



EZ/NWO-ALW Programme'The Value of Animal Welfare'

Towards socially accepted and economically viable animal husbandry 2008-2014

Final Evaluation Report by the External Evaluation Committee

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Foreword

Towards socially accepted and economically viable animal husbandry

Welfare issues in animal husbandry can only partly be ascribed to a lack of biological knowledge. The problem rather is that animal welfare clashes with production methods because of the economic needs of producers. Throughout the production chain, farmers and retailers maintain their market positions by producing within society's confines, by controlling costs, and by differentiating their products. While animal welfare is a major concern for the general public, resulting in demands for policies and governmental action to increase animal welfare, for a considerable part of the consumers low priced meat is at the same time a basic choice to cope with within their family budget. And thus, animal welfare seems to be locked in.

Animal welfare in intensive production systems is, however, not only compromised by economic reasons. Gaps in our biological knowledge on how animals can cope with high production husbandry systems in terms of behaviour, health, and stress adaptation capacity have to be filled. Only then evidence based animal housing, farm management and animal breeds can be developed that guarantee optimal animal welfare under intensive, highly productive farming conditions or extensive outdoor farming conditions.

Society, both at home and in the EU, is increasingly calling for better animal welfare, and this prompted the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ) (this ministry covers the former Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV)) and the Division for Earth and Life Sciences (ALW) of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) to develop a new, jointly funded and dedicated research programme. A programme to make the difference, and which required an integrated, interdisciplinary approach because of the range of scientific, socio-economic and societal issues involved. A programme, moreover, that involved all the parties responsible for animal welfare in order to ensure that the findings and recommendations are genuinely appropriate and can be applied in practice.

The programme committee showed an inspiring engagement to monitor and evaluate the 5 subprogrammes yearly, on the base of site visits and progress meetings. It resulted in an impressive line of publications and communicative actions towards the stakeholders and the public. What makes the programme special is the attention for the interdisciplinary learning process. Unique was the experiment of the programme committee to take a pro-active role in facilitating interdisciplinary training for the PhD's and postdocs involved. This resulted in 5 courses of 2-3 days throughout the programme addressing interdisciplinary issues like ethics, sustainability, marketing, animal welfare and policy. Although primarily meant to catalyze the integration of wider societal issues in the research teams, it also served as teambuilding instrument uniting not only the different disciplinary PhD's and postdocs within a team, but also across the teams. Even more, we as members of the programme committee and steering committee, became most welcome guests in the "speed-dating" sessions as part of every course, which created an unmet inspiring focus of knowledge exchange. These were memorable learning moments for all of us.

After six years of intensive work by many, the programme has now become to an end. As may be clear from the final evaluation report, produced by an international panel of experts, almost all parts of the programme have been very successful and answered the original expectations.

The programme committee and steering committee would like to express their appreciation to all researchers in this programme, especially the young ones, the PhD students and postdocs.

Prof Dr Tjard de Cock Buning (chair programme committee)

Prof Dr Henk Goos (chair steering committee)

EZ-NWO research programme 'The Value of Animal Welfare' – an introduction

The integrated and interdisciplinary research programme 'The Value of Animal Welfare' wanted to provide answers to the questions arising as a result of the imbalance between efficient production and animal welfare. The programme involved stakeholders such as breeders' organisations, livestock farmers, animal-health organisations, societal organisations, retailers, ethicists, animal scientists and market and consumer experts.

The questions were very wide-ranging, and covered both the exact and social sciences. The questions concerned the ethical and biological limits to the adaptability of animals and the consequences for animal welfare, while other issues that were addressed included ways of measuring animal welfare and the relationship with trends in society and consumer behaviour. The programme aimed for a balance between fundamental and applied research, both in biological and social sciences, because there is a clear need for knowledge developed in cooperation with stakeholders in agricultural industry, retail, and society.

Focus areas and key fields

For this programme, five focus areas were defined:

- 1. Social trends in how we treat our animals
- 2. Limits to productivity
- 3. Robustness and adaptability
- 4. Natural behaviour, needs and emotions
- 5. Selection behaviour of consumers and producers

The call of the programme was published in 2008 and was focused, in addition to the five focus areas, on the following three key fields:

 Interdisciplinary research aimed at enhancing animal welfare in intensive forms of animal husbandry and thus improving the societal and socio-economic position of these sectors.

- Increasing the understanding of the emotional component of natural behavior and/or the adaptability of animals in order to develop methods or parameters that can be used to provide a more scientific basis for assessing the emotional state of animals.
- 3. Knowledge development with stakeholder participation, aimed at structural changes needed to achieve sustainable forms of animal husbandry, based primarily on the needs of animals.

Origin of the programme

In 2005 the NWO-LNV Priority Programme 'Limits to Animal Welfare and Production' came to an end.

This programme resulted in over 20 successfully completed PhD-projects as well as various post-doc studies. The projects within this programme focused on physiological and behavioural studies on stress and stress adaptation capacity in production animals.

At the end of the programme a final evaluation took place. The programme and its output was assessed by an external evaluation committee (Prof Dr I. Duncan (chair), Dr L. Matthews, Dr I. Veissier, and Dr B. Jones). In general, the opinion of the committee was that the programme was very successful. In case of continuation of the programme, which was strongly recommended, the evaluation committee advised the following adjustments:

- 1. The researchers involved should put a real effort in interpreting their results in terms of animal welfare.
- 2. The generation of greater integration between researchers between species projects, and the stimulation of greater coherence across species groups.
- Procedures for the dissemination of the results should be implemented from the start of the programme, and outcomes should be shared with the general public.
- 4. The programme should adopt a more problem oriented approach and end-users should cooperate in the research projects from the conceptual phase.
- Research in animal welfare offers also a fine opportunity for interdisciplinary collaboration with, for instance, social scientists or economists.
- 6. The promotion of more international cooperation. The inclusion of selected international experts in any future programme

committee would enhance the capacity for worldwide networking and the international impact of the work.

The programme 'The Value of Animal Welfare' clearly followed on from the findings of the 'Limits to Animal Welfare and Productions' programme, but essentially went further by explicitly involving stakeholders in the research strategies.

Organisation and management

The research programme 'The Value of Animal Welfare' was funded for two-third by the Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ) and for one-third by the NWO Division for Earth and Life Sciences (NWO-ALW). Together, both parties invested 4M€. In addition, the subprogrammes got financial (and in kind) contributions from third parties. Those included, the total budget for the programme was 5.1M€.

The management of the programme was structured according to the NWO guidelines and consisted of a programme committee and steering committee. Administrative support and financial control has been supplied by NWO-ALW and both committees were assisted by a NWO-ALW programme manager.

The programme committee was formed by representatives of the Dutch research community with backgrounds in animal sciences, behavioural sciences, social sciences and veterinary sciences, representatives of the ministry of Economic Affairs, and representatives of other relevant organisations (e.g. the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals). See addendum 2 for the full list of programme committee members. The committee is responsible for the scientific content and quality of the programme, and should aim to reach the goals set out at the start of the programme. The programme committee advises the steering committee on its decisions.

The steering committee was formed by the representatives of the financing parties and was chaired by an independent chairman. The steering committee has a controlling and deciding function. See the addendum for the list of steering committee members.

After publication of the call for the programme, 23 preliminary proposals were submitted. After a first selection by the review panel, 11 full proposals were assessed by international referees. The

reports were rendered anonymous and sent to the applicant for the purposes of a written rebuttal. The review panel – that consisted of several independent international scientific experts complemented by representatives from policy and society (see the addendum for the list of review panel members) - then ranked the proposals by allocating scores to the following criteria:

- 1. Relevance to the objective of the programme, as formulated in the three key fields;
- 2. Scientific quality;
- 3. Applicability of research results;
- 4. Active participation of industry;
- 5. The interdisciplinary extent and added value of cooperating groups: a proposal should combine at least two focus areas.

Finally, the steering committee granted the first 5 proposals of the ranking list.

Five subprogrammes

In every proposal, the main applicant applied for 2 to 3 PhD positions and sometimes for a postdoc position as well. Therefore, after granting, the five awarded proposals became so called "subprogrammes":

File Number Name Main Applicant	M/F	Institute	Project Title
1 827.09.010 Prof Dr Johan van Arendonk	m	WUR	Seeking sociable swine? Incorporating social genetic effects into pig breeding programs to achieve balanced improvement in productivity and welfare
Co-applicants: Dr J.E. Bolhuis (f; WUR), Prof Dr B. k (m; WUR), Prof Dr F. Brom (m; WUR/Rathenau Inst Prof Dr J.M. Koolhaas (m; RUG), Prof Dr T. de Cock	itute),	lr. C.G. van	2
2 827.09.020 Dr Bas Rodenburg	m	WUR	Preventing feather pecking in laying hens: from principle to practice
Co-applicants: Dr S.M. Korte (m; UU), Prof Dr B. Ol Prof Dr A.G.G. Groothuis (m; RUG), Dr B.J. Riedstra (m; WUR), Dr I.C. de Jong (f; WUR), Dr J.E. Bolhuis	a (m; Rl	JG), Dr J. te	en Napel (m; WUR), Dr O.N.M. van Eijk
3 827.09.030 Prof Dr Hans van Trijp	m	WUR	Mobilizing the latent consumer demand for animal-friendly products an interdisciplinary system approach to support stakeholders? decision making
Co-applicants: Dr G. Backus (m; WUR), Dr V. Beekn Dr P.T.M. Ingenbleek (m; WUR), Dr H.W. Saatkamp			• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
4 827.09.040 Prof Dr Gert Flik	m	RUN	Aggression in catfish aquaculture
Co-applicants: Dr R. van den Bos (m; UU), Dr E. Lar Dr J.W. van de Vis (m; WUR)	nbooij	(m; WUR),	Dr F.L.B. Meijboom (m; UU),
5 827.09.050 Prof Dr Wouter Hendriks	m	WUR	Novel roughage-based feeding strategies to improve welfare of vea calves
Co-applicants: Dr P.B.M. Berentsen (m; WUR), Dr E Dr W.J.J. Gerrits (m; WUR), Dr N. Stockhofe-Zurwie			

In total, 12 PhD students have worked on projects within this programme. 11 of them have or will defend their thesis in 2014. In addition, the research programme also included 7 postdoc projects.

