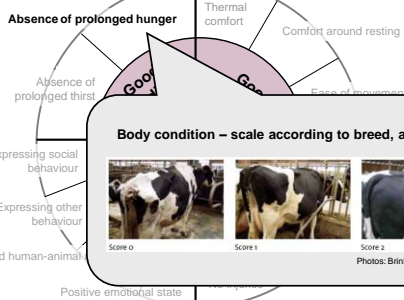
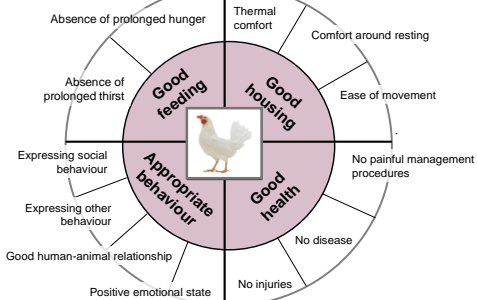
Welfare assessment measures

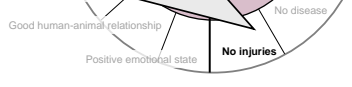
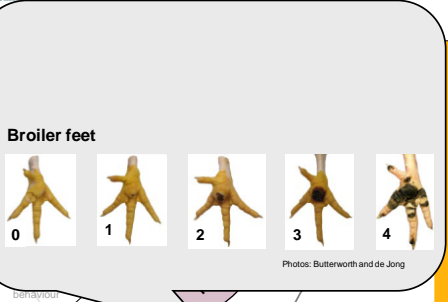
Since animal welfare is a multi-dimensional concept measures should:

- cover different domains (nutrition, health, comfort, expression of behaviour,)
- address worries from all stakeholders

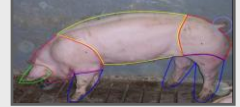
Following these principles Welfare Quality scientists defined 12 criteria (grouped under 4 principles)

Four principles and 12 criteria

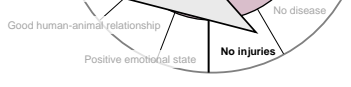




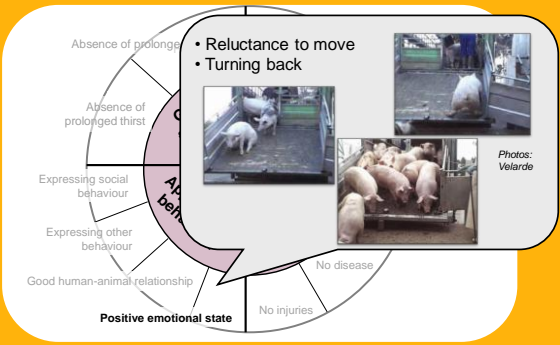
- Wounds
- Scratches
- Location



Ears



Approach



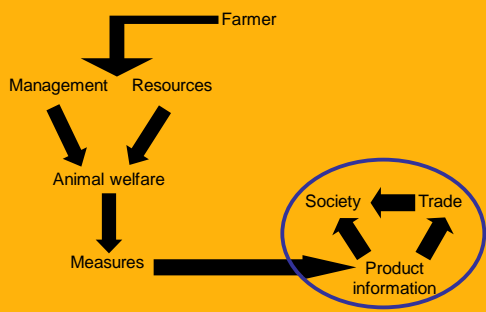
Approach

Welfare principles, criteria and measures defined and described



Approach

'Thinking model'



Approach

Product information

Integration of parameters is necessary

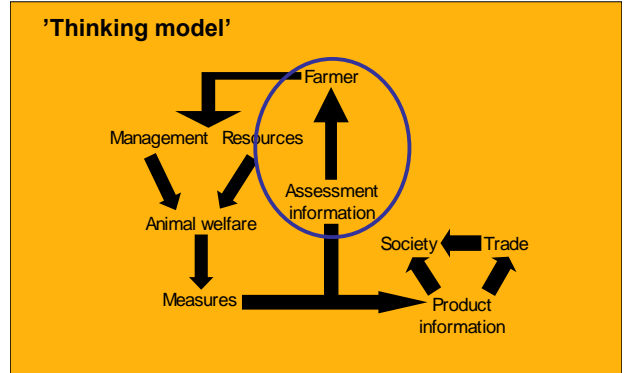
- Appealing and transparent (marketing)
- Science based



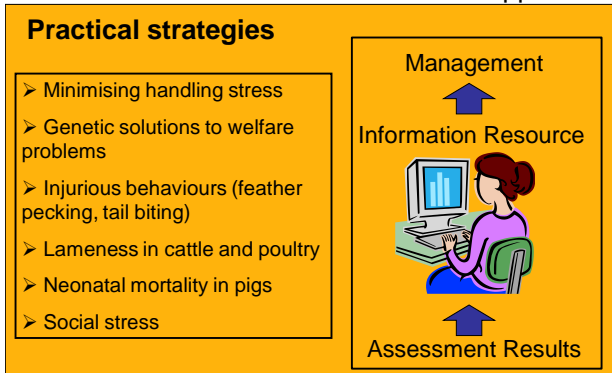
Approach



Approach



Approach



The Welfare Quality® project



Use and implementation

- On-farm welfare management
- Labeling special products

Use and implementation



- Trends:
- No generic labelling for AW
  - AW as integral part of total quality concept ('bundling')
  - AW linked to corporate image (and branding)

Use and implementation

- On-farm welfare management
- Labeling (special) products
- Corporate image

Use and implementation

Corporate image



Use and implementation

- On-farm welfare management
- Labeling (special) products
- Corporate Image
- Legislation
  - Ban bad designs and practices
  - WQ assessment
- Integration in existing quality assurance systems/schemes

The Welfare Quality® project



Future

More research???

Yes, of course!



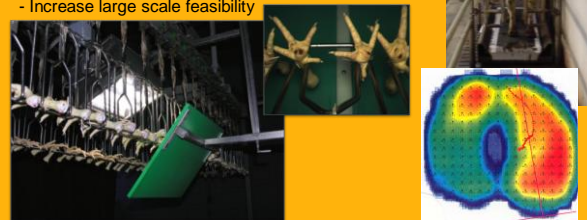
But, this can build on a firm Welfare Quality® basis:

- Widely accepted principles and criteria for animal welfare;
- A working system and process for on-farm welfare measuring and assessment;
- Insights into the European diversity of consumer and public attitudes;
- Insights into possible implementation and market strategies and farmer acceptance;
- Established scientific networking and collaboration

Future

Automated recording to:

- Save time
- Further improve accuracy
- More frequent (continuous) recording
- Increase large scale feasibility



**'Maintenance'**

- Assessment protocols are 'living documents'
- Need upgrading on basis of new research and development
- Maintain support tools (e.g. algorithms, information resource)
- Ensuring solid acceptance among stakeholders



**The Welfare Quality® project ended 31/12 2009**

Active involvement of other actors/stakeholders is essential to use, improve and implement the results



[www.animalwelfareplatform.eu](http://www.animalwelfareplatform.eu)



**Initial Partners**

- Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences
- Royal Ahold
- Farm Animal Initiative
- Eurogroup for Animals
- McDonald s Europe
- Amadori
- Danish Meat Association
- Inalca
- Noble Foods
- Marine Harvest
- Grupo Vall
- Autogrill
- Coop Italia
- Animal Sciences Group (ASG)



**Thank you!!**



[www.welfarequality.net](http://www.welfarequality.net)