

Anonymous

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Fitness check and revision of current legislation:

In 2020, the European Commission adopted its [Farm to Fork Strategy](#) (F2F), to promote a shift towards a [sustainable food system](#).

Because animal welfare is a cornerstone of sustainable food production, Farm to Fork committed the Commission to revising the current EU animal welfare legislation by 2023, and to consider options for animal welfare labelling.

The purpose is to improve animal welfare and broaden the scope of the legislation, by aligning it with the latest scientific evidence, current political priorities and public expectations – all while making the legislation easier to enforce.

The EU legislation under review is:

- a [Directive concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes](#)
- 4 Directives laying down minimum standards for protecting:
 - [laying hens](#)
 - [broilers](#)
 - [pigs](#)
 - [calves](#)
- a [Regulation on animal transport](#)
- a [Regulation on the protection of animals at the time of killing](#).

These EU acts regulate animal welfare at farm level, during transport and at slaughter, and cover animals – including fish – that are bred and kept for farming purposes, as well as cats and dogs that are transported for commercial purposes.

The acts do not cover wild animals (except when they are killed for the purpose of depopulation), experimental or laboratory animals (except when they are being transported) or any invertebrate animals.

The goal is to improve the welfare of animals while ensuring sustainable production and fair competition for EU businesses in the single market.

In 2020 the Commission performed an evaluation ('fitness check') of the existing legislation, to assess what needed to be changed, followed in 2021 by the start of an impact assessment for the possible changes.

This consultation would like to know your views on the existing animal welfare rules, as well the changes we are suggesting.

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
* Compared to 25 years ago, there is more uniform protection of farmed animals across EU countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Compared to 25 years ago, more comprehensive protection of farmed animals (in terms of species protected) has been reached across the EU	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Requirements set by EU rules on animal welfare are easy to apply and it is clear how they should be applied	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Increased animal welfare has contributed to a more sustainable food system, for instance by allowing for healthier animals to enter the food chain	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Having common rules on animal welfare has facilitated trade and improved competition in Europe – for instance by removing obstacles to trading animals and products of animal origin in the single market	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
* Abiding by (certain) animal welfare requirements set in EU rules is not (too) burdensome and/or costly for producers (e.g. farmers)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Abiding by (certain) animal welfare requirements set in EU rules is not (too) burdensome and/or costly for processors (e.g. slaughterhouses)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Abiding by (certain) animal welfare requirements set in EU rules is not (too) burdensome and/or costly for retailers	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Abiding by (certain) animal welfare requirements set in EU rules is not disproportionately burdensome and/or costly for small/medium businesses (e.g. slaughterhouses, transport companies, retailers)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Rules and requirements on animal welfare are not (too) complex for consumers to understand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* EU rules and requirements on animal welfare impose extra costs on consumers when buying animal welfare-compliant products	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Level of information on animal welfare standards in the EU

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
* I feel sufficiently informed about the conditions under which animals are farmed in the EU (i.e. how they are treated during the breeding period)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* I feel sufficiently informed about the conditions under which farmed animals are transported in the EU	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* I feel sufficiently informed about the conditions under which farmed animals are transported beyond EU borders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* I feel sufficiently informed about the conditions under which farmed animals are slaughtered in the EU	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Possible changes to EU animal welfare legislation:

4. Is the current level of animal welfare in the EU sufficient to:

* - Ensure adequate and uniform protection of all animal species in need?

Yes

- No
- Do not know

* - Ensure that businesses can compete fairly across the EU?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

* - Meet future challenges in relation to sustainable food production, such as climate change and biodiversity loss?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

If you have replied NO to any of the questions above, which of the actions listed below could help improve animal welfare in the EU?

	Very important	Important	Moderately important
More inspections and controls by national authorities to improve compliance with existing rules	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve existing rules on welfare requirements for pigs, calves, laying hens and broilers	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cover additional animal species, alongside the ones that are already protected by specific legislation (pigs, calves, laying hens and broilers)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase the use of modern technology to better monitor the welfare of animals during transport (e.g. cameras, satellite navigation systems, artificial intelligence)?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase the use of scientific indicators, to better assess the welfare of animals (e.g. injury rates other than foot-pad dermatitis)	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve training for people handling animals, so they are able to adopt practices that improve welfare (e.g. for farmers, slaughterhouse staff and drivers)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide better information to consumers on animal welfare conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Animal welfare during transport:

Current EU legislation in this field regulates the transport of live animals between EU countries and requires

checks on animals entering or leaving the EU.

To prevent injury and/or unnecessary suffering, all animals transported must be fit to travel, sufficient height and floor space must be available, and water, feed and rest must be provided when needed and within certain intervals.

For long journeys (i.e. over 8 hours) between EU countries and to destinations outside the EU, transporters must have the necessary authorisation(s), documentation, satellite navigation system and contingency plans for emergencies. National authorities must carry out checks at the point of departure and on a random basis thereafter.

