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FINAL REPORT OF A MISSION
CARRIED OUT IN FINLAND
FROM 11 TO 15 OF JUNE 2001
CONCERNING THE INSPECTIONS OF ANIMAL WELFARE STANDARDS ON
PIG, CALF AND LAYING HEN HOLDINGS

Please note that certain written comments, made by the Finnish authorities on 11 September 2001 in response to the draft report, have been included in the text of this final report in bold, italic type or as a footnote.

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ABBREVIATIONS & SPECIAL TERMS USED IN THE REPORT

CA	Competent Authority
CCA	Central Competent Authority
EEC	European Economic Community
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office

1. INTRODUCTION

The mission took place in Finland from 11 to 15 June 2001. The mission team comprised two veterinary experts from the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO), and one Member State expert.

The mission was undertaken as part of the FVO's planned mission programme. The inspection team was accompanied during the whole mission by a representative of the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

At the opening meeting held on 11 June 2001, the objectives of the mission were confirmed by the inspection team, and presentations were made by representatives of the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, outlining the structure, administrative and operational procedures of all levels of the competent authority (CA).

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE MISSION

The objective of the mission was to evaluate CA inspections of animal welfare standards on pig, calf and laying hen holdings. This was the first mission undertaken to Finland for this purpose. It formed part of a wider series of missions to all Member States evaluating control systems and operational standards in this sector.

In pursuit of this objective, the following sites were visited:

COMPETENT AUTHORITY VISITS			Comments
Competent authority	Central	2	Opening and closing meetings
	Regional	2	The organisation of the inspections and the results of previous inspections were discussed at these meetings.
	Local	3	The organisation of the inspections and the results of previous inspections were discussed at these meetings.
LIVE ANIMAL CONTROL SITES			Comments
Pig holdings		2	A veterinarian from the local (municipal) authority carried out an inspection of the holdings in his area.
Calf holdings		2	
Laying hen holdings		2	

3. LEGAL BASIS FOR THE MISSION

The mission was carried out under the general provisions of Community legislation and in particular:

Commission Decision 98/139/EC of 4 February 1998 laying down certain detailed rules concerning on-the-spot checks carried out in the veterinary field by Commission experts in the Member States.

Article 9 of Council Directive 91/629/EEC of 19 November 1991 laying down the minimum standards for the protection of calves.

Article 9 of Council Directive 91/630/EEC of 19 November 1991 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs.

Article 7 of Council Directive 88/166/EEC laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens in battery cages.

Article 7 of Council Directive 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes.

Commission Decision 2000/50/EC of 17th December 1999 concerning minimum requirements for the inspection of holdings on which animals are kept for farming purposes.

In addition certain aspects of Council Directive 93/119/EEC of 22 December 1993 on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter or killing were relevant to the performance of this mission.

4. BACKGROUND TO THE CURRENT MISSION

4.1. The pig sector

In 2000 there were about 1.3 million pigs in Finland of which there were around 0.18 million breeding sows and 0.69 million fattening pigs. There were 4387 pig holdings in Finland and in the regions visited there were between 140 and 1575 pig holdings.

4.2. The calf sector

In 2000 there were about 1 million cattle in Finland. The production of calves is mostly used *for replacement of milk production* or transferred to fattening farms up to the age of 1-1.5 year for slaughter. The production of veal calves is prohibited in Finland. There were 9651 suckling calves on 2676 holdings. In the whole of Finland there were 28485 cattle holdings and in the regions visited there were between 2345 and 4225 cattle holdings.

4.3. The poultry sector

In 2000 the laying hen population in Finland was about 3.5 million in total. There were 1046 laying hen holdings with more than 350 animals of which 2 holdings with enriched cage systems and 140 holdings with alternative systems. In the regions visited there were between 28 and 595 laying hen holdings.

5. MAIN FINDINGS

5.1. Central Competent Authority

The Food and Health Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is the Central Competent Authority (CCA) responsible for the legislation and its enforcement concerning animal welfare. The CCA *directs guides and generally supervises compliance with the animal welfare legislation and therefore* issues guidelines and instructions to the regional services. The checklists for the inspections are laid down at central level and the farms to be visited are selected by the CCA.

5.2. Regional Competent Authority

Finland is divided into 6 provinces, in which there are 13 regional (provincial) offices with 17 provincial veterinary officers. They direct and supervise *compliance with the animal welfare legislation* within their area.