Results and cooperation aspects

In total, 50 peer-reviewed papers were published at the time that the final evaluation took place. In addition, next to publishing papers and presenting their results at congresses, the researchers organised several stakeholder meetings and they were active in involving the general public.

In order to monitoring the progress and results of the research projects, the members of the programme committee and steering committee have made so called site visits. All the subprogrammes were visited twice. In addition, the programme committee organised several events during the course of the programme: the kick-off meeting, a progress symposium, and a debate day. Prior to the debate day, the researchers per subprogramme first organised their own societal afternoons: a societal aspect picked by the researchers was discussed with stakeholders and other interested parties (e.g. farmers). At the debate day the conclusions and output of the societal afternoons were subsequently presented for and discussed with all researchers of the programme.

The programme ended with a final symposium. Next to all involved participants of the programme, a number of journalists was invited for the final symposium. The journalists got the chance to talk to the researchers individually (per subprogramme): this resulted in quite a few articles that were published in journals and newspapers. Four of them are included in this booklet.

The programme also included an educational part for the PhD-students (obligatory) and postdocs (highly recommended) working on the projects. Under the supervision of the programme committee a set of five courses, two to three days each, have been developed.

The goal of the educational programme was threefold:

- To bring in touch the researchers of the EZ/NWO-ALW programme, team building;
- 2. To educate beta researchers in the relevant selection of theories, models and methods of gamma researchers;

3. To stimulate and support the development of high quality betagamma research, and the production of shared beta-gamma papers.

Next to lectures and assignments, every course included an excursion to a company/organisation:

Course no. (date)	Topic	Excursion
1 (October 2010)	Sustainable Animal Production	Rondeel Barneveld (laying hens)
2 (February 2011)	Ethics & Animal Welfare	VanDrie Group (veal production)
3 (May 2011)	Animal Behaviour & Society Behaviour	Beemsterlant's varken (pig farm)
4 (April 2012)	Market & Animal Welfare	AH, Puur & Eerlijk (retail)
5 (June 2013)	Governance & Policy Advise	Dutch parliament

Evaluation of the programme

In 2012, when most projects were halfway, a mid-term evaluation was carried out by an external evaluation committee. The same committee has now also carried out the final evaluation of the programme. Their report is published in this booklet.

The final evaluation aimed at assessing the scientific quality of (the results of) the projects and pointing out the merits and shortcomings of the programme 'The Value of Animal Welfare' since its establishment in 2008. Special emphasis has been given to the implementation of initial goals with respect to interdisciplinary research and stakeholder participation.

1 Summary and recommendations

A unique and ambitious programme

In the opinion of the evaluation committee, the programme 'The Value of Animal Welfare' is a special programme. It was unique in its set-up and it had ambitious goals pertaining to interdisciplinary research and stakeholder involvement which were well implemented. The societal relevance of the projects is high; the results are important for society in general and for the sustainable livestock industries in particular. In general, the evaluation committee is impressed by what has been achieved within the programme.

Interdisciplinary research and cohesion amongst the subprogrammes

Interdisciplinarity within and cohesion amongst the subprogrammes* have increased since the mid-term evaluation. The organisation of symposia by the programme committee, as well as the organisation of societal afternoons by the researchers of the subprogrammes, has been very beneficial for this integration. Especially the symposia that included workshops, were organised in such a way that the researchers of the subprogrammes were able to exchange information and ideas. For the societal afternoons, the researchers per subprogramme choose a societal aspect that they wanted to discuss with stakeholders and other interested parties (e.g. farmers). At a following debate day, the conclusions and output of the afternoons were presented for and discussed with all researchers of the programme. The members of the evaluation committee stated that they had never seen a programme before that had so many cooperation aspects.

Stakeholder involvement

With respect to stakeholder involvement, all subprogrammes have made substantial steps forward. The commitment from the stakeholders was very strong, already right from the start of the programme.

Per subprogramme, a number of external (societal) parties - like for example the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, breeding companies, fish farms, and Product Boards – were involved. In the opinion of the evaluation committee, the societal relevance of this research programme is a very strong and positive point.

Results and output

Although there is some variability between subprogrammes, in general, the scientific as well as the societal results are very good. Most subprogrammes have excellent output, both in peer-reviewed scientific papers and also in other forms of output (brochures for the general public, radio/newspaper interviews, etc.). In total, more than 50 papers have been published in international peer-reviewed journals. The fish subprogramme has a relatively modest output to date, but has the potential to expand this over the coming months. There are only a few projects with a limited output.

Monitoring the subprogrammes

The programme and steering committee have carefully monitored the subprogrammes by making two site visits to each of the subprogrammes. During these site visits there was ample opportunity for contact between the programme management and the researchers. The evaluation committee appreciates the site visits very much and was pleased to see the reports about the second round of visits, since these provided very important feedback to the researchers.

Educational programme

By initiating and organizing the educational programme, the programme committee made a serious effort to achieve integration of the sub-programmes. A set of five courses have been developed and took place over a time frame of four years. The goal of the educational programme was threefold: (1) To bring in touch the researchers of the EZ/NWO-ALW programme, team building; (2) To educate beta researchers in the relevant selection of theories, models and methods of gamma researchers; (3) To stimulate and support the development of high quality beta-gamma research, and the production of shared beta-gamma papers. The courses were well organized and their contents were in line with this objective. The educational programme was both useful and necessary and the evaluation committee considers its set-up as excellent.

* Within this research programme five proposals have been granted. In every proposal – after granting we refer to it as a 'subprogramme' – the main applicant applied for two to three PhD positions and sometimes for a postdoc position as well. Thus, every subprogramme included several PhD (and postdoc) projects.

2 The evaluation committee and its approach

The evaluation committee met in Wageningen on 13 June 2014. During this meeting they discussed their views and ideas on the EZ/NWO-ALW programme 'The Value of Animal Welfare', a research programme for which the first projects started at the end of 2009. In total, 12 PhD students have worked on projects within this research programme; 11 of them will defend their theses in 2014. In addition, the programme also included 7 postdoc projects.

To establish an opinion on the programme, the evaluation committee had prior access to the final reports from the subprogrammes and projects, as well as all the necessary background information about the programme, which was read in advance. In addition, all members of the evaluation committee were present at the final symposium, which was held on 12 June 2014.

On the day of the evaluation meeting (13 June 2014), the evaluation committee exchanged their viewpoints with the programme committee, steering committee, and with researchers representing the five different subprogrammes. For each subprogramme a separate short meeting was held. This evaluation report is the result of these discussions.

The evaluation committee for the final evaluation of the programme consisted of the same persons who also participated in the mid-term evaluation committee, namely:

- Prof. dr. Bert van Zutphen (chairman)
 Emeritus professor of Laboratory Animal Science at University of Utrecht (UU)
- Mr. Bart Jan Krouwel (representative of the Dutch agricultural industry)
 - Chairman of *Productschap Pluimvee & Eieren* (Product Board for Poultry & Eggs)
 - Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the International Egg Foundation

Member of, and chairman of the core group within, the Taskforce Voedselvertrouwen (Taskforce Foodtrust) of the Dutch government

- Prof. dr. Alistair Lawrence (scientific member)
 Scotland's Rural College, professor of Animal Behaviour & Welfare
- Prof. dr. Christine Nicol (scientific member)
 University of Bristol, professor of Animal Welfare
- Prof. dr. Klaus G. Grunert (scientific member)
 Aarhus University, Department of Business Administration;
 professor of Marketing
 Director of MAPP Centre for research on customer relations in the food sector

3 Results of the programme

3.1 Realisation of the original objectives

The call within this programme was focused on the following three key fields:

- 4. Interdisciplinary research aimed at enhancing animal welfare in intensive forms of animal husbandry and thus improving the societal and socio-economic position of these sectors.
- 5. Increasing the understanding of the emotional component of natural behaviour and/or the adaptability of animals in order to develop methods or parameters that can be used to provide a more scientific basis for assessing the emotional state of animals.
- Knowledge development with stakeholder participation, aimed at structural changes needed to achieve sustainable forms of animal husbandry, based primarily on the needs of animals.

