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FINAL REPORT OF A MISSION
CARRIED OUT IN ITALY
FROM 22 TO 26 OCTOBER 2001
CONCERNING THE ANIMAL WELFARE INSPECTIONS ON PIG, CALF AND
LAYING HEN HOLDINGS

Please note that factual errors in the draft report have been corrected in bold, italic, type. Clarifications provided by the Italian Authorities are given as footnotes, in bold, italic, type, to the relevant part of the report

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ABBREVIATIONS & SPECIAL TERMS USED IN THE REPORT

ASL	<i>Aziende Sanitarie Locali</i>
CA	Competent Authority
CCA	Central Competent Authority Final
DG SANCO	Directorate General of the European Commission for Health and Consumer Protection
EC	European Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office
EEC	European Economic Community
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
FVO	Food and Veterinary Office
GURI	<i>Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana</i>
OJL	Official Journal L

1. INTRODUCTION

The mission took place in Italy from 22 to 26 October 2001. The mission team comprised two veterinary inspectors 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 mission team was accompanied during the whole mission by a representative from the central competent authority, Italian Ministry of Health (*Ministero della Salute*).

At the opening meeting held on 22 October 2001, the objectives of, and itinerary for, the mission were confirmed by the mission team. Presentations were made by representatives of the Italian Ministry of Health, 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 Italy 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	3	The organisation of the inspections and the results of previous inspections were discussed at these meetings.
	Local	5	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 authority carried out an inspection of the holdings in his area.
Calf holdings		2	
Laying hen holdings		1	

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/EC¹ 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/EEC² of 19 November 1991 laying down the minimum standards for the protection of calves.

¹ OJL 38, 12.02.1998, p. 10;

Article 9 of Council Directive 91/630/EEC³ of 19 November 1991 laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs.

Article 7 of Council Directive 88/166/EEC⁴ laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens in battery cages.

Article 7 of Council Directive 98/58/EC⁵ of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes.

Commission Decision 2000/50/EC⁶ 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/EC⁷ 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

Although there had been no previous missions carried out regarding animal welfare on farm, the FVO carried out a mission from 6 to 10 November 2000 concerning animal welfare during transport, published on the Internet:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/inspections/vi/reports/italia/vi_rep_ital_1105-2000_en.pdf

There was a failure to impose sanctions where infringements had been detected. Furthermore, there was a failure in effective level of enforcement of EC provisions for animal welfare during transport, such as transport of unfit animals, too long journey times, lack of provision of water and adequate rest periods. The FVO has received a response to the recommendations from the Italian competent authority.

4.1. The pig sector

In 2000 there were about 7,945 pig holdings with 8,307,000 pigs in Italy and in the regions visited there were between 1,543 and 3,327 pig holdings.

² OJL 340, 11.12.1991, p. 28;

³ OJL 340, 11.12.1991, p. 33;

⁴ OJL 74, 19.03.1988, p. 83;

⁵ OJL 221, 08.08.1998, p.23;

⁶ OJL 19, 25.01.2000, p. 51;

⁷ OJL 340, 31.12.1993, p. 21;

4.2. The calf sector

In 1999 there were about 19,957 farms with calves in Italy. In the regions visited there were between 23,674 and 259,934 veal calves. Among the farms there are also veal calf holdings for white meat production.

4.3. The poultry sector

In 2000 there were between 24 and 233 laying hen holdings with between 1,447,700 and 11,312,125 laying hens in the three regions visited.

5. MAIN FINDINGS

5.1. Central Competent Authority

The Ministry of Health, the Directorate-General of Veterinary Public Health, Food and Nutrition (*Ministero della Salute, Direzione Generale della Sanità Pubblica Veterinaria, degli Alimenti e della Nutrizione*) is the Central Competent Authority (CCA) responsible for the legislation and its enforcement concerning animal welfare. The CCA issues guidelines to the regional services. The CCA is directing and co-ordinating the supervisory activities at national level. Furthermore, the CCA is collecting and summarising at national level information on the supervisory activities carried out on holdings. The CCA receives the information from the competent authorities of the regions and the autonomous provinces after a preliminary summarising is carried out by the Regional Veterinary Services.

5.2. Regional Competent Authority

In Italy there is a Regional Veterinary Service consisting of veterinary officers and administrative staff in each of the 19 regions and two autonomous provinces. The main tasks performed by the Regional Veterinary Service as regards animal welfare on farm are the co-ordination and supervision of the activities of the ASL (*Aziende Sanitarie Locali*) veterinary services in their region. If necessary the Regional Veterinary Service may carry out inspections to verify correct implementation of the legislation. The collection and aggregation of the data supplied by the ASL veterinary services in the region for subsequent forwarding to the Ministry of Health is also under the responsibility of the Regional Veterinary Service.