5.3. Local Competent Authorities

Municipal veterinarians, municipal health inspectors and the police act as local animal welfare authorities. The municipal veterinarians are supervised and paid by the veterinary service for administrative tasks. In addition the municipal veterinarians perform private¹ curative veterinary practice in their municipality (see chapter 5.6.1 under staff personnel).

The official veterinarians for carrying out meat inspection are responsible for animal welfare checks at slaughterhouses. Border veterinarians are responsible for animal welfare checks at exit points and veterinary border control points.

There are also a number of animal welfare inspectors whom the provincial offices have authorised to make animal welfare inspections. However, these inspectors cannot perform official duties but have to contact the appropriate authority that will take the measures necessary to improve animal welfare.

5.4. Special status of the Åland Islands

As regards veterinary matters, the Åland Islands are autonomous with the exception of animal disease legislation. Regarding animal welfare, the Åland Islands enact their own laws and enforce the EC ordinances applicable to these fields. The Åland Islands have a provincial veterinarian whose work profile corresponds to that of the provincial veterinarians in the Finnish mainland. The Åland Islands were not visited in this mission.

5.5. Applicable legislation in Finland

The basic legislation providing the legal basis for carrying out inspections of animal welfare on pig, calf and laying hen holdings is laid down in the Act on Animal Protection (247/1996) and amends 1194/1996, 594/1998 and 662/1999.

Other basic legislation is laid down in the Decree (Statute) on Animal Protection (396/1996), as amended (402/1998, 425/2000).

Council Directive 91/629/EEC laying down minimum standards for the protection of calves, as amended by Council Directive 97/2/EC, and by Commission Decision 97/182/EC is implemented in Finland by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Decision on animal welfare requirements for cattle (14/FHD/1997).

¹ The Finnish comments state, that the municipal veterinarians carry out veterinary practise in their district but are compensated by the municipality and not by keeping private practices.

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Decision on animal welfare requirements for pigs (13/FHD/1997) implements Council Directive 91/630/EEC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs.

Council Directive 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes is implemented by amending the Act, the Decree and corresponding decisions.

Council Directive 88/166/EEC and Council Directive 1999/74/EC laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens were implemented by the Decision 10/FHD/2000 of the Ministry of Agriculture on animal welfare requirements for laying hens.

Council Directive 93/119/EC of 22 December 1993 on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter or killing was implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Decision on animal welfare requirements for the slaughtering of animals (23/FHD/1997, as amended 6/FHD/1999) and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Decision on animal welfare requirements for the killing of production animals (18/FHD/1996, as amended 5/FHD/2000).

Several requirements which go beyond the requirements of the directives were noted:

- The pigs and calf regulations apply to all holdings without exempting small units.
- There are no transitional periods for older pig and calf holdings concerning the keeping of calves over 8 weeks in individual pens and the space requirements.
- The keeping of veal calves is prohibited and the tethering of pigs is no longer allowed since 1.7.1996. Beak trimming of birds is forbidden as well. Tail docking of pigs is principally not allowed, only in exceptional cases *may it be done if the measures to improve the housing of pigs in order to avoid tail biting have failed.*
- From 1.7.2006 on, *dry pregnant sows and gilts after service may be kept in crates preventing them from turning around only for acceptable reasons and temporarily.* Farrowing sows shall not be kept in crates preventing them turning around for more than eight weeks after farrowing..
- From 1.1.2003 on the requirements of the new laying hen directive 1999/74/EC concerning unenriched and enriched cages also apply to hen houses with less than 350 hens.
- *For cages accommodating 1 adult hen, the space requirement is 1000 cm² and for cages accommodating 2-3 hens, the space requirement is 600 cm²/hen.*

- For cages accommodating 4-5 hens, the minimum space requirement is 480 cm²/ hen until 31.12.2002 compared to 450 cm² required by the EC Directive.
- Accommodation comprising more than 3 tiers for laying hens is prohibited.
- Calves, pigs, and laying hens must not be permanently exposed to noise over 65 dBA.
- Recommendations for different criteria are laid down, e. g. concentration limits for noxious gases and for humidity in the houses, construction requirements for farrowing pens, bedding.

