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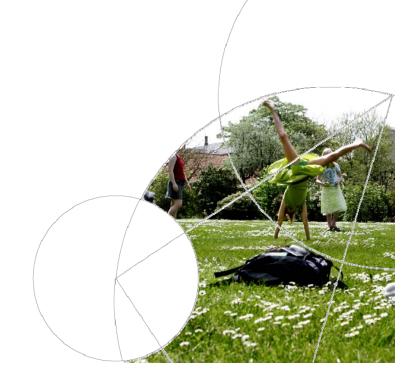


Faculty of Life Sciences



Drawing a Transparent Line between Acceptable and Unacceptable Welfare in Livestock Production

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Agenda

- To present the hypotheses of a recent Danish research project
- To present a sketch of a recent development in the regulation of animal welfare
 - In particular: A change of focus from the individual to the population



3 Hypotheses

- It is possible to make a valid an accurate risk-based identification of farms with a high level of welfare problems based on limited information (most from central data registers)
- 2. It is possible, by combining reflection on animal ethics, economics, legal requirements and measurement theory, to set up transparent models of how to draw the line between acceptable and unacceptable welfare; and
- 3. It is possible to design training courses for farmers with unacceptable welfare leading to increased understanding and more far-reaching and lasting improvements than legal orders from the authorities.



Danish Regulation of Animal Welfare

Prescribes a set of rights:

- <u>Positive rights</u>: An animal has right to care
 - Animals should be kept, such that their "physiological, behavioral and health care needs" are fulfilled
- <u>Negative rights</u>: Animals should be protected against
 - "pain, suffering, anxiety, durable injuries and serious harm"
- The key word is that every individual animal should be kept
 properly



Acceptable vs. Unacceptable

- The problem of distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable welfare is a problem of determining when the keeping of an animal is *improper*.
- Proper keeping of animals is defined in terms of a number of minimal requirements, e.g. concerning
 - Housing
 - Transport
 - Handling of diseases
 - Etc.



Sanctions

- Veterinarians have the duty to report serious cases of improper handling to the police
- The authorities perform on-farm control on selected samples
- In serious cases, the farmer can be punished with fine, or in case of grave mistreatment, prison
- In less serious cases, the authorities can erect a decree ordering the farmer to correct his handling



Perceived Insufficiencies of the Standard Regulation

- A number of welfare problems seem to persist in industrialized farming
- Minimal requirements to physical conditions of housing etc. are by themselves not sufficient to ensure an acceptable level of welfare
 - There is great variation between the handling skills of farmers
- A number of cases escape the regulation
 - Insufficient reporting
 - Strong requirements of evidence



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New Policy Instruments

- Better surveillance of actual herd welfare
- Means to involve the farmer
 - Own control
 - Health care courses and plans
- Risk-based control by the authorities



Adaption of a goal

- In some cases, initiatives have been taken to minimize specific problems
 - (Salmonella)
 - The burning with ammonia of chicken feet
 - Shoulder wounds in sows
- These goals are concerned with the total population of a farm
- The problem of distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable welfare here becomes a problem of determining a line between acceptable and unacceptable prevalence of the problem in question.
 - There is often a trade-off between seriousness of the problem vs. the frequency



Underlying Values

- It is considered more cost-effective to concentrate resources on farms with problems
- It is considered important to involves and motivate the farmer
- The surveillance and control is aimed at making action plans rather than prosecuting the farmer



Value Conflicts

- The new policy instruments are considered to be an addition to existing regulation
- However, in theory there might be a conflict between the concern for the individual and the concern for the population
 - The goal-directed initiatives seem to accept some prevalence of welfare problems



Preliminary Conclusions

- Goal-directed initiatives seem to be increasing in numbers all over Europe
- There are good reasons behind looking at farm-level of welfare, involving the farmers etc.
- The change in underlying value focus (from protecting the individual to minimizing certain problems) should be better analyzed and understood.

