

The European livestock sector and animal care:

Options explored by French cattle and dairy producers



French Dairy Farmers Union

Jean-Marc Bèche



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European livestock sector and animal care

1st part

Background



French Dairy Farmers Union

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P L A N

Background

- The relation between humans and animals, a real dilemma... particularly in Europe
- A few key figures to help understand the strong bond that exists between the European population and animals
- Public opinion and modern livestock raising practices
- Animal care regulations as they apply to farm animal production



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P L A N

Background

The relation between humans and animals, a real dilemma... particularly in Europe



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What has happened to the relation between humans and animals in modern livestock operations?

Often viewed as "factories", "artificial", "inhumane" !!!...

In other words, "things were so much better in the old days"



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What has happened to the relation between humans and animals in modern livestock operations?

Raising livestock nowadays: a strange occupation!

It is both an ancient activity and a high tech activity, whereby the stakeholder remains in direct contact with the living, the environment, the weather... and with animals, but that are not viewed as pets



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What has happened to the relation between humans and animals in modern livestock operations?

Raising animals to produce food, and to make a living in the process – is that something of the past, an activity no longer acceptable ("barbaric")?

French cattle producers started from that premise/accusation when they decided to make their occupation and their animal care practices better known, in particular with regard to the care they provide to their animals



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Background

A few key figures to explain the strong bond that unite Europeans citizens and animals



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"Europe, a true story of animals and people"

461 million inhabitants


(EU-25 member countries, 2005, Source Eurostat)

of which **63 million live in France**
53 million pets
(9 million cats, 8 million dogs, 2 million rodents)

35 % of French citizens own at least one dog, and 20% own at least 2 cats



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"Europe, a true story of animals and people"

461 million European citizens in the EU-25


and **86 million heads of cattle** (22% in France) including 23 dairy animals (France: 17%)

150 million hogs (Fr : ???%)


90 million sheep (Fr : 10%)

12 million goats (Fr : 10%)

or over 330 million heads of livestock



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"Europe, a true story about animals and people" and about producing food from animal products"

Meat consumption

(GIRA Meat Club, 2005)

86 kg/person/year

(pork meat making up half of that)

Dairy products

(UE15, 2003)

255 kg/person/year

(world average: 81kg per person)

The vast majority of products coming from Europe are also consumed in Europe



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Background


Public opinion and modern farm animal care practices



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Comment nous voient-ils ?

P U B L I C O P I N I O N

Results of recent surveys and studies

What do citizens of Europe and France think of farm animal welfare?



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P U B L I C O P I N I O N

Welfare Quality Programme: Eurobaromètre, March 2007 "Attitudes of EU citizens towards animal welfare"

Do you consider that you know the conditions in which farm animals are raised in your country?
 (28% NO NOTHING – 57% YES SOMEWHAT – 12% YES VERY WELL)

Do you think that farm animal welfare conditions need to be improved in your country?
 (77% YES)




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P U B L I C O P I N I O N



Welfare Quality Programme: Eurobarometer, March 2007

In general, what do you think of the level of animal care in the following types of animal production?


Egg layers:
 32% good or very good / 58% bad or very bad

- Hogs:
 45% good or very good / 44% bad or very bad

- Dairy cows:
 66% good or very good / 20% bad 5% very bad

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P U B L I C O P I N I O N

What do French citizens think of the welfare of dairy animals?

CSA survey/Cidil/NDPF:

- Representative sample of 1000 French citizens
- 20 minutes phone survey conducted in February 2006
- 5 years after a similar survey conducted in 2001




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PUBLIC OPINION

Sondage APF/Cidill/FNPL 2006



How many dairy cows are kept on farms?
 Perception is clear but "offset"

According to respondents, there are on average:

4 cows in a small farm operation

15 cows in a large farm operation

In fact, in 2006, there were on average 40 cows

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PUBLIC OPINION

What do French citizens think of the welfare of dairy animals?