On the other hand the following minor deficiencies have been noted in the Finnish legislation:

- The definition of an ‘owner’ or ‘keeper’ as laid down in Article 2 of Council Directive 98/58/EC as well as the staffing requirement for the care of the animals as laid down in paragraph 1 of the Annex of Council Directive 98/58/EC are not exactly transposed into Finnish legislation.
- The reference to the Council Directive 98/58/EC as laid down in Article 10 was only done for the Laying hen Decision but not for the calf and pig Decisions.
- The requirement to seek veterinary advice as soon as possible for any animal which is not responding to the stockkeeper’s care as laid down in paragraph 6 of the Annex of Council Directive 91/629/EEC and Council Directive 91/630/EEC has not been transposed into Finnish legislation exactly.
- The requirement of ‘feeding’ calves at least twice a day as laid down in paragraph 12 of the Annex of Council Directive 91/629/EEC has been transposed with the wording ‘drinking’ into Finnish legislation.
- Whereas a ‘boar’ is defined in Article 2 of Council Directive 91/630/EEC as a male after puberty a ‘boar’ in Finnish legislation is defined as a grown-up adult male.

5.6. Operational procedures

5.6.1. Description of the system of supervision

The CCA has issued checklists for the inspections of calf, pig, laying hen and fur animal holdings. These include instructions and guidelines for the completion of the inspection. The checklists were used by all inspectors during the mission and in all previous inspections checked by the mission team. While the checklist for the laying hens was complete, the checklists for the pigs and calves did not include all aspects of the Council Directive 98/98/EC e.g. concerning the staff requirements and the requirements for record keeping of medicinal treatment and mortalities.

During the mission some inspectors did not check all criteria mentioned on the checklist but completed some of them on presumption. There were cases where the inspector did not give the correct answer because he did not read the questions on the checklist exactly.

In the beginning of each year the CCA sends a list of holdings to be inspected to the regional services, which forward this list to the corresponding municipalities. There is no date set² for the inspection and the time period in which the inspections had been carried out in previous years depended on the municipality inspectors. The veterinarians normally perform 4 to 6 EU inspections per year.

There are four copies of the inspection checklist which is signed by the inspector only: the original is given to the farmer, one copy is for the inspector himself and two copies are sent to the regional office which forwards one of the copies to the CCA.

For infringement cases the CCA has drafted a special report form in which the inspector documents the deficiencies detected and gives either advice notices in the case of minor deficiencies or orders in the case of infractions. It was observed by the mission team that the inspectors preferred to give advice notices rather than orders even in cases where orders would have been more appropriate.

The inspector sets a deadline on the order for remedying the deficiencies. There are no instructions concerning the appropriate length of deadlines. On one occasion a deadline of one year was set for modifying the housing system of calves older than 8 weeks from individual pens to group housing. While most revisits were done shortly after the deadline there were some revisits done several months after. The mission team observed cases where there were several revisits on a farm and at no time were any sanctions imposed. The veterinary service understands its role mainly in remedying the deficiencies and not in sanctioning.

The orders have to be signed by the farmer and the inspector. The farmer receives the original, one copy is for the inspector, one copy for the police and one copy for the regional veterinary service. If an official veterinarian at a slaughterhouse has reason to believe that there has been an animal welfare infringement *in an animal unit delivering the animals*, he is expected to report this to the corresponding provincial office. The mission team was shown such a case.

There is close co-operation between the veterinary services and the police (see chapter 5.6.3 Sanctions). The police act in *all cases* whereas the veterinary service is responsible for the follow-up for minor deficiencies. In court cases the inspecting veterinarians are often consulted for professional advice.

² The CCA has instructed the regional and local authorities that the inspections ordered must be done within the calendar year and during all seasons.

Although there are guidelines laid down in the Finnish legislation to describe the norms of some specific technical requirements such as air quality, floor characteristics and light, clear guidelines are missing for the assessment of the need for artificial ventilation or the isolation of sick and injured animals. In addition there were no guidelines for formulating action plans for farmers.

Staff personnel

Except for the personnel in the CCA, the supervision of animal welfare issues is only a part of the tasks of the veterinary service personnel. The local (municipal) veterinarians reported that the time spent for official administrative tasks including animal welfare amounts to 10-30 % and the rest is curative practice. No income comes from the sale of veterinary drugs. The municipal veterinarians are engaged by the Municipal Health Board which requires that there is always a veterinarian on duty in the municipality. Several municipal veterinarians work together in order to achieve a permanent duty representation. The municipality gives a fixed salary for this task which represents only a part of the income of the veterinarian. The other part of the income is the payment for the administrative tasks based on the number of official inspections or the inspection time and the curative practice. The municipal board has set a price range for each veterinary treatment on the farms. All inspectors during the mission stated that they only followed the instructions from the veterinary service without interference of the municipal board.³

Number of official veterinarians in the veterinary service

Region 1		Region 2		Whole Finland
Whole region	District visited	Whole region	District visited	
52 ¹	2	56	3	498

¹ The number includes the veterinarian officials in the regional and municipal service, the slaughterhouses and the border inspection service.