5.3. Local Competent Authorities

At local level there are approximately 230 local health boards ASLs (*Aziende Sanitarie Locali*) in Italy with veterinary officers to carry out on-the-spot checks. Each ASL is responsible for an area ranging from one or more municipalities to a province. The veterinary service of each ASL, in particular, The Department of Hygiene in Animal Breeding, Protection and

Welfare (*Aree operative C, igiene degli allevamenti, protezione e benessere degli animali*) has responsibility for animal welfare and enforcing the relevant legislation. Veterinary officers of ASL can also carry out on-the-spot checks in conjunction with police and *carabinieri* for enforcing the veterinary legislation within the area concerned.

The main tasks performed by the responsible veterinary officials (ASL) as regards animal welfare on farm are the checks on holdings to verify compliance with the legislation. Furthermore, their duties include the collection of data on the results of these checks carried out and on the infringements detected and the transmission of the data at regular intervals to the veterinary services of their regions. All necessary measures in the event of non-compliance, including punitive measures and referral to the judicial authorities when animals are severely maltreated are also under the responsibility of the local CA.

5.4. Applicable legislation in Italy

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 Italy by *Decreto legislativo 533/92* and by *Decreto legislativo 331/98*.

Council Directive 91/630/EEC laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs is implemented by *Decreto legislativo 534/92*.

Council Directive 98/58/EC concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes is implemented by *Decreto legislativo 146/2001*.

Council Directive 88/166/EEC laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens was implemented by *Decreto Presidente Repubblica 233/88*.

Council Directive 93/119/EC of 22 December 1993 on the protection of animals at the time of slaughter or killing was implemented by *Decreto legislativo 333/98*.

5.5. Operational procedures

5.5.1. Information provided to the various livestock sectors

All the statutory instruments and the most important explanatory notes are published in the Official Journal of the Italian Republic (*Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana – GURI*), which generally reaches all those working in the sector, both operators and officials.

The Local Veterinary Services (ASLs) inform the operators of new legal requirements for the sector during their periodic inspections of the farms. Decree 146/2001 provides that the regions may run compulsory courses for livestock farmers through the ASLs.

The national and local trade associations provide farmers with information, including that on the pertinent legislation. The CCA's explanatory notes are also sent to the major trade associations.

5.5.2. *System of supervision*

In all three Regions, animal welfare inspections were carried out by veterinarians from the ASLs, who were civil servants. The inspectors involved in the on farm checks are usually veterinary officers. For recruitment to the public service, a degree in veterinary medicine and a specialised training in one of the branches of veterinary medicine (Diploma of Specialised Studies) are required. There are also technicians assisting the veterinarians during inspections.

The various (local, regional or central) authorities, as part of their in-service training activities, arrange courses and workshops for the personnel concerned. According to the information received, the regions organise meetings, which are attended by local veterinary officials, and during which issues relating to animal welfare checks are also discussed.

At the time of the mission there were no national requirements for a written report to be produced for each inspection. Periodic reports of the inspections (one or two per year) are usually produced, but form part of the arrangements laid down within the Local Veterinary Services. The representative of the CCA indicated that the Ministry of Health is drawing up national guidelines on the matter.⁸

There is no uniform checklist provided by the CCA or the regional CA for the animal welfare inspections on farm. The ASLs visited had developed for the farm visits their own checklists or standard report forms, which also cover animal welfare issues amongst other issues. The checklists and standard report forms differed from each other. Apart from the checklists or standard report forms developed on individual initiative in the ASLs, no additional written instructions or guidance (e.g. assessment of different criteria, how to handle deficiencies on the farms inspected and what specific actions and follow-up has to be taken) had been provided to the veterinary officials. The main policy was to leave it to the veterinarians to use their professional judgement to assess each situation. It was reported that the practice was to impose actions orally and revisits were not done systematically.