2006 APF Survey, a positive trend was noted in all regards about :

Living conditions of dairy cows
 (increased to **48%** vs 35% in 2001)

- **Good health condition of their cows**
 (90% vs 83% in 2001)
- **Welfare of their animals**
 (84% vs 71% in 2001)

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PUBLIC OPINION



What do French citizens think of the welfare of dairy animals?

2006 APF Survey, a positive trend was noted in all regards about the notion that:

An involved and conscientious dairy farmer is:

attached to his farm and to his herd (95%)

a modern manager, but who remains attached to his herd (86%)

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P L A N

Background

Regulations about farm animal welfare

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R E G U L A T I O N S

Regulations about farm animal welfare

For cattle...
 on farm, since 2007, general rules loosely based on eligibility criteria for EU support:

- Conditions of livestock facilities
- Injury prevention means
- Animal health
- Feeding/watering
- Keeping animals outdoors

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The European livestock sector and animal care:

2nd part

Initiatives led by livestock producers and their organizations

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Livestock producers and their organizations:

- anticipated regulations
- are interested and contribute to research work
- are involved in international forums
- inform the general public

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Livestock producers and their organizations:

anticipated regulations

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Livestock producers and their organizations anticipated the regulations

In 1999, a Good Practices Charter for cattle (dairy & beef) was adopted

- 7 main sections
- 37 risk control points
- 130 000 livestock producers subscribed to this charter in 2007

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Livestock producers and their organizations anticipated the regulations

Chapter 5 of the “Charter”

“With regard to my livestock, I make sure that Best Practices are implemented in the area of hygiene and animal care”

- sound cleanliness
- animal kept in well lit and ventilated facilities
- handled gently with appropriate equipment
- dehorned according to recommended methods
- allowed to free-range, protected in winter by shelters (natural or man-made)
- protected in their physical integrity

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Paris, septembre 2005 : 1000 éleveurs sous la Tour Eiffel



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Livestock producers and their organizations anticipated the regulations

Steps similar to the adoption of the Charter were taken in other European countries and included animal care

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Livestock producers and their organizations anticipated the regulations;

they are interested in research work and contribute to it

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Livestock producers and their organizations contribute to research on relations between humans and animals


In the area of animal science, to improve livestock raising conditions and to measure animal comfort

INRA, Animal production institute... and international studies (Agassi, British Columbia)

but also in social science, in order to better understand the relation between livestock producers and animals



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Livestock producers and their organizations, vs. the relation between humans and animals

"Live in contact with animals / make a living off animals: an ethnological approach to relations between French livestock producers and their dairy herds and ethical aspects of animal killing"

Social anthropology and ethnology research work by Laëtitia Baichi under the supervision of Noëlie Vialles (Collège de France) 2005 - in consultation with OCHA



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The study entitled "Live in contact with animals - make a living off animals: ..."


is a very interesting insight in the way farmers view their herds.

"The watchful eye of the farmer": an innate gift, but one that must be cultivated!

- In observation, monitoring (as when the farmer waits for a cow to give birth or observes the animal during chores)
- In exchanges required to communicate (calling a cow, training a calf)
- In contemplating, out of sheer pleasure (to admire animals for the beauty of life, for the result of their work, sometime over several generations)



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Livestock producers and their organizations, vs. relations between humans and animals

"Live in contact with animals / make a living off animals,..."

One particular article in the Proceedings from the seminar « le Mangeur, l'Homme, l'animal » (eater, man, animal) published in 2007 (Stories about French livestock producers and their dairy herds) (available in English)



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P L A N

Livestock producers and their organizations take part in international forums on animal welfare

take part in international forums



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I N T E R N A T I O N A L L E V E L

Livestock producers and their organizations take part in international forums on animal welfare

- Welfare Quality Programme (EU)
- International Dairy Federation (IDF) (Farm Management Committee)
- FAO and OIE




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I N T E R N A T I O N A L L E V E L


Livestock producers and their organizations take part in international forums on animal welfare

Good Practices Guidelines from IDF/FAO

- on animal husbandry in the dairy industry (2004)
- on animal care in the dairy industry (in preparation)