There were indications that there was a certain conflict of interest for the local municipal veterinarians related to the double function as officials and curative practice. On some occasions the municipal veterinarian issued recommendations (advice) as a follow-up after an inspection although the deficiencies detected were non-compliant with legislation and an order would have been more appropriate. One inspector who worked for 15-20 years in one municipality reported that he personally has difficulty imposing official orders to farmers whom he visits regularly. It was stated from another inspector that farmers may call for a veterinarian of another municipality to treat their animals.

Apart from the official veterinarians, there were 31 animal welfare inspectors in the whole of Finland in 2000 with no official duties but who are entitled to do inspections in cases of suspicion. They work in close cooperation with the official veterinary service. In order to become an animal welfare inspector the person has to undertake training, which has to be

³ There is a comment by the Finnish authorities explaining the composition of the income in more detail.

approved by the CCA. The provincial service grants or revokes their authorisation to perform inspections. These inspectors are *rarely* veterinarians. The whole system of animal welfare inspectors is based on a voluntary basis without payment and built up to assist the officials in detecting animal welfare infringements.

Training and information

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry organises special training days up to 4 times per year (from 1 to 2 days) for the provincial veterinary officers in which animal welfare aspects are also covered. Provincial veterinary offices organise annual training in their regions for local authorities in which personnel from the CCA actively participate occasionally. Lectures about animal welfare are sometimes offered in the Annual Congress of Finnish Veterinarians. Personnel from the CCA and the provincial offices participate occasionally on international courses about animal welfare. There is a high level of communication between central, regional and local authorities by personal contact, phone and e-mail on animal welfare issues.

The CCA has drafted information booklets about animal welfare legislation for various types of domestic and farm animals. These booklets which are free of charge have been distributed to veterinarians and agricultural organisations. These booklets can be ordered free of charge from the CCA. The municipal veterinarians organise seminars for the farmers in their area, in which animal welfare legislation aspects are also covered. Personnel from the CCA and Regional Competent Authority participate occasionally in these training days.

5.6.2. Farm inspections

Approximately 2 % of all pig and calf farms and 5 % of the laying hen farms are chosen randomly from a farm register maintained by the Information Centre of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The majority of the EU inspections are carried out only for the purpose of animal welfare and some are combined with residue control.

The CCA listed the most frequently detected areas of non-compliance on pig, calf and laying hen holdings as the following: too high a stocking density for group housed calves and pigs and laying hens in battery cages, tethered calves, unsatisfactory hygiene in pig houses.

The nationally targeted number of inspections were not totally achieved in the two regions visited as well as for the whole of Finland for the different species inspected (see table)⁴.

⁴ The CCA commented on this finding.

Table: Number of farms and specific inspections carried out in 2000

	Region 1			Region 2			Whole Finland ²		
	Number of farms	Number of inspections	%	Number of farms	Number of inspections	%	Number of farms	Number of inspections	%
Cattle/calves	4225	85	2,0	2345	32	1,4	28485	501	1,8
Pigs	140	2	1,4	1575	26	1,7	4387	66	1,5
Laying hens	28	1	3,6	595	15	2,5	1046	30	2,9
Others		700 ¹			528 ¹			4294 ¹	

¹ This figure includes inspections based on doubt and also inspections for licencing or notification (39 § of Finnish Act) e.g. for animal exhibitions and competitions, circuses.

² including the Åland Islands

5.6.3. Sanctions

The competent authorities have the legal power to issue advice, orders or take immediate or urgent measures. Advice is given for minor shortcomings. If the inspection reveals a violation of the animal welfare legislation, the animal welfare authority forbids the owner or keeper of the animal to continue the illegal activities or order him or her to comply with the minimum requirements in the law within a time limit set by the authority. The provincial government can make the decision more effective by imposing a conditional fine. If necessary for animal protection, the authority can take immediate measures to secure the animals' welfare. For this purpose, care, feed, or other measures necessary for the well-being of the animal may be acquired. If this not possible or expedient, the animal may also killed, taken to be slaughtered or sold

The police perform the preliminary investigation after being notified by the veterinary service. A court may impose a fine on a person or condemn him/her to imprisonment for the maximum of two years. Furthermore, the person may at the same time be banned from keeping animals. Prohibition of keeping of animals may be of definite duration or permanent, and it may concern the keeping of a certain animal species or keeping of animals in general. Prohibition of keeping of animals is enforced immediately regardless of appeal. If a prohibition of keeping of animals has been imposed on a person, the court of law must send a copy of the protocol on the issue to the CCA.