Within this research programme five proposals were granted. In every proposal – after granting we refer to it as a 'subprogramme' – the main applicant applied for two to three PhD positions and sometimes for a postdoc position as well. Thus, every subprogramme included several PhD (and postdoc) projects.

Four of the five subprogrammes dealt with evident animal welfare problems of a specific species (pigs, laying hens, fish, and veal calves) provoked by the system of intensive farming. In addition, one subprogramme was devoted to understand, and possibly to mobilize, the latent demand for animal friendly products from the perspective of the producers, the retailers and the consumers.

Considering the original objectives of the programme, the evaluation committee concludes that all subprogrammes have been successful with respect to interdisciplinary research. Interdisciplinarity within, and cohesion amongst, the subprogrammes have increased since the mid-term evaluation. The organisation of symposia, including workshops by the programme committee, as well as the organisation of societal afternoons by the researchers of the subprogrammes, has been very beneficial for this integration. This is particular true for the collaborations within subprogrammes; a fine example is the

organisation of summer schools by the physiologists and the ethicists of the fish subprogramme (827.09.040).

The emotional component of natural behaviour and the adaptability of animals have been explored during the course of this research programme. This has provided new insights that can be used by producers in order to improve sustainability and welfare in animal production. One good example comes from the results of sub-programme 827.09.010 which found evidence of emotional contagion in pigs, with pen-mates influenced by the emotions of others in their group. These novel findings have implications for the ways in which pigs are managed and housed, particularly during periods of stress or disease. Another example is where research on the biological origins of feather pecking (subprogramme 827.09.020) suggests that once feather pecking starts within a group this increases 'fear' levels within the group potentially causing a further escalation in feather pecking.

The focus of the programme has been to bridge the gap between fundamental research on animal behaviour and welfare, and ways in which this knowledge can be used to develop solutions for practical welfare problems. In general, it has substantially contributed to both scientific insights as well as practical tools for the improvement of animal welfare.

With respect to the involvement of stakeholders, which was clearly an ambitious goal of this programme, the members of the evaluation committee were, as for the mid-term evaluation, very positive: the subprogrammes have implemented this task very well. The evaluation committee considers this an important tool in order to maximize the relevance of the research results.

3.2 Results of the subprogrammes

Although there is some variability between subprogrammes, in general, the scientific as well as the societal results and output are very good. The evaluation committee finds it insightful to see that researchers really tried to bring together different areas of science and that they involved stakeholders. Compared to similar research programmes,

they did a very good job on this and it is beyond what most scientific programmes would do.

The committee does want to make the footnote that the methodology used by the social scientists involved in the programme is not always written down very accurately: the free-flowing way of reporting does not always justify the work that has been performed. For example, it is not enough to state that stakeholder meetings have been held, but it would be useful to know how these meetings have been documented and how such documents have been used for scientific analysis subsequently.

Specific comments per subprogramme are the following:

3.2.1 Subprogramme 827.09.010

> Seeking sociable swine? Incorporating social genetic effects into pig breeding programs to achieve balanced improvement in productivity and welfare

The aims of this subprogramme were highly novel in that they aimed to better understand the biology, and the practical (breeding) and societal implications of the so-called 'social-genetic' approaches to pig breeding. During the course of the projects the objectives of this subprogramme have slightly been changed mainly due to the practical problem of slowness in supply of the pigs. The evaluation committee appreciates that – as a result of the mid-term evaluation – the adaptations were well documented.

The evaluation committee is very impressed by the scientific results of this subprogramme. The researchers have shown that positive behaviour is contagious: positive behaviour has positive consequences for the other group members. And moreover, indications have been obtained that social breeding can improve growth of the pigs. The relevance of the research is very high, since for example tail biting problems need to be solved before the EU regulation aiming at ending tail docking will be implemented. Indications are that the breeding company involved is moving closer to implementing selection for 'social effects'.

The beta and gamma scientists worked in close cooperation with each other. Together they organised several stakeholder meetings. At first the farmers denied the statements of the researchers. By visiting the

farmers and a better 'one to one' explanation, the researchers were able to create a scientific discussion. The stakeholder meetings then turned out to become very beneficial for the projects, since every time the relevance of the research for the stakeholders could be determined. In this process, the social science part of the subprogramme was mainly used as a facilitator, which is good, but does not generate new knowledge for the social sciences. Still, as a learning process this has been of great value, especially since it now has been documented. Overall, this subprogramme did excellent work and exceeded the expectations: it raised the bar for all other subprogrammes.

3.2.2 Subprogramme 827.09.020

> Preventing feather pecking in laying hens: from principle to practice

Although the projects of the feather pecking subprogramme were performed on different locations, the researchers were in good contact with each other and made use of an excellent exchange system of research material. In one project, researchers developed a new method (micro-dialysis in living hens) to study monoamine levels in the brain. Their scientific findings, however, produced some results that contradicted earlier work. Previously it had been found that birds with lower serotonin and dopamine concentrations might be at greater risk of severe feather pecking. However, some evidence was found in this subprogramme that in adult hens severe feather pecking was related to higher serotonin and dopamine turnover. The discrepancies revealed by this project suggest that different mechanisms may apply in young and adult birds. Further work will be needed to establish the reasons for these differences. The researchers of this project came close to the final goal - linking blood samples with brain levels of monoamines - but, unfortunately, they still need to wait for the research results because of technical problems.

Furthermore, the researchers of this subprogramme have worked on and showed interesting data about the relationship between the concentration of testosterone in eggs, and subsequent dominance hierarchy and feather pecking. At the time of the mid-term evaluation, the evaluation committee recommended to relate the hormonal data to large commercial flocks. This was because dominance relationships are not generally formed in large commercial flocks and so egg

hormone levels may have rather different effects in this context. The eggs were collected in Wageningen and needed to be analysed in Groningen. The latter, however, faced a huge delay. Eventually, the data came only available very late and, unfortunately, the researchers were not able to use them anymore in practice within the time frame of this research programme.

The evaluation committee comments favourably on the research that examined the relationship between parent flock stress and behaviour, and the subsequent risk of feather pecking in adult offspring. Work on parental influence has not previously been conducted on this scale, and it required good integration between many participants to achieve. The results are commercially important. Especially with respect to the regulation of banning beak trimming, which will be implemented by the Dutch government in 2018, the research in this subprogramme is very timely and relevant. With this significant change in industry regulation approaching, this subprogramme has contributed by identifying new targets for genetic selection against feather pecking. Clearly, this is a time of great change for the laying hen sector. The researchers feel that the industry appreciates this but that farmers can be reluctant to change management practices for economic reasons. Therefore, it is very important to explain which changes can be made to reduce the risk of feather pecking, and to demonstrate how this can be done. Highly motivated farmers can act as models for others. In conclusion, the evaluation committee is very satisfied with the results of this subprogramme. The researchers nicely combined basic and applied science. Although there were some problems, it met all expectations and did very well in producing good PhD theses and publications. In addition, so far, this is the only subprogramme that published a peer-reviewed joint paper (that includes the researchers of all four different projects in the author list).

3.2.3 Subprogramme 827.09.030

> Mobilizing the latent consumer demand for animal-friendly products: an interdisciplinary system approach to support stakeholders' decision making

The input of stakeholders and society is very important for this subprogramme. Shortly after the start of the research projects, the Better Life hallmark (*Beter Leven kenmerk*) of the Dutch Society for

the Protection of Animals – a welfare qualification star system for meat and eggs – was introduced. The researchers adapted very well to these changes and eventually it was even beneficially for the subprogramme since the star system created a nice link between the different projects. It also created long term impact for the research results.

The researchers organised several meetings for different stakeholders and succeeded to have two competitive retailers around one table having a discussion. Retailers can be both a facilitator and a barrier in the introduction of more animal-friendly products, and play a decisive role both in the creation of those boundaries within which consumers make their decisions and in the creations of demand conditions for farmers. The researchers of this subprogramme positioned the situation as a social dilemma. In any case it is clear that none of the individual actors can do it alone; it should be organised together and there is space for small steps to bridge the gap. An additional issue here is that much of Dutch agricultural products are exported while the consumer research in this project was only carried out in the Netherlands. Unfortunately, one of the projects did not deliver up to scientific standards. A theoretical framework has been developed, but its empirical grounding in some casework is very limited. It also seemed to involve some contradictions with assumptions made in the rest of the subprogramme. The deficiencies in this part of the subprogramme were mostly for medical reasons. In common agreement with the graduate school it was decided that the work on this project will not lead to a PhD.

The evaluation committee concludes that the overall quality of the work performed within the marketing subprogramme is good, although the approach taken is mainstream. The subprogramme has certainly been beneficial for the total programme, since it created elements for cooperation between the different subprogrammes. It is, however, questionable if all opportunities have sufficiently been utilized.