5. To (better) protect animals during long journeys (over 8 hours):

	Yes	No	Do not know
* Maximum journey times should be introduced	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* More specific requirements for different animal species are needed	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Technical requirements are needed for the different means of transport used for long journeys (e.g. satellite monitoring, ventilation and water supply)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. Given the difficulties ensuring compliance with the rules beyond EU borders:

	Yes	No	Do not know
* Exports of live animals to non-EU countries for breeding should be prohibited (after a transition period)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Export of live animals to non-EU countries for slaughter should be prohibited (after a transition period)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Exports of live animals should be limited only to non-EU countries whose requirements on animal welfare are at least equivalent to those in the EU	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Exports of live animals to non-EU countries should be allowed only under stricter control conditions (e.g. at departure, at any stage of a long journey and at EU exit points)	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. To improve welfare for unweaned calves and other vulnerable animals, such as pregnant cows:

	Yes	No	Do not know
* The transport of unweaned calves and other vulnerable animals should be prohibited (after a transition period)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Transport of unweaned calves and other vulnerable animals should be allowed only if the welfare and the control requirements are stricter	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* The transport of unweaned calves and other vulnerable animals should be limited to 8 hours	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Animal welfare at farm level:

Directive 98/58/EC provides **general rules** to protect animals and fish of all species that are kept for the production of food, wool, skin or fur, or for other farming purposes.

In addition, more **specific requirements** have been laid down in the 4 Directives on pigs, calves, laying hens and broilers.

Since the EU legislation on the welfare of farm animals lays down **minimum standards**, national authorities are free to adopt more stringent rules (provided they are compatible with EU law).

*** 8. Should specific requirements for extra animal species be introduced?**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

If YES, for which species/categories of animals:

- Dairy cows
- Beef cattle
- Sheep
- Goats
- Horses
- Minks
- Raccoon dogs
- Foxes
- Cats
- Dogs
- Rabbits
- Chicken pullets
- Chicken breeders
- Turkeys
- Ducks
- Geese

- Quail
- Farmed salmon
- Farmed trout
- Farmed carp
- Farmed sea bass
- Farmed sea bream
- Farmed European eel
- Invertebrate aquatic animals such as lobsters, crustaceans

9. Currently, certain procedures are only allowed in the EU under specific circumstances and/or if not performed routinely.

How do you think the following mutilation practices should be addressed?

	Prohibition	Additional restrictions	No action needed	Do not know
* Tail-docking (removing part of the pig's tail, to reduce the risk of tail biting in older pigs)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Castration (removing pigs' genitals, to avoid boar taint)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Dehorning (removing calves' horns, to avoid injuries)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Beak trimming (removing part of the beak of birds, to avoid feather pecking among birds)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. On 30 June 2021, the Commission announced that it will propose to phase out and finally prohibit the use of cages for the species listed below, in response to the European Citizens' Initiative "End the cage-age".

What should be the maximum time allowed for this phasing out?

	Maximum 5 years	Maximum 10 years	Maximum 15 years	Do not know
* Sows (farrowing crates and sow stalls)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Laying hens	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Calves (individual pens)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Rabbits	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Pullets	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Broiler breeders	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Layer breeders	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Quail	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Ducks	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Geese	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

*** 11. Should imported products be subject to particular welfare requirements, such as “cage-free”?**

- Yes
 No
 Do not know

If YES, should these requirements be:

	Yes	No	Do not know
The same as those that apply to EU production?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Equivalent to those applied to EU production?	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Specific labelling rules to allow consumers to identify products produced under EU welfare conditions?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Animal welfare at the time of killing:

12. Current EU legislation does not contain specific requirements for killing of farmed fish.

For other species, it provides a list of authorised methods, some of which have been scientifically challenged on animal welfare grounds – like the use of carbon dioxide at high concentration for pigs, and electrical water baths for poultry.

The use of electric prods to move animals in slaughterhouses is still allowed under certain conditions.

To what extent would you agree to the following statements?

	Yes	No	Do not know
* Electrical water bath stunning for poultry should be prohibited (after a transition period)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Carbon dioxide (CO2) at high concentration, as a stunning method for pigs, should be prohibited (after a transition period)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* The use of electric prods in slaughterhouses should be prohibited (after a transition period)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Specific rules for killing farmed fish should be adopted, to protect their welfare	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* The systematic killing of one-day old male chicks should be prohibited (after a transition period)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Animal welfare labelling:

*** 13. Would an EU animal welfare label be a useful tool for informing consumers on the conditions in which animals are treated?**

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

If YES, should an EU label apply:

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
To all products of animal origin on the market?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Only to products of animal origin for which welfare standards going beyond the minimum EU legal requirements are applied?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If YES, should such an EU animal welfare label:

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
Be limited to indicating farming methods that use cage systems or not?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Be based on broader animal welfare criteria, including requirements on animal transport and slaughter?	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Is there any other comment you would like to add?

Contact

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