Table: Number of sanctions imposed in 2000

Sanctions imposed		Region 1	Region 2	Whole Finland
Number of <i>orders and prohibitions</i> according to § 42 of Finnish Act	Calf farms ¹	10	7	64
	Pig farms ¹	-	-	1
	Laying hen Farms ¹	-	-	1
	Total ²	163	98	951
Number of administrative fines		1	-	12
Number of public court prosecutions	Information not available	-	-	-
Number of withdrawals of the permission to keep animals		3	2	19
Number of urgent measures (§ 44)		14	11	148

¹ Including the orders and prohibitions imposed in the inspections carried out on basis of the relevant EU Directives.

The number of orders issued by the inspectors in the last years is low compared to the number of deficiencies detected in the inspections during the mission. The veterinary service is not aware of all the sanctions imposed by the courts. There is no obligation for the court to report all sanctions imposed to the veterinary service beside the prohibitions to keep animals and the veterinary service does not ask consistently for results of court prosecutions for recording purposes.

5.6.4. Supervision

The regional service supervises the municipal veterinarians by checking the inspection reports (checklists). The payment for the inspection is only done on the basis of sent inspection reports. It was reported by both regional official veterinarians that each inspection report is read and when there were deficiencies detected in the report the municipal veterinarian was immediately contacted for clarification and was given advice, if necessary. The provincial office has the power to impose *conditional* fine to *obligate* the municipal *veterinarians to perform their official duties*. In one province it was reported that there had been such cases.

Annual summary reports about the inspections carried out and the imposed sanctions were put together in the two provinces visited and sent to the CCA. These are the basis for the report from the CCA to the Commission. The evaluation of the deficiencies detected during the inspections on the farms is however not very detailed and will not be sufficient to meet the reporting requirements set by the Commission Decision 2000/50/EC.⁵

Although one copy of each inspection report is also sent to the CCA there are no checks performed on any of these reports. The CCA has no direct legal basis for performing inspections on holdings.

⁵ The CCA commented on the format of the report in the future.

5.6.5. Reports to the Commission

The CCA sent a report to the Commission in 2000 detailing the inspections carried out on calf and pig farms in the years 1998 and 1999.

5.7. Animal holdings visited

Two calf, pig and laying hen holdings in two different regions were visited during the mission. All inspections were carried out by a municipal veterinarian. The inspectors used a standard checklist issued by the CCA.

The performance of the inspectors in the following table is summarised.

Table: Performance of inspections

Criteria	Calves/cattle	Pigs	Laying hens
Staff resources, knowledge	+	IC	+
Frequency of inspection	+	+	+
Space allowance	+	+	+
Tethering	+	Prohibited	Not relevant
Social contacts, visual aggressions	+	+	+
Keeping in appropriate groups	+	+	+
Early weaning	Not relevant	+	Not relevant
Floors	IC	+	+
Bedding	IC	+	Not relevant
Substrates providing environmental enrichment	Bedding	Bedding	Not relevant for battery cages (CD 88/166)
Feed access	+	+	+ (including back-up)
Feed quality, appropriateness (fibre, ingredients) ⁶	+	+	IC
Water access	+	+	+ (including back-up)
Water quality	+	+	+
Fixtures, safety of material	IC	+	+
Light (for animals)	+	+	+
Light for inspection	+	+	+
Temperature	+	+	+
Humidity	IC (Feeling)	IC (Feeling)	IC (Feeling)
Gases	IC (Nose)	IC (Nose)	IC (Nose)
Ventilation	IC	IC	IC

⁶ CAA commented on the control of feed stuffs in Finland

Criteria	Calves/cattle	Pigs	Laying hens
Back-up system	IC	IC	IC
Alarm	IC	IC	IC
Testing of alarm	IC	IC	IC
Health status, Care of sick or injured animals	IC	IC	+
Hospital pens	+	IC	Not relevant
Cleanliness/disinfection	+	+	+
Medical treatment	-	-	-
Register (medical treatments and mortalities)	-	-	IC
Mutilations	+	Only teeth clipping and castration of young males	Prohibited
Euthanasia	-	-	-

+: controlled; IC: inconsistently controlled -: not controlled

5.7.1. Pig holdings visited

The first farm visited had 700 breeding sows in buildings constructed in 1996. About 500 weaners were kept in a new house built in 2000. 2 professional animal keepers and 2 experienced helpers were responsible for the whole farm.