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Guide de bonnes pratiques en élevage laitier

2004





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Inform the general public about modern livestock raising practices, especially animal welfare

Livestock producers and their organizations take part in international forums on animal welfare

to inform the general public

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Inform the general public about modern livestock raising practices, especially animal welfare

Since 2002, a communication and information strategy, including a campaign, has been implemented with various types of media:

TV, printed press, trade fairs, field trips for school students, training material development (brochures, videos);

priority was given to building awareness and explaining in plain terms modern livestock raising practices, the underlying theme being the relation between humans and livestock.

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Inform the general public about modern livestock raising methods, and especially about animal welfare

- Case in point (end of 2002):

60 short films were broadcast on the most popular French channel at prime time, every night just before 8pm (between weather bulletin and evening news)

The clips/testimonials all featured livestock producers on the farm, speaking about their operation in a friendly, realistic manner

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Inform the general public about modern livestock raising methods, and especially about animal welfare

Short Video TF1 (1 minute)

Elevage européen et bien-être animal : Les pistes explorées par les éleveurs de bovins en France – Jean-Marc Bèche




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Inform the general public about modern livestock raising practices, especially animal welfare

In order to develop messages to be communicated :

Producer training
(a collective debate on the relations of producers with their herd, speaking in a just and favourable manner, with help from anthropology or sociology experts, with particular attention given to society's concerns.

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Inform the general public about modern livestock raising practices, especially animal welfare

An on-going effort of liaison with journalists is made to multiply opportunities to feature livestock producers and their occupation in the media:

print, national and regional, TV and radio, Internet, etc.



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Inform the general public about modern livestock raising practices, especially animal welfare

Last but not least, fairs and events (in local areas)

that encourage direct contact between the public and livestock producers (with livestock on hand, as much as possible)

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Inform the general public about modern livestock raising practices, especially animal welfare

Local fairs - a recent example:

The Farm Trade Show held in Paris in 2007

- A farm was recreated on-site for visitors to explore
- 1000 m² in area, with about 30 animals
- over 70 000 information pamphlets distributed over 9 days
- Many media interventions(130), half of which involving non farm specialists



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la ferme
métiers de l'élevage

l'élevage : la passion des métiers

Élevage européen et bien-être animal : Les pistes explorées par les éleveurs de bovins en France – Jean-Marc Bèche

l'ETABLE

les PRES

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FN PL Fédération Nationale des Producteurs de Lait

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la NURSERIE

la SALLE de TRAITE

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Inform the general public about modern livestock raising practices, especially animal welfare

Development of information material:

- Short brochures
- Material for students and teachers
- Posters
- Videos (one last example)

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Bien-être animal

Les éleveurs qui produisent notre lait

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Côté Campagne

Les éleveurs qui produisent notre lait

D'abord aimer ses animaux

A chacun son projet

L'HOMME LA VACHE

UNE HISTOIRE DE TROIS MILLIONS D'ANNÉES

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- An actual self-exam by society about the status of livestock and the occupation of producer is needed
- Let's not forget the impact of organizations opposed to any form of farm animal keeping/raising
- ... but let's also not view their influence as being bigger than it actually is

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- The best approach is to ensure that livestock producers participate in the debate
- It is essential to recover "the link", to have a dialogue with the public about these difficult issues
- ...and to contribute to the debate that will pave the way for tomorrow's standards on animal welfare
- This is a long term effort where every opportunity for exchange and communication



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- Because in the end, we must remember that livestock producers and the relation they maintain with their herds are key to the well being of animals
- Livestock producers know this naturally and by intuition, and they have to learn to analyze this knowledge in order to explain it and share it with the general public
- The public must be made aware of farmers' know-how and their ability to live in contact with animals, and must recognize these as positive factors in farm animal care



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**Launching of the video
« l'herbe au lait quelle histoire ! »
(4 minutes)**



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**Merci pour
votre attention**



Près de Bordeaux
(France), -
décembre 2005