3.2.4 Subprogramme 827.09.040

> Aggression in catfish aquaculture

At the time of the mid-term evaluation, this subprogramme had diverged quite a bit from their original application, especially for the physiological projects. Because of the loss of catfish producers

in the Netherlands and because of handling issues with catfish, the researchers had started to work with zebrafish and carp as well. The evaluation committee advised at that time to rewrite the objectives of the physiological part of this subprogramme and the committee now appreciates that the researchers did write this down. However, the clear mile stones which the committee asked for were not presented very clearly. In addition, the work the research group is doing is also funded by a number of different organisations. Of course it is logical that the researchers bring everything together, but in terms of what to evaluate (and what not), the evaluation committee found it difficult to extract the right information out of the final reports.

Scientifically, the researchers did a good job resulting in several interesting findings. For example: natural day-night rhythm reduces aggression in catfish and enriched environments have a positive effect on learning capacity in fish. The work on multiple and chronic stress within the framework of allostasis is important. New and potentially valuable insights seem also to have been obtained on the emotional capacities of the fish brain. The concepts of the theses of both PhD students are ready, but in terms of scientific output much relevant work is not yet published. Most likely, this means that the researchers of this subprogramme are not completely finished yet.

The ethical part of this subprogramme first started with answering the question 'what is a moral status' before they started discussing whether or not fish can be counted as members of the moral community. The ethical researchers created lots of discussion and interaction moments with the physiologists. Together, they organised several summer schools on fish welfare for all interested parties. The evaluation committee really appreciates this initiative and points out that it has been very beneficial for the beta-gamma collaboration within the subprogramme as well as for the societal attention and output.

The evaluation committee is satisfied with the depth that has been reached by this subprogramme, but additional monitoring of the research results is needed. The committee would like to see the final output of this subprogramme within the next 1,5 years: preferably in the form of a matrix where, in percentages, the contribution of all funding sources to each published output can be seen.

3.2.5 Subprogramme 827.09.050

> Novel roughage-based feeding strategies to improve welfare of veal calves

The objectives of this subprogramme focused on a more sustainable diet for veal calves including a solution for behavioural and health problems. The researchers had a strong interaction with the industry and worked in close collaboration with those stakeholders, already right from the start of the project. The application of this subprogramme covered only 2 out of the 5 focus areas described in the call and there were no societal stakeholders involved. However, since the application was funded, one agreed upon this set-up from the beginning. The researchers really tried to find other ways than scientific media to communicate to the public. They did publish a couple of newspaper articles, even though that caused some friction with the industry. This showed that the researchers maintained their independence. Moreover, the product board of animal feed has been actively involved.

The relevance of the research within this subprogramme is very high. Ruminal drinking has long been seen as a major health problem. The researchers developed a method in order to qualitatively detect it. Another important scientific result is that the researchers showed that – although there is a high individual variability – a higher percentage of roughage feed is preferred over milk replacer when the veal calves are given a free choice of dietary components. This suggests that the animals feed themselves to their own needs and it contradicts with the current EU guidelines and legislation. Roughage should be provided in considerable excess of current guidelines. The results also support the view that, where possible, it is better to allow animals to make free choices over the composition of their diet providing that some controls are in place to prevent excessive intake of energy.

The research in this subprogramme also revealed data on methane emission (which increases with increasing intake of fibrous ingredients). These data will be used to set Dutch estimates for methane emission in veal calves.

The evaluation committee concludes that this subprogramme did very well. The research was focused on behavioural problems related to feeding. And, although the committee would have liked to see a broader focus on animal welfare in general, this focus was agreed upon from the beginning. Thus, this subprogramme met all expectations.

3.3 Scientific output

In total, over 50 papers in international peer-reviewed journals have been published. The evaluation committee has no doubts about the scientific impact of the programme at an international level. The number and quality of the publications are excellent. In only a few projects the output was below expectation, mainly due to external circumstances (availability of animals, illness).

Logically, the evaluation committee finds it difficult to give her opinion about the papers that are still in preparation or under review, since it is not clear if those papers will indeed be published. The evaluation committee would appreciate it to see the final output of this programme within the next 1,5 years.

4 Programme cooperation

General questions as 'How do you bring the results to society?' arise in all five subprogrammes.

From the start of the programme it turned out to be difficult to get the subprogrammes working together. Eventually, coherence amongst the subprogrammes was achieved through symposia and societal afternoons. The programme committee did a good job by organising and setting up these events. Especially the symposia that included workshops, were organised in such a way that the researchers of the subprogrammes were able to exchange information and ideas.

In order to take the time to discuss the societal aspects of each subprogramme, the programme committee asked the researchers to organise societal afternoons. The researchers per subprogramme choose a societal aspect that they wanted to discuss with stakeholders and other interested parties (e.g. farmers). At a following debate day for all researchers of the programme, the conclusions and output of the afternoons were presented and discussed.

The evaluation committee concludes that the events have been very beneficial for the cohesion amongst subprogrammes. In addition, the educational programme (see paragraph 7) has been of great value for the coherence and the beta-gamma integration within the programme. The evaluation committee points out that she has never seen a programme before that had so many cooperation aspects.

5 Societal relevance of the programme

As pointed out before, the evaluation committee is very positive about the involvement of stakeholders in the programme. Their commitment to the subprogrammes was very strong and ongoing, already right from the start of the programme. Several subprogrammes even got financial support or received in kind support from external parties. Next to the programme symposia and societal afternoons, all subprogrammes also organised their own stakeholder meetings.

The results of the programme are highly relevant for policy and the society in general. This is particular true for regulations aiming at ending beak trimming in chickens, ending tail docking in pigs, or the exclusive feeding of milk to veal calves. The committee feels that this is a very strong and positive point of this research programme. The interest in animal welfare by consumers is growing and the results of the programme contribute to the demands for animal friendly produced products in society.

Several actions have been undertaken to increase awareness of problems encountered in the intensive farming and how these problems can be best tackled. Next to peer-reviewed scientific output, almost all projects have put efforts in public/societal output, ranging from a brochure for the general public to interviews in regional and/ or national newspapers and to an exhibition in co-production with the Utrecht School of Arts. This clearly shows that the projects were not only able to produce scientific results, but that they also created societal impact.

Academically, PhD theses should still strictly contain scientific papers. For such an integrated research programme as 'The Value of Animal Welfare', it would be fair that PhD students are given the opportunity to also include societal output in a thesis.

For a future programme, the evaluation committee recommends a similar set-up of organising the societal aspects of a dedicated research programme. Improvement may lie in putting more emphasis on the responsibility of the whole chain (producer-retailer-consumer), since it is evident that in order to be able to change something you will need to talk to every single involved group.

6 Monitoring of the subprogrammes (site visits)

The programme committee and steering committee combined forces and together they made two site visits to each of the subprogrammes in order to monitor the progress of the projects. The first visits were planned only a while after the start of the projects (end of 2010 up to 2011); the second site visits were held in autumn 2012. The evaluation committee appreciates the site visits very much. During these site visits there was ample opportunity for contact between the programme management and the researchers. The evaluation committee greatly appreciates the continuation of the second round of site visits and is pleased to see the reports about this round of site visits, since these are very important as feedback to the researchers. The reports clearly illustrated the involvement and guidance of the programme and steering committee; the evaluation committee is glad to see that their recommendations have been picked up well by the research groups.

7 Educational programme

In order to encourage the beta-gamma integrations within the subprogrammes, the programme committee organized a special educational programme linked to the programme 'The Value of Animal Welfare'. A set of five courses (two to three days each) have been developed and took place over a time frame of four years. The goal of the educational programme was threefold: (1) To bring in touch the PhD/postdoc researchers of the EZ/NWO-ALW programme, team building; (2) To educate beta researchers in the relevant selection of theories, models and methods of gamma researchers; (3) To stimulate and support the development of high quality beta-gamma research, and the production of shared beta-gamma papers.

Although the evaluation committee regrets that no information on how researchers have evaluated and appreciated the courses has been provided, out of the discussions at the evaluation meeting the committee concludes that all PhD students were enthusiastic about the courses. Unfortunately, the interest of most postdocs was less; this is mainly due to other commitments of the postdocs (most postdocs had a part-time contract) and cannot easily be avoided. The courses were well organized and their contents were in line with the objectives. The educational programme has definitely improved and supported the coherence amongst the different researchers and the beta-gamma interactions.

During the courses, the researchers have worked on joint papers. Unfortunately, they are not published yet. The evaluation committee encourages the researchers to finish the papers and would like to see them published within the next 1,5 years.

The evaluation committee concludes that, by initiating and organizing the educational programme, the programme committee made a serious effort to achieve the integration of the subprogrammes. The committee is very positive on this initiative and underlines the value and importance of the educational programme. The educational programme was both useful and necessary and its set-up is considered as excellent. Spreading the courses in a way that most of them take place during the first and second year of the PhD projects and the involvement of the subprogramme and project leaders are two suggestions that are encouraged to be taken along for a future programme.

8 Organisational structure of the programme

From their experiences during the evaluation meeting, the evaluation committee concludes that the relations within and between the programme committee and steering committee are amiable. At the time of the mid-term evaluation, there was a lack of clarity and confusion about the role of both committees. This aspect has improved; both the programme committee as well as the steering committee had a clear view of their role which made it more transparent for the evaluation committee.