The second pig farm visited held 2 boars, about 95 sows and about 270 piglets in a recently (2000) refurbished building. The owners, of whom one was a trained agronomist, were responsible for the care of the animals. The farm had been inspected according to Council Directive 91/630 EEC on 22-11-2000.

Isolation of sick and injured pigs, mutilations, euthanasia and medical treatments

While the inspectors addressed the presence of sick pens it was accepted that in several sheds there were no sick pens. The inspecting veterinarian did not comment on wounds on the back of some sows on a farm.

The inspecting veterinarians did not ask the stockmen to explain how euthanasia was carried out. The stockmen killed emergency cases on a routine basis with a captive bolt and subsequent bleeding.

The veterinarians did not control sufficiently the use of veterinary medicines and the keeping of a register detailing the medical treatments. The mortalities and the mortality rates were as well not checked. The mortality registers were either not present or incomplete and were different from one farm to the other.

Mutilations and substrates providing enrichment

Teeth clipping or grinding and castration were carried out on all the farms visited. On one farm the teeth of the piglets from first time farrowing sows were not clipped. In all cases the inspecting veterinarian accepted the farmer's justification for tooth clipping. The tail docking is not mentioned in the checklist and was not questioned by the veterinarian although the tails of some pigs were docked. It was explained that these pigs had been bought from other farms.

All the farms visited provided straw, saw dust, peat or mixtures of these to satisfy the behavioural needs of the pigs.

The CCA could not provide exact figures about mutilations but explained that tail docking is done only exceptionally and the teeth clipping or grinding and castration is done routinely on all farms.

Fixtures, floors and light

The inspecting veterinarians highlighted broken fixtures, which needed to be repaired, on the farms visited. On one farm a fixture was broken in such a way that sharp edges could harm the animals, e.g. a broken water cup. The veterinary inspector did not ask for immediate action to rectify this fitting.

Feed and water

The dry pregnant sows were not provided with fibrous food with a high fibre content to satisfy their appetite. The inspectors did not pay attention to this point and it is not mentioned specifically in their checklist.

The inspector defined the feed as acceptable although he did not have sufficient training to assess whether the feed ingredients were suitable to the pigs.

The inspectors asked for back-ups for feeding and watering devices, which went beyond EU requirements.

Space allowance and tethering

Two boar pens on one farm did not have the minimum required surface of 6 m². The inspector recommended the farmer to use these pens for young boars. The Finnish legislation requires a surface of 6 m² only for adult boars.

Ventilation systems and alarms

On the two farms visited, the replacement system for the ventilation system consisted of opening doors and on one farm there was an electric power generator in case of electrical breakdown. An alarm was present only on one farm.

The inspecting veterinarian easily accepted the farmer's explanation that the ventilation system was not mainly dependent on the artificial devices and did not have an objective method for assessing this. The requirement for the independence of the alarm from the electricity circuit was not asked for.

Staff responsible for the care of the animals

The inspector did not mind that on the big breeding farm with 700 sows there was not 24 hour surveillance in place where 1 to 2 farrowings are expected per night. The mission team had the opinion that for such a big farm a steady surveillance of farrowing sows is necessary.

5.7.2. Calf holdings visited

Two different calf/cattle holdings in one region were visited during the mission and inspected by one veterinarian. The calves in these holdings were all from their own herd.

The first farm had 40 dairy cows, 35 young heifers and 15 calves. One older shed was built in the sixties and a new one in 1999. One owner was responsible for the care of all animals. This farm had been inspected one month before the mission.

The second farm inspected had 44 dairy cows, 94 young cows (replacers) and 20 calves in farmhouses constructed in 1989/90 (last refurbishment for calves in 1999/01). In addition there was a new loose cow house built in 1999-2001. Two owners were responsible for the care of all animals.

The CA informed the mission team that the size of the farms were well above the average dairy farms in the region.

Isolation of sick and injured calves, mutilations, euthanasia and medical treatments

The majority of the dairy cows on one farm had overgrown hooves. The inspector accepted the farmer's explanation that the person requested for clipping the hooves was not yet available. The mission team had the opinion that in order to avoid animal suffering treatment had to be given within a short time frame.

On none of the farms visited did the inspectors ask the stockman to explain whether and how euthanasia was carried out.

The checking of medical treatment and relevant documentation and records of mortalities was not done thoroughly by the inspecting veterinarian. The mortality registers were either not present or incomplete.

Fixtures, floors and light

On the farms visited the inspectors did not recognise deficiencies regarding floors (uneven and irregular floor surface) in many houses. On one farm the inspector did not criticise slat openings of more than 3 cm for calves. In this case one calf was kept in a calving pen together with its mother where one part of the floor was slatted.