The results of the inspections are first summarised at ASL level and the periodic reports are usually produced about 2 –3 times a year. The results are then forwarded to the various Regional Veterinary Services, which forward them to the Ministry of Health (CCA) using forms from the Ministry. The information required by the CCA was general (number of farms in the

⁸ *In the response to the draft report the Italian Authorities stated that pending national guidelines, the local authorities (ASL) have adopted "internal" checklists and paper forms for recording the result of inspections, which, although not uniform, give proof of the inspection activity. Furthermore with the entry into force of Legislative Decree No 146/2001, national guidelines were issued in Circolare della Salute No 10 of 05-11-01, which cover the points raised by the Commission.*

region, type of farms, number of farms inspected and number of non-compliances detected).

The CCA puts all reports coming from the regions together in order to prepare the report to the EU-Commission according to Decision 2000/50. However, the evaluation of the deficiencies detected during the inspections on the farms is not very detailed. The CCA has recognised this weakness and is drafting guidelines to ensure a uniform and more frequent reporting of the inspections carried out in the regions.

Two ASLs visited could present a few reports from previous inspections. Some of the reports were not properly completed e.g. observations concerning space allowances were missing. Representatives from other ASLs explained that reports were only completed where a deficiency was detected and that generally there were no deficiencies detected during farm visits. However, none of the different checklists or report forms seen during the mission covered all the requirements of the EC legislation.

The Regional Veterinary Services supervise the local veterinary officials by checking the inspection reports. Further supervision in the regions was done by phone calls according to the information received.

5.5.3. *Selection of farms*

No particular programme for the selection of farms is presented by the CCA. The choice of holdings and the frequency of inspections are currently a matter for the Local Veterinary Services. In some regions an annual programme including animal welfare checks is drafted by the ASLs for the approval by the regions.⁹

The animal welfare inspections on farm are generally carried out at the same time as other checks. These integrated checks incorporate e.g. residue, animal identification, hygiene and feed controls. In their reply to the pre-mission questionnaire, the CCA informed that more than 50 % of the pig, calf and laying hen holdings are visited every year. The representatives of the regions and ASLs informed the mission team that the results of the previous inspections are also taken into consideration for the selection of farms to be inspected. However, the choice of the farm depends mainly on other aspects of the farm inspections (see above). The local ASLs are free to decide whether they incorporate animal welfare aspects in their inspections. In one region the CA stated that the pig farms are inspected weekly for other purposes and the official veterinary may also check on animal welfare during the inspections.

⁹ *In the response to the draft report the Italian Authorities noted, that in the reporting period 1998-1999 the local veterinary service managed to inspect over 50% of the holdings concerned every year. Furthermore in the circular No 10 (see above) the CCA gave very detailed instruction to ensure that, when drawing up the annual inspection programmes, the species and their production systems, the greater risks of certain production techniques used and the findings of previous inspections should be considered by the ASL.*

5.5.4. Follow-up and sanctions

According to the information received from the CA, the inspector will give verbal advice as a first step where an infringement is noted. It may be necessary to visit the farm again for verification until the shortcoming is put right. As a second step according to the severity of the deficiency an administrative fine can be given. In serious cases the juridical authorities can be informed and asked to consider whether further proceedings are necessary. However, no documented evidence of the use of the procedures was presented during the mission.¹⁰

In the three Regions visited the CA stated that where infringements were detected, the main policy was to give oral advice or warnings. Generally there was no evidence of any follow-up action.

The CA in one ASL stated that the follow-up is generally reviewed in December. However, the previous follow-up was not reviewed due to other priorities of the service. Furthermore, there was a case where corrective action was requested four months ago and the revisit of the holding had not been made.

The sanctions provided for by Italian legislation are administrative fines and prosecution. Most of the sanctions, which would be imposed in case of infringements would be administrative fines. Only in very serious cases a prosecution is possible. The CA stated that only the most serious infringements may be reported to the judicial authorities for prosecution by the ASLs.

The procedure for imposing sanctions is that laid down in accordance with Act 689/81 and Legislative Decree 507/99 and the level of fines is mainly determined with reference to the above legislation. Generally, a **shortened procedure** is followed, i.e. payment of a fixed penalty amounting to twice the minimum fine or one third of the maximum fine stops further proceedings. If the fine is not paid, an enforcement order is made for the sum to be paid. If payment is still not obtained, further procedural steps can be taken, involving entry in the cause list (this being the means used to enforce payment of taxes) and forced collection.

The most serious infringements may be reported directly to the judicial authorities by the responsible veterinary service. Where it is uncertain whether the matter should be dealt with under penal or administrative law, the local judicial authorities are informed as a precaution.