The communication between both committees is good and they have regular (informal) meetings.

The relationships between programme committee, steering committee, programme secretariat and researchers has been smooth and supportive. The programme and steering committee combined forces and have carefully monitored the subprogrammes by making site visits. The evaluation committee greatly appreciates the visits; as mentioned before, the reports of the visits clearly illustrated the involvement and guidance of the programme and steering committee in the projects. The change of chair for the programme committee half way the programme has in no way hampered their work. The organisation of symposia including workshops, the initiation of the societal afternoons, as well as setting up and organising the educational programme have all been very beneficial for the interdisciplinarity within and cohesion amongst the subprogrammes.

Overall, the evaluation committee concludes that the programme has been very well organised.

9 Final remarks

In the opinion of the evaluation committee, the programme 'The Value of Animal Welfare' is a special programme. It was unique in its set-up and it had ambitious goals as interdisciplinary research and stakeholder involvement which were well implemented. The societal relevance of the projects is high; the results are important for society in general and for the sustainable livestock industries in particular. Although struggling a bit in the beginning, the researchers have found a good balance between scientific research and interacting with society. They have become scientists that are able to look at all different viewpoints of a certain (societal) issue. The programme has given new scientific insights as well as practical solutions for the improvement of animal welfare. In general, the evaluation committee is impressed by what has been achieved within the projects. In some cases, practical applications can be effected in the near future without undue difficulty. For example, simple changes to the management of laying hen parent flocks could result in laying birds with a lower risk of feather pecking, and breeding for more sociable pigs seems likely to commence in the near future.

The objectives as formulated at the start of the programme were ambitious, but realistic. Because this type of research is rather new, the programme was designed in such a way that it had a highly explorative character. The evaluation committee realizes that 4 years is not a long period and that it is not feasible to assume that results of the projects should and could have been implemented in practice during the course of such a relative short programme. Nevertheless, compared to similar programmes, the evaluation committee is impressed with what has already been achieved by the researchers of this programme.

Considering the main objectives, the programme has revealed valuable results in each of the five subprogrammes. Implementation of the results will certainly contribute to alleviation of some evident welfare problems. However, there is still much work to be done. Most welfare problems are a consequence of scale enlargements. Natural behaviour is hampered and redirected into damaging behaviour: tail biting in pigs, feather pecking in chickens, aggressiveness in catfish. The consideration whether natural behaviour

should be changed (through breeding and selection and/or genetic modification) so that future animals are better adapted to the conditions of intensive farming or whether the housing system and environmental conditions must be adapted in such a way that natural behaviour can be executed by the animals, is a long lasting discussions without proper answers yet. As previous studies did, the outcome of the pig subprogramme is indicating that solutions must be sought by a combination of both options.

Answers can only be found through intensive dialogues involving all relevant stakeholders, preferably at an international level. For a future programme, these kinds of discussions should certainly be taken along and it would be beneficially to include an international partner as active participant for every subprogramme.

Finally, the evaluation committee encourages and applauds the enthusiasm of all young scientists involved in the programme and especially likes to see the large number of young women putting a lot of efforts in their future careers. The committee encourages their eagerness and hopes to see them as future group leaders.

Addendum 1

bionieuws

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5

Verenpikken zit in synapsen en darmflora

ZOÖLOGIE

Door Gert van Maanen

Heftig verenpikken bij legkippen is deels terug te leiden op neurotransmitterafgifte tijdens de opfok en wordt mogelijk versterkt door veranderingen in darmflora bij notoire veerpikkers. Het zijn nieuwe, fundamentele aanknopingspunten die boven kwamen drijven in het vijfjarige NWO-programma Waardering van Dierenwelzijn, dat donderdag 12 juni in Wageningen een slotsymposium hield. In het koepelproject zochten interdisciplinaire teams naar fundamentele oplossingen rond welzijnsproblemen bij het houden van legkippen, varkens, vleeskalveren en Afrikaanse meervallen.

Veerpikken is gewoon gedrag van kippen', vertelt de Groningse gedragsbioloog Bernd Riedstra. 'Vooral bij jonge dieren is zachtaardig pikken belangrijk voor het tot stand brengen van sociale relaties en rangorde.' Waarom dat subtiele pikken op jonge leeftijd soms op latere leeftijd ontaardt in ernstig pikken is nog grotendeels onbegrepen. Het gehalte aan geslachtshormoon testosteron in broedeieren lijkt een rol te spelen. maar erg eenduidig is het niet. Wel vonden de onderzoekers aanwijzingen dat de olie die kippen over hun verenkleed verspreiden van groot belang is, Riedstra: 'De olie uit de stuitklier is bepalend voor de conditie van het veerkleed en werkt antimicrobieel. Er zijn zelfs aanwijzin-

gen dat dit consequenties heeft voor het microbioom van notoire veerpikkers en mogelijk een rol speelt bij instandhouding van dit gedrag. Daar duiken nu veel onderzoekers op.' De Utrechtse farmacoloog Marjolein Kops ontdekte dat ernstige veerpikkers op volwassen leeftijd meer van de neurotransmitter serotonine in de synaps kunnen vrijmaken, terwijl ze er evenveel van op voorraad heb ben als kippen die weinig pikken (Behavioural Brain Research, 14 juli). 'Genetische selectie en omgevingsomstandigheden bepalen waarschijnlijk vooral via hersenprocessen of kuikens zich ontwikkelen tot ernstige veerpikkers', denkt Kops, Omdat in 2018 een verbod op snavelknippen zal ingaan, proberen fokkers on-

der meer vreedzamere legkippen te fokken door rekening te houden met indirecte genetische effecten. De pluimveehouderij kent een grote specialisatie met broederijen, opfokbedrijven en legkiphouderijen, aangevuld met verschillende houderijsystemen. Gedragsontwikkeling van jonge kuikens is hiermee niet altiid goed afgestemd op latere productieomstandigheden. 'Vooral in de vijfde week van hun ontwikkeling zie je bij kuikens een piek in de overgang van zachtaardig naar ernstig veerpikken, met een langdurig effect op het latere gedrag', constateert de Wageningse adaptatiefysioloog Elske de Haas. Vooral bruine legkippen zijn hierbij erg gevoelig voor omgevingsfactoren (Plos One, 6 maart online).



Fish subprogramme: Still of video showing an elevator construction that projected video images of an aquarium. The purpose was to bridge the distance between fish and human. The construction has been used at the open day of Utrecht School of the Arts (www.vimeo.com/62102011)

WAARDERING VAN DIERENWELZIJN

Dierenwelzijn in belang van mens en dier werkt

Hoe kunnen we dierenwelzijn verbeteren zonder dat het ten koste gaat van economische belangen? Dat was de hoofdvraag binnen het NWO-programma Waardering van dierenwelzijn dat in juni werd afgesloten. Betrokkenen zijn enthousiast over de gezamenlijke opzet, de resultaten én over de vernieuwende aanpak. Tekst menke benytma



Bijtgedrag is deels erfelijk bepaald Met selectie kun je vriendelijkere nakomelingen fokken.

Het lijkt misschien een paradox, maar varkens-, kippen- en vissenonderzoe-kers, fokkers en kwekers, dierenbesehermers, politici en mensen van de productschappen Vlees en Vis hebben een gezamenlijk visie. Ze willen allemaal dat het dierenwelzijn in de Nederlandse stallen en schuren verbetert – en ze zijn ervan overtuigd dat dat kân, zonder dat de producenten erop achtersitezen.

Op 12 juni kwamen ze bijeen in Wageningen om de resultaten te delen van het NWO-programma Waardering van dierenwelzijn (zie kader), dat dit jaar ten einde loopt.

'Het is heel bijzonder dat je al deze spelers op deze manier bij elkaar ziet', zegt Tjard de Cock Buning, hoogleraar Toegepaste ethiek in de levenswetenschappen aan de VU Amsterdam tijdens de bijeenkomst. Als voorzitter van de programmacommissie was hij nauw bij dit NWO-initiatief betrokken Dierenwelzijn, zo benadrukt hij, wordt van oudsher top-down aangepakt: via regelgeving die de producenten wordt opgelegd. Dat blijkt keer op keer niet goed te werken. 'Hier zie je een prachtig voorbeeld van een bottom-up-aanpak', zegt hij. 'Alle partijen zitten samen om de tafel - en dat levert uitkomsten op waar de producenten ook werkelijk jets mee kunnen.