On the same farm calves under the age of 2 weeks were kept in a pen which was part-slatted and where only the lying area was bedded. The space allowance of 1.5 m² per animal as laid down in paragraph 1 of Article 3 of Council Directive 91/629/EEC was only fulfilled by taking into account the

total pen surface including the slat area. It remains open whether the requirement of appropriate bedding for calves less than 2 weeks as laid down in point 10 of the Annex of Council Directive 91/629/EEC has been fulfilled in this case.

Feeding and water supply

On both farms the calves received hay or silage from an early stage of 2 weeks on. The milk was given twice per day manually or on one farm by a milk automate.

Space allowance and tethering

On both farms the official veterinarian gave an order concerning the space requirements in calf boxes. One animal had to be removed within two weeks.

No tethered calves were seen on any of the farms visited.

Ventilation systems and alarms

There was no alarm system for the forced ventilation on both farms visited. The inspector accepted the explanation that in case of bad air quality windows and/or doors can be opened. The inspector did not have an objective method for assessing whether the air quality was mainly dependent on the artificial ventilation (measuring devices, air exchange estimation). For one part of a building on one farm the inspector however gave an order to install an alarm.

5.7.3. Laying hen holdings visited

Two different laying hen holdings in one region were visited during the mission and inspected by one veterinarian.

The two farms visited had around 10000 laying hens in battery cages in buildings constructed in 1995/96. One of the farms visited had been inspected on 19.12.2000 on basis of Council Directive 88/166/EEC.

For the one farm two owners were responsible for the care of all animals and for the other ***the owner family and one hired worker***.

Isolation of sick and injured hens, mutilations, euthanasia and medical treatments

The inspector accepted the missing logbook of medicinal treatment by ticking the box on the checklist that there was one kept. On the mission teams intervention the inspector rectified this and required that a register on medicinal treatments is kept. On both farms the owners stated that no medicinal treatments were done.

The checking of the records on mortalities was not done consistently by the inspector. On one farm there was a well-maintained logbook and on the other it was incomplete.

On none of the farms visited did the inspectors ask the stockman to explain whether and how euthanasia was carried out. The owners reported to the mission team that in emergency cases they decapitated the hens with an axe.

Feeding and water supply

The inspector defined the feed as acceptable although he did not have sufficient knowledge to assess whether the feed ingredients were suitable to the hens..

Space allowance and cage properties

On both farms the official veterinarian made extensive controls on the stocking density and the cage dimensions.

Ventilation systems and alarms

There was no alarm system for the forced ventilation on both farms visited. The inspector accepted the explanation that in case of a breakdown of the artificial system the natural air circulation would be sufficient. The inspector did not have an objective method for assessing the efficiency of the natural ventilation system.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Applicable legislation in Finland

The relevant EC Directives have been transposed into Finnish law. There were however several minor requirements concerning certain definitions of Council Directives 91/629/EEC, 91/630/EEC and 98/58/EC which have not been transposed exactly. There are several requirements in the Finnish legislation which go beyond the EU legislation.

6.2. Implementation of the animal welfare directives

6.2.1. Training and information

Training, education and information on the requirements of the welfare Directives is given in a well established system to the officials of the veterinary services and also to the farmers and operators concerned. There is also a high level of communication between central, regional and local authorities on animal welfare issues.

6.2.2. Implementation of a control system, follow-up and application of sanctions

The implementation of the animal welfare directives and the level of enforcement are ensured in a satisfactory way. The main conclusions are the following:

- The responsibilities are clearly defined between central, regional and local level. The CCA issues instructions, guidelines and checklists, which are quite consistently used in the regional and municipal veterinary

services. Some criteria could however be more exactly defined in the instructions or guidelines such as the assessment of the ventilation system, the appropriate care for sick and injured animals, the distinction between orders and advice in the case of deficiencies and the length of deadlines by which deficiencies are to be remedied. Whereas the checklists used in the laying hen inspections covered the main aspects of the requirements of the Directives, the calves and pigs checklists did not include all the aspects of Council Directive 98/58/EC.