In one region the CA presented one case when a laying hen holding was closed due to excessive overstocking of cages. However, the procedure took

¹⁰ *In the response to the draft report the Italian Authorities noted, that the average number of infringements for each region for 1999 was fewer than five. This low number together with the fact that, at the time of inspection, recording of these data was organised only on the basis of local procedures, may have contributed to the difficulties in obtaining adequate documentary evidence. The above mentioned Circular No 10 uniform guidelines are also provided for keeping information of infringements.*

8-9 months due to the right of appeal and the hens had to remain during that time in the overstocked cages. According to information received from the CA, in the other regions visited there had been no infringements until now and no further cases related to sanctions were presented during the mission.

5.6. Animal holdings visited

One laying hen holding, two calf and two pig holdings in three different regions were visited during the mission. All inspections were carried out by local veterinary officials. During two visits the inspecting veterinarians conducted the inspection together with a supporting technician. One inspector used a checklist issued by his own service. All the inspectors produced a report after the visits. These different reports covered the animal welfare requirements to a varying degree and none covered all the animal welfare requirements of the relevant EC legislation.

The following findings mainly concentrate on those requirements, which were not covered adequately during the visits.¹¹

5.6.1. Pig holdings visited

Two fattening pig holdings in two different regions with 8,000 and 4,500 pigs respectively were visited during the mission.

The inspection of the first farm was done in a systematic way, although certain requirements were not properly checked. The second inspection was done superficially and the majority of the requirements were not properly checked.

5.6.2. Isolation of sick and injured pigs, euthanasia, mortality and medical treatments

On the second farm some sick pigs were lying in the corridor but the inspector did not pay any attention to those pigs.

The inspecting veterinarians on both farms did not ask the farmers to explain how euthanasia was carried out, if necessary.

Both inspecting veterinarians checked that a register was kept on the use of veterinary medicines. However, on the second farm the mortality records were not properly checked.

¹¹ *In the response to the draft report the Italian Authorities noted that a large part of the comments concern inadequate checks on certain requirements during the inspection of certain holdings. They explain that Circular No 10 (see above) draws the attention of the local authorities to the findings described in the report and that it will be the responsibility of the authorities to ensure to carry out the required checks correctly. Special comments to forced ventilation, tail docking of pigs, keeping mortality registers and fibrous food to calves can be found in the annex.*

5.6.3. Mutilations and substrates providing enrichment

Tail docking was carried out on both farms visited. On neither farm did the inspecting veterinarian ask the owner for justification for carrying out this mutilation and accepted that this was routine husbandry practice.

On the first farm, the farmer had only provided chains in some pens to satisfy the behavioural needs of the pigs. The inspecting veterinarian considered this sufficient environmental enrichment and in his opinion environmental enrichment was only necessary if pigs clearly show aggressive behaviour. On the second farm nothing was provided and the inspector did accept it without any comments.

5.6.4. Fixtures, floors and hygiene

On both farms the mission team observed injurious fittings which could harm the animals (sharp edges, holes in mangers, broken slats) in the pens. These findings were not notified by the inspecting veterinarians and as a consequence no corrective actions were required by them.

On the second farm in one unit with large pigs the floors were dirty and slippery. The pigs in the pens were also dirty and the mangers were highly contaminated with faeces. The inspecting veterinarian did not make any remarks on hygiene and floors.

5.6.5. Space allowance

Measurements of the size of pens were made on both farms visited. However, on the first farm the inspecting veterinarian measured the pens with the mangers and did not exclude the area occupied by the mangers from the unobstructed floor area available for the pigs.

5.6.6. Ventilation systems and alarms

On the first holding the inspecting veterinarian did not ask if the alarm system was regularly tested.

On the second farm the inspector did not properly check the ventilation system. When the mission team asked for clarification the farmer claimed that the wellbeing of the pigs is not depending on an artificial ventilation system, although there was one installed. This farmer was not aware that where an artificial ventilation system is used, an appropriate back-up and alarm system must be provided. The inspecting veterinarian accepted the farmer's explanation that the ventilation system was not mainly dependent on the artificial devices, but did not have an objective method for assessing this.

5.6.7. Calf holdings visited

Two veal calf holdings in two different regions with 954 and 720 animals respectively for the production of white meat were visited. The calves arrive at the age of 2-3 weeks to these fattening farms. All the calves on the first farm originated from other farms in Italy and the calves on the second farm originated from Poland.

On the first farm the calves were kept in groups of about 6 animals in each pen and on the second farm the calves were kept in groups of 20-30 animals in each pen.

Not all the requirements were properly checked during both inspections.