Speelgoed vermindert staartbijten

Een mooi voorbeeld is het verhaal van de Wageningse varkensonderzoekers. Zij onderzochten hoe je kunt voorkomen dat varkens elkaar voortdurend in de oren en de staart bijten. Dat gedrag komt helaas veel voor in moderne varkensstallen. 'Varkens hebben een sterke behoefte aan wroeten en knagen, en in een kleine, kale behuizing reageren ze dat op elkaar af,' vertelt onderzoeker Irene Camerlink, 'Dat gedrag is niet alleen naar voor de varkens, maar het gaat ook ten koste van de groei.' De ideale oplossing is een grotere en natuurlijkere huisvesting voor alle varkens. Dat is om allerlei redenen niet realistisch, aldus de onderzoekers. Maar ook onder de gegeven omstandigheden zijn er manieren om het bijtgedrag te verminderen. 'Een daarvan is

'Als je varkens een jutezak geeft om op te kauwen, dan neemt het bijtgedrag sterk af'

verrijking van het hok', vertelt Camerlink. 'Als je varkens een jutezak geeft om op te kawwen, dan neemt het bijtgedrag sterk af. Zelfs een paar keer per dag een handjevol stro maakt al een verschil.' Daarnaast blijkt het bijtgedrag bij varkens deels erfelijk bepaald te zijn. Dat betekent dat je ouderdieren daarop kunt selecteren om zo 'vriendelijkere' nakomelingen te fokken. Die aanpak is nieuw, aldus de onderzoeker, en lijkt niet ten koste te gaan van de productie.



Interdisciplinaire onderzoeksaanpak in de praktijk

'Dierenwelzijn speelde een rol in twee eerdere NWO-programma's', vertelt voorzitter De Cock Buning. 'Maar die waren vrij fundamenteel van aard en de resultaten zijn nog nauwelijks vertaald naar de praktijk.' Daar wilde de hoofdfinancier, het toenmalige ministerie van Landbouw, Natuurbeheer en Visserij (nu EZ), graag verandering in brengen. Daarom is er bij dit derde programma voor een ander traject gekozen. 'Vanaf het begin zijn álle partijen bij het onderzoek betrokken,' zegt De Cock Buning. 'Van het formuleren van de wezenlijke vragen tot het nadenken over hoe je de resultaten het beste in de praktijk kunt brengen en kunt communiceren naar het publiek."

Dat betekent ook dat de onderzoeksprojeeten interdisciplinair van aard waren: niet alleen levenswetenschappers, maar ook ethici en sociaalwetenschappers deden mee. Zij onderzochten bijvoorbeeld welke rol de consument kan spelen bij het verbeteren van dierenwelzijn.

Nederland geeft internationaal voorbeeld

Een van de sprekers op 12 juni was Christine Nicol, lid van de beoordelingscommissie 2009 en onderzoeker aan de University of Bristol. Zij besprak recent Brits onderzoek naar pikgedrag en stress bij kippen. 'Dit NWO-onderzoeksprogramma is uniek', zegt ze na afloop. 'Vanwege die bottom-upaanpak, maar ook gezien de duur en de schaal van het onderzoek. Daar kunnen andere landen nog veel van leren.' In veel westerse landen krijgt het welzijn van productiedieren steeds meer nadruk, aldus Nicol, maar er ontbreekt nog veel kennis om die intentie werkelijk om te zetten in veranderde productiemethoden. Juist voor die stap is een programma als dit van groot belang', zegt Nicol. 'Ik hoop dat andere landen daar een voorbeeld aan zullen nemen." Ze ziet dat positief in, zeker nu de EU-regelgeving steeds strenger wordt.

Binnenkort is het kappen van snavels en het couperen van staarten bijvoorbeeld niet meer toegestaan en kunnen dieren elkaar makkelijker beschadigen. Daarom moeten producenten snel concrete maatregelen gaan nemen om dierenleed te voorkomen – en om hun productie op peil te houden. Want daar zijn alle partijen inmiddels van overtuigd: uiteindelijk is dierenwebzijn ook in het belang van de boer en zijn portemonnee. Nieo! 'De uitdaging is om dit internationaal aan te pakken. Om de uitkomsten van onderzoek te delen en samen te komen tot een model van best practiees.' «<

Waardering van dierenwelzijn

Het NWO-programma Waardering van dierenwelzijn liep van 2009 tot 2014. Het werd gefinancierd door NWO en het ministerie van Economische Zaken. Daarnaast droegen het bedrijfsleven (zoals viskwekerijen en fokkerijen) en productschappen bij in middelen en in natura. Vijf projecten kregen financiering toegekend, met een totaal budget van 5,1 miljoen euro: Verminderen van ooren staartbijten bij varkens; Verminderen van stress bij vissen; Verminderen van verenpikken bij kippen; Natuurlijker voer voor kalveren en Marketing van diervriendelijke producten.

Een vervolg van dit programma is niet direct voorzien. Wel zullen algemene aspecten van dierenwelzijn aan de orde komen in verschillende initiatieven binnen de topsectoren Life Sciences & Health en Agri & Food. Meer informatie: www.nwo.nl/dierenwelzijn en www.nwo.nl/topsectoren.

Door Nienke Beintema

et is een favoriet tijd-verdrijf van varkens: op elkaars oren en staarten kauwen. Dat gebeurt vooral in de waar tien tot wel vijftig dieren in één hok leven. Gemiddeld vertoont zo'n 5 procent van de varkens schade aan de staart, met uitschieters tot wel 60 procent. Dat gebijt heeft niet alleen procent. Dat gebijt heeft niet alleen nare gewolgen voor de varkens, maar is ook slecht voor de productie: geplaagde dieren groeien minder goed. In het slachthuis kan dat per varken al gazw 4 kilo schelen.

Maar er is goed nieuws voor de varkensboeren. De neiging tot bijten zit bij varkens in de genen. Dus kun je oudertifieren de aavon sedereten en vo

bij varkens in de genen. Dus kun je ouderdieren daarop selecteren en zo minder bijtgrage varkens fokken. Dat bleek uit een project in het kader van het vijfjarige onderzoeksprogramma Waardering van dierenwelstijn', een initiatief van de Nederlandse Organi-satie voor Wetenschappelijk Onder-zoek (NWO) en het ministerie van Economische Zaken. Op 12 juni pre-senteerden de onderzoekers hun be-vindingen op een eindsymposium in

Wageningen. "Natuurlijk heb je het liefst dat alle varkens de hele dag buiten in de mod varkens de hele dag buiten in de mod-der mogen rollen", zegt Liesbeh Bol-huis van Wageningen Universiteit, projectleider van het varkensonder-zoek. "Dan kunnen ze voldeonde wroeten en kauwen en hoeven ze die neiging niet op elkaar af te reageren. Maar dat is om allerlei redenen niet realistisch."

realistisch."

Ook onder de gegeven omstandig-heden zijn er veel manieren om het diserenwebzijn te verbeteren, bena-drukt ze. "Bij het welzijn van varkens denken veel mensen alleen aan de fysieke omgeving", zegt Bolhuis, "zoals de grootte en de inrichting van het hok. Maar ook de sociale omgeving is heel belangrijk." Varkens ervaren in een nieuwe omgeving minder stress als er een bekend varken in de buurt als er een bekend varken in de buurt is, zo bleek uit het Wageningse onderzoek. Varkens die regelmatig vriend-schappelijk besuntfeld worden door hun soortgemoten, groeien zo'n 30 gram per dag miedr dan dieren die nooit besuntfeld worden. Op een ge-middelde greeiensheldel van zo'n 750 gram per dag scheelt dat aanzienijk. meer dan 2 procent van de tijd wor-den beknabbeld, juist 40 gram per dag minder groeien.

den beknabbeld, Juist 40 gram per dag minder groeien. De Wageningers ontdekten daarbij iets opvallends: varkens die in een goed humeur zijn, kunnen die ge-moedstoestand overbrengen op hun holgenoten. Maar ook stress slaat snel over van het ene op het andere dies. Win opvannen die ang reministous dier. "We noemen dit een primitieve vorm van empathie", zegt Bolhuis, "en die kan dus zowel positief als negatief uitwerken. Het is zaak om daar in de dierhouderij gebruik van te ma-

in de dierhouderij gebruik van te ma-ken."

De Wageningers widen graag we-ten of het bijgedrag van varkens san-geboren is. Hulpmidde bij hun on-derzoek waren de gegevens die fok-kers al decennislang nauwkeurig bij-bouden van al ban varkense wie krijgt nakomelingen met wier En hoe pro-ductief zijn die nakomelingen't Voor-seel van de die die die die die die die walled krijgen varkens een fok-waarde 'toeghend. Op basis daarvan klezen de fokkers welke dieren ze met claar kruisen. Daar wilden wij graag een fokwaarde voor sociaal ge-



DURRELE AANDAK-GOEDMOEDIGEDE DIEDEN FOKKEN EN MEED AEL EIDING

In leuke stal vol stro en jutezakken bijten varkens elkaar veel minder

Liesbeth Bolhuis en collega's onderzochten ook het ga's onderzochten ook het effect van de omgeving op sociaal gedrag. Verrijking van het hok zorgt ervoor dat varkens elkaar minder beknabbelen. Een maxi-

Volgens EU-regels is verrij-king van varkenshokken nu al verplicht, maar de term is niet nader omschreven. Sommige boeren geven

een metalen ketting als ver-rijking, maar die is niet fijn om op te bijten. Ook zijn er allerlei situaties waarin varkenshouders die ver-rijkingspileht kunnen ontlopen. "Strobedding is niet in alle varkensstallen niet in alle varkensstallen in optie", erkent Bolhuis, "omdat sommige systemen van mestalverd daardoor

verstopt kunnen raken."