- There is a good system of selecting farms to be inspected with a national farm register at central level fulfilling the requirement of randomness. The percentage of selected farms is adapted to each species in order to ensure a good representation. The targeted percentage of farms to be visited was however not quite achieved.
- Overall the inspections carried out by the inspectors of the CA during the mission were performed in a competent way, however certain aspects of the inspections seen during the mission concerning
 - the care of sick and/or injured animals in group housing systems
 - the lack of assessment tools to decide on whether the air quality is mainly dependent on an artificial ventilation system and consequently the need for a replacement system and an alarm.
 - the presence of registers or documentation on veterinary treatments and mortalities.
 - the method on whether and how euthanasia of animals was carried out was not satisfactory.
- There is a well-established system of documentation of the inspections and of detected deficiencies (form with orders or advice). Whereas the follow-up of inspections with deficiencies was satisfactorily performed there were cases seen of considerable delays in revisits.
- The inspecting veterinarians have strong legislative power to impose sanctions. These instruments are however not always effectively used as the veterinary service understands its role mainly as remedying the deficiencies and not in imposing sanctions. The number of orders issued in the last years is low compared to the number of deficiencies detected and the number of orders imposed during the mission. The system of imposing administrative fines is not adequately used.
- There is well-established co-operation between the veterinary services and the police who perform the preliminary investigations in cases of more serious deficiencies and initiate the prosecution. The veterinary service is, however, not aware of all the sanctions imposed by the courts as there is no obligation for the court to report all sanctions imposed to the veterinary service besides the prohibitions upon keeping animals.
- The main means of supervision of the municipal veterinarians by the regional service is the checking of the inspection reports (checklists). The

CCA is informed of the results of the inspections through the annually established summary reports by the regional services. The evaluation of the deficiencies detected during the inspections on the farms is however not very detailed and will not be sufficient to meet the reporting requirements set by the Commission Decision 2000/50/EC.

6.3. Overall conclusion

The implementation of the directives on animal welfare of pigs, calves and laying hens was ensured in a satisfactory way. The targets for the numbers of inspections set by the CCA and the system of farm selection meet the EU requirements.

Procedures and staff instructions for the operation of inspections which have been drafted at the central level were applied by the regional and local services. The pigs and calves checklists do not include all the requirements of the Directive 98/58/EC whereas the laying hen checklist has been updated.

The inspections carried out by the inspectors of the CA during the mission were performed in a competent way, although certain aspects of the inspections seen during the mission were not satisfactory. A possible conflict of interest can, however, not be excluded, as the veterinarian charged with the animal welfare inspections acts for the veterinary practice of the same region as well.

The application and monitoring of sanctions have been adequately addressed by the CA although further improvement is possible. There is good co-operation between the veterinary services and the police. There is however a lack of communication of all the sanctions imposed by the courts to the veterinary services.

The supervision of the local veterinarians by the regional level was mainly monitored by controlling their inspection checklists and reports. No control visits were undertaken. The CCA receives the information on the inspections through summary reports from the regional services. These are however not detailed enough to satisfy the reporting requirements set by the Commission Decision 2000/50/EC. The reporting of the results of the inspections from the CCA to the Commission Services was done for the first time in 2000.

7. CLOSING MEETING

A closing meeting was held on 15 June 2001 with the central competent authority. At this meeting, the main findings and conclusions of the mission were presented by the mission team to which the central competent authorities principally agreed on. The mission team acknowledged the good co-operation given by the CCA before and during the mission.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. To the competent authorities of Finland

The competent authorities are requested to inform the Commission Services of the actions taken and planned to address the following recommendations and to provide a timetable for the completion of these actions. This should be done within one month of the receipt of the final mission report.

- (1) Transpose the requirements related to definitions outlined in the findings of this report (as laid down in Council Directives 91/629/EEC, 91/630/EEC and 98/58/EC) into Finnish law.
- (2) Take measures to ensure that inspecting veterinarians and technicians receive adequate information, training or other forms of support to assist them in enforcing the statutory animal welfare requirements, in particular with regard to standards of suitability of floors, feed, care for sick and injured animals, euthanasia practices, ventilation and registers of medicinal treatments and mortalities.
- (3) Take measures to improve the standard of performance of inspections with regard to the care of sick and/or injured animals, euthanasia of animals, the lack of assessment tools for ventilation, the presence of registers or documentation on veterinary treatments and mortalities, where insufficient attention had been paid to and follow-up (surveillance of deadlines).
- (4) Take measures to ensure the effective application of sanctions and to monitor this at central level, so that the requirements of Article 7 of Council Directive 91/629/EEC and Council Directive 91/630/EEC and Commission Decision 2000/50/EC are fulfilled.

ADDENDUM TO MISSION REPORT DG (SANCO)/3312/2001

Competent Authority response to draft Mission Report

The Finnish authorities have responded in a satisfactory manner to the recommendations.