Het Wageningse onder-zoek liet zien dat alle beet-jes helpen. Het scheelt als je varkens een jutezak geeft om op te kauwen, of een touw. Zelfs twee keer per dag een handje hooi

drag aan toevoegen", vertelt Bolhuis, Maar hoe doe je dar' je kunt als fok-ker ommogelijk van al je varkens een tijdlang gaan turven hoe vaak ze in el-kaars oren en staarten bijten." Daarom gingen de Wageningers op zoek naar een geschikte indirecte maat voor 'vriendelijk' gedrag. De fokdatabases voor tienduizenden vardrag aan toevoegen", vertelt Bolh

maat voor 'vriendelijk' gedrag. De fokdatabases voor tienduizenden var-kens lieten inderdaad - net als de ge-dragsstudies - verschillen tussen var-kens zien. De hokgenoten van sommi-ge dieren groeiden een paar procent beter of juist slechter dan gemiddeld, onder vergelijkbare omstandigheden.

Higgen
Wat cruciaal was: dat effect heeft een
erfelije component. Als oadervarkens een negatief effect hebben op de
groei van hun holgenoten, dan hebben hun biggen later een bovengmiddelde kans dat ze óök hun holgenoten dwarszilien. In een gedragsstudie
kens vergeleken de Wageningers vervolgens dieren met zo n' 1age sociale
kens vergelekens met een hoge sociale fokwaarde bijten eilcaar 24 procent minder in saatren en oren. Ook
zetten ze veel minder vaak (44 procent) zomar een hap in andere licent) zomaar een hap in andere li-chaamsdelen, zoals een beet in de zij van een ander varken. En als de dievan een ander vanken. En als de de-ren jutezakken kregen om mee te spe-len, gingen er 30 procent minder zak-ken doorheen - de varkens beten er minder in.

minder in.

Varierus met een hoge sociale folwaarde reageren ook minder angeig
en gestrest op nieuwe en uitdageid
es itsateid, en hebben lagere concentrate
switte bloedcellen in han bloed.
"Deze bloedcellen spelen een rol in
et afweersysteem", legt flohisi uit,
"Bij acute en chronische stress kunen deze waarden verhoogd zijn."
Bolbuis en haar collega's noemen
un niet-bilterage varierus virjende-

Bolhuis en haar collega's noemen hun niet-bliggrage varkens vriende-lijk' of sociaal'. Of ze ook echt meer sociaal gefrag vertonen, zoals elkaar bestuffelen, is niet onderzocht. In ie-der geval zijn de dieren kalmer, en minder agressief. Bolhuis will graag doorgaan met het onderzoek, vooral om uit ez ooken wat or gebeur als je dieren met elkaar wat or gebeur als je dieren met elkaar sociaal en die sociaal sociaal fokwaarde. Jik ben heel benieuwd welk, effect dat over een paar eneera-

welk effect dat over een paar genera-

welk effect dat over een paar genes ties zou hebben, wat betreft zowel groei als welzijn." Is het wel ethisch om varkens te fokken op wenselijk gedrag? Bolhu vindt van wel. "In de fokkerij is de vindt van wel., In de fokkerij is de laatste jaren steeds meer aandacht ge-komen voor de fysieks en mentale ge-zondheid van dieren", zegt ze., Dm-dat de consument dat wil, omdat de EU het voorschrijf en ook omdat vee-houders zien dat de productie daar baat bij heeft. Dat selectie folden daarbij nu een middel wordt, is alleen daarbij nu een middel wordt, is alleen maar een goede zaak. Er wordt nu al continu gefolt op allerfel fysieke as-pecten, waarom dan niet ook op ei-genschappen die goed uitpakken voor wetzigt? Als geide op positieve manier kunt bijsturen, dan komt dat de berene nie de varkens ten goede. de berene nie de varkens ten goede. schermligt jo het niet haar eens. "Het schermligt jo het niet haar eens. "Het schermligt jo het niet haar eens. Jette beleen", zegt ze, want het couperen beleen", zegt ze, "want het couperen het op de person was de person beleen", zegt ze, "want het couperen het op de person was de person het op de pe

toesomst aneen maar een groter pro-beem", zegt ze, "want het couperen van staarten wordt in Europa op kor-te termijn verboden. Dit onderzoek laat zien wat boeren op relatief simpe le manieren kunnen doen om hun varkens een beter leven te geven. Dat juichen wij alleen maar toe."



NIENKE BEINTEMA

et is een favoriet tijdverdrijf van varkens: op elkars cree en staarten kauwen, Dat gebeurt vooralin de moderne var kensstal, waar dien tot wel vijftig dieren in ein hot keven. Genade

wel vijftig dieren in eine holde ver der wel vijftig dieren in ein hold heven. Gemidded verhoet in 5 grocens van de vanbens schoel ein de staat an de vanbens schoel ein de staat op die beeft het die de verhoel ein de van de van maar is ook diecht voor de producties, maar is ook diecht voor de producties, peplaagde dieren groein minder goed. In het alschhuis kan dat per varken al gazw 4 kilos schefer.

a Main Certem.

A state of the control delevate votor de vunder boosens. De nedging not bijen alt bij v bens in de genen. Dus kan je ouderdie daarop selecteren en zo minder bijegz varkens fokken. Dut bleek uit een proje in het kadev unt het viljering onder zoel zijer, een institutief van de Nederlaan Organisaatie voor Wetenschappel Onder noch (DWO) en het ministreier van Cognalisaatie voor Wetenschappel Onder noch (DWO) en het ministreier van de Nederlaan de Nederlaan

"Natuurlijk heb je het liefst dat alle var kens de hele dag buiten in de modde Wageningen Universiteit, projectfeid van het varlamsonderzoek, "Dan kanns au voldoende wroeten en kauwen en ho ven ze die neiging niet op elikaar af te re geren. Maar dat is om allenlei zedenen ni

geren. Maar dat is om alleriet redenen n realistisch."

groeien.

De Wageningers ontdekten daarbij iets opvallends: varkens die in een goed hamear zijn, kunnen die gemoedstestand overbrengen op han holgenoten.

ctleider op het andere dier. kunnen primitieve vorm var en hoef te reanegatief uitwerken.

Fokken op vriendelijk gedrag

outcom gragientos wagernagers open sanar een geschtzle indirecte maat voor 'vriendelijk' gedrag, De foldatabases voer intenduizenden vaternas liteen indeedaad – seet als de gedragsstudies- veeschilden tusseen varkens sien. De holgenoten van soontralge dieren groeiden een paar procert beere of just siehen de granddeled, onder vergelijkhare omstandigheden. Wite revisial soon van effect heen om effect. lijke component. Als oudervarkens e negatief effect hebben op de groei van h hokgenoten, dan bebben hun biggen lat een bovengemiddelde kars dat ze 60k h

ern invergensuserier nam van er con in helegenotien dwarzitzier met vijfhonde varhens veignfelenn ert Nijfhonde varhens veignfelenn ert Nord State varhens veignfelenn met no'n 'tage cocialer fin verseler' met dieren met no'n 'tage cocialer fin transport of the state of the state to state of the state of the state ten en coren. Odl. arthur ar veid mind stalk (44 procent) zonsaar een hap andere infransporteren, nook een best

> pargent of any potential minister assistent conbenn -deze varients betten er minister in. Varieres met een hoge sociale foll waarde reageren ook minder angelig e gestrest op nieuwe en uitslagende eitzuties, en heiben lagere ontentstaties viri bloedcriffen in hran bloed. "Deze bloedd het systelm een of in het al freeersysteen: legt Bolbuin uit. "Bij secule en checotisch streys kunnen deze waarden verhoog streys kunnen deze waarden verhoog

Bolhuis en haar collega's noemen hun niet-bijtgrage vurkens 'vriendelijk' of 'sociaal'. Of ze ook echt meer sociaal gedrag vertonen, zools elkaar bestudfelen, is niet onderzocht, in ieder geval zijn de-diecen kalmer, en minder agressief.

onsent. Als oudervarknes een liech hebben op-de groei van hun n, dan hebben han biggen later n, dan hebben han biggen later sen op basis van hun sociale fokuma ne doarsezitzen een paar georatis so on beben.

Is dit een goed idee?

habst wie effective from varieus or folkern op warstellig georgie. Deltaks visitet var und "In die folkertij in die laatete jewen steed neer anschließ gelomen voor de fysiele en sensibe geworkheid van deren", zeg de territorie de de 1900 de 1900 de 1900 de 600 de 1900 de 1900 de 1900 de 1900 de 600 de 1900 de

boeen en de vasteens ten goede."
Manijle de Jong van de Dierembesche
ming is het met haar eens, "Het staarfis
en van vastiens wordt in de toeloom
sleeen naar een groter probleeen", zegt a
jaar de probleeen", zegt a
jaar de probleeen van staarten woodt it
Barepa op korte tennijn verhoden. Di
noderzoek baat zien van toevere op relatii
singele maniteren kunnen doen ook ha

NRC Next, 28 juni 2014

VEEHOUDERII

Waardering van dierenwelzijn

ILONA LESSONS

Alom is er de roep om meer dierenwetzijn. Maar wat is dierenwetzijn nu precies en hoe meet je dat? Met de onderzoeken die donderdag werden gepresenteerd in Wageningen zijn heldere afspraken en definities weer een stapje dichterbij.

Pas wanneer dierenwelzin een transparant begrip is en te beoordelen is aan de hand van dudelijke criteria en betrouwbare instrumenten. kan het een waarde worden waar de markt nee uit de voeten kan, schrijkt de Nederlande Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO). De gaf opdracht voor het meerjarig project "Waardering van dierenwel. jijf. Dat project is nu algerondzijf. Dat project is nu algerond-

Voor varkens en pluimvee ligt er wat betreft dierenwelzijn al een stevige kennisbasis. Dat wordt nu vertaald naar integraal duurzame systemen, labels en concepten.

Han Swinkels, lector Duurzame Veehouderijketens aan de HAS Den Bosch en lid van de programmacommissie, juicht die ontwikkeling toe. 'Als de markt het maar trekt; de consument wil er wel voor betalen.'

'Waardevol', kwalificeert Swin-

keis het project 'Waardering van dierenwelzijn'. 'De waarde van kennisontwikkeling moet niet worden onderschat, Het is een voorwaarde om te vernieuwen, ook al staat het soms ver van de praktijk. De permanente uitdaging is kennis te verbinden met kunde uit de praktijk." Scholen en praktijkeentra zoals het Varkens Innovatie Gentrum (VIC) Sterksel spelen een belangrijke rol in het maken van die vertaalslag.

Stro is must

Stro is een must uit oozguunt van dierenwelzijn en het effect van verijkingsmateriaal is eomm. Dut is een van de conclusies van het onderzoek naar sociale interacties tussen varkens en het effect daarvan op gedrag en welzijn, verricht door longe Reimert. Irene Camerlink, Naomi Duijvestofin en Makianen Benard.

Misar er is meer. Sociale interacties zijn positief voor een varken, concluderen de onderzoekers. Het leidt onder andere tot een hogere groei (de groep bepaalt voor zo tot 30 procent de groei) en gunstiger voederconversie.

Dat inzicht leidde onder andere tot een nieuwe fokkerijstrategie naar een socialer varken. Een veelbelowend indirect genetisch effect (IGE) daarvan is minder peoblemen met straaribijten. Een ander resultaat van het onderzoek zijn nieuwe parameters voor het vastleggen van emoties

Belangrijke les voor de onderzoekers is dat bet in principe niet uitmaakt wat je onderzoekt. Zonder vertaalslag naar de praktijk heeft het onderzoek geen waarde, is hun ervaring. Ze pleiten et voor de primaire sectoe nauw te betrekken bij onderzoek.

Vezelrijker voer

Een duurzame voerstrategie is goed voor kalf en economie, vonden Laura Webb, Evnis Mollenbrist en Harm Berends. In hun onderzoek komen zij tod de conclusie dat in he rantsoen van vleeskalveren tot weld einft van de energie kan komen uit ruw- en krachtvoer met behoud van groei en de specifieke kenmerken van kalfovleen.

Kalveren die te weinig wezeltijk voor krijgen, noem vaak abnoren vaak abnoren van de kongedrag. Wannere en meer zuwe en krachtvoer wordt gewende is de verhooding tussen beide een punt van aandacht. In dat geldt ook van aandacht. In dat geldt ook helbenhorst en Beereds aan. Kalver hebben een voorkeur woer hool it, jurrijk en site. Ook vonde in de onderzoekersdat läng hoot positiever is voor de unvooropname en peers voor de unvooropname en peers voor de unvooropname en peers

ontwikkeling dan gehakseld hooi.

Een hogere ruwvoeropname leidt tot meer pensfermentatie en broeiksagsamissie. 'Op dientweau betekent dat een verslechtering, Op ketenniveau is het milieueffect neuraal', gewen de onderzoekers aan. Wat het effect van meer ruwe en krachtvoer is op de stikstofefficiency moet nog worden berekend.

Paspoort voor hen

Werenpikken is een probleem van de bele keten. Iedere schakel speelt een rol in het voorkomen van werenpikken, zegeen Elske de legten tragrid de jong en Bernd Riedstra. Zij vonden dat het gedrag van Zij vonden dat het gedrag van stress hij de moorderdieren of uit opfakperiode. "Early life conditions birtrodeet het gedrag van de birtrodeet het gedrag van de in het latere leven", aldus de onderzeeker.

Zo geven ouderdieren met stress meer testosteron mee in het el. Het kuiken is daardoor competitiever', zeggen de onderzoekers. Ook het weghalen van kuikenpapier in de opfok kan negastel werken tijdens de legperiode. De Haas, De Jong en Biedstra pleiten daarom voor meer openheid en transparantie in de keten. Dat zoo bijvoorbeeld vorm kont krijgen in een paspoort dat met het e

Verder noemen de onderzoekers meer onderzoek naar epigenetische effecten (parameters die invloed hebben op de genexpressie) gewenst. Je hebt bennen die het genetisch in alch hebben om te pikken. De vraag blijft waarem de eerste kip daarmee begint.

Positie innemen

Consumenten vragen om diervriendelijker vlees. Ze zijn het texreden over het gangbare, maar vinden biologisch vlees te duur. Maarschappelijke organisaties, de Dierenbescherming in het bijzonder, hebben echter een wezenlijke rol gespeeld in de totstandkoming van het tussensegment.

Voor kip bijvoorbeeld is een nieuwe markt op gang gekomen omdat zijpositie innamen', geven Jacqueline Bos, Janneke de Jonge, Eva Gocsik en Victor Immink aan. 'Door de dialoog met meerdere belanghebbenden vindt er een geleidelijke verschuiving plaats naar dienvriendelijker syste-

Veehouders willen wel omschakelen naar dierwiendelijker productiesystemen, vonden de onderzoekers, als de meerkosten maar worden. betaald. Uit zichzelf hebben veehouders niet een heel sterke drive om te veranderen en missen ze meestal de flexibiliteit om radicaal te veranderen.

Verder vonden Bos, De Jonge, Goosik en Immink dat wanneer er geen productdifferentiatie is de consument toch vooral kiest voor gangbaar viees en minder snel voor biolo-



Addendum 2

The steering committee consisted of the following persons:

Prof Dr Henk Goos (chair) em. professor Endocrinology, Utrecht

University (UU)

Ir. Jan Nijsten

Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs (EZ)

Dr Frans Martens

Netherlands Organisation of Scientific

Research: director of Earth and Life Sciences

(NWO-ALW)

The review panel consisted of the following persons:

Dr Jan Terlouw (chair) Dutch physician, politician, and writer

Prof Dr Klaus Grunert Aarhus School of Business
Prof Dr Per Jensen Linkoping University

Prof Dr Alistair Lawrence SAC Newcastle
Prof Dr Christine Nicol Bristol University

Prof Dr Peter Sandoe University Copenhagen

Dr Marijke de Jong Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals

Ir. Saskia Beers Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature

and Food Quality (LNV)

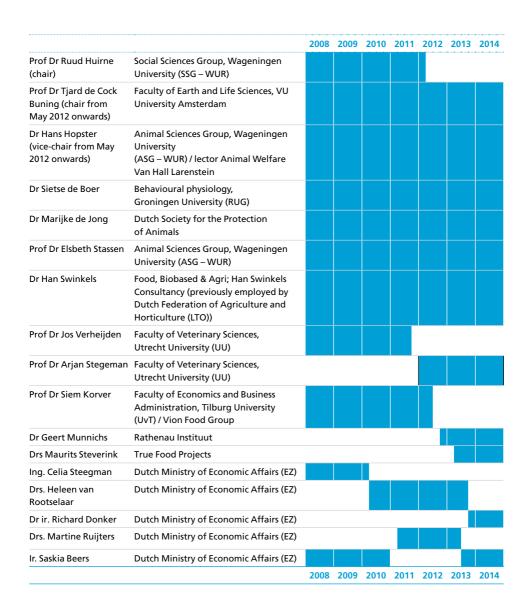
Ing. Celia Steegman Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature

and Food Quality (LNV)

Dr Han Swinkels Dutch Federation of Agriculture and

Horticulture (LTO) – South

Overview of current and past members of the programme committee.



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November 2014

Dit eindevaluatierapport vormt de afsluiting van het programma Waardering van Dierenwelzijn. Het onderzoeksprogramma financierde wetenschappelijk onderzoek dat een maatschappelijk en economisch vitale dierhouderij moet bevorderen. Economische belangen staan immers vaak op gespannen voet met het welzijn van het dier.

Het programma liep van 2008 tot 2014 en had een budget van € 5,1 miljoen, bijeengebracht door het Ministerie van Economische Zaken en NWO Aard- en Levenswetenschappen; daarnaast waren er bijdragen, zowel financieel als in natura, van onder andere het bedrijfsleven (viskwekerijen, fokkerijen en productschappen) en van de Dierenbescherming.

Het onderzoek richtte zich op verenpikken bij broedkippen, agressie in viskweekculturen, het sociale gedrag van varkens, natuurlijke voeding voor kalveren, en de latente vraag van consumenten naar diervriendelijke producten.