5.6.8. Isolation of sick and injured calves, mutilations, euthanasia, mortality and medical treatments

On the first farm there were no pens reserved for sick or injured animals and the inspecting veterinarian wrote a remark in his report concerning the requirement to have pens reserved for sick or injured animals.

On the second farm there were calves in pens reserved for sick or injured animals. These pens were bedded with straw. However, there was no water available for the animals and the inspector did not pay any attention to that.

On the first farm all calves had docked tails and the inspector did not make any comments on it. When the mission team pointed it out the inspecting veterinarian said that it was rarely practised but not forbidden in Italy according to the national legislation. On this farm hygienic reasons were given to justify this practice.

The inspecting veterinarians did not ask the farmers to explain how euthanasia was carried out, if necessary.

The keeping of medical and mortality registers was addressed by the inspecting veterinarian on the first holding. However he did not ask for the mortality records. The keeping of medical and mortality registers was not addressed by the inspecting veterinarian on the second farm. When the mission team pointed it out the inspecting veterinarian stated that the farmers do not necessarily keep records because the ASL receives information on dead animals.

5.6.9. Feeding and water supply

On both holdings the blood haemoglobin-levels were controlled. The fibrous food provided for the calves on the first farm was maize grains and later maize silage. On the second farm the calves received first cotton seeds and later pellets. No rumination activity was observed during the visits. On both farms the inspecting veterinarians did not make any remarks on the provisions of fibrous food to calves. It is questionable whether the animals receive fibre as required by legislation. However, the inspecting veterinarians accepted the feed provided as appropriate.

On both farms no water was available for any calves. The inspecting veterinarians did not make any remarks or recommendations on this issue.

5.6.10. Space allowance

On the second farm the inspector measured the pens on the ground plan and did not pay attention to the buildings inspected, which diverged from the plan.

5.6.11. Ventilation systems and alarms

On both farms the inspectors did not ask for the back-up and alarm system for the artificial ventilation system. On the first farm the owner stated, at the request of the mission team, that there was no back-up system and no appropriate alarm system on the farm. The inspecting veterinarian did not require any corrective action.

5.6.12. Laying hen holding visited

One laying hen holding was visited in one region. The 100,000 hens seen were accommodated in one house. The inspection was done professionally and routinely.

5.6.13. Euthanasia, mortality and medical treatments

The owner and the inspecting veterinarian stated that medical treatments of laying hens were forbidden. The mortality records were checked but the inspecting veterinarian did not ask the owner to explain how euthanasia was carried out.

5.6.15. Inspection, space allowance and cage properties

There were eight tiers of cages with an appropriate means for inspecting the upper tiers of cages. The lowest tiers of cages were not easy to inspect because at the time of the visit there was not enough light in the house to inspect these hens without extra light. However, the inspecting veterinarian had brought his own torch for the inspection.

The inspecting veterinarian did not measure the cages. He said that the cages had already been measured earlier. However, he checked several cages to confirm that the number of hens in a cage was appropriate.

5.6.14. Ventilation systems and alarms

The presence of a back-up system and an alarm system was confirmed. However, the inspecting veterinarian did not ask if alarm system was regularly tested.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Implementation of the animal welfare directives

6.1.1. Supervision

The main means of supervision of the local veterinarians by the regional service is by checking the inspection reports. However, the reports are rarely produced and do not include all the requirements of the relevant directives. The CCA is informed of the results of the inspections through the annually established summary reports by the regional services. These are however,

not detailed enough to satisfy the reporting requirements set by the Commission Decision 2000/50/EC.

The supervision of the veterinary services in the regions by the CCA was not satisfactory. The CCA is drafting guidelines to ensure a uniform and more frequent reporting of the inspections carried out in the regions.

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

Although the implementation of a control system is in place, a satisfactory standard of controls is not yet achieved because the criteria checked during the integrated inspections do not cover all the provisions of the animal welfare Directives and cannot be regarded as fulfilling Article 7 of the Council Directives.

Some of the main deficiencies were related to the following aspects:

- Justification for the routine mutilation (tail docking) carried out (point 4 of part III of Chapter II of the Annex of Council Directive 91/630/EEC).
- Means for satisfying the behavioural needs of pigs e.g. for rooting material (point 16 of Chapter I of the Annex of Council Directive 91/630/EEC).
- Euthanasia (Article 12 of Council Directive 93/119/EC).
- Availability of water for ill calves and for calves in hot weather conditions (point 13 of the Annex of Council Directive 91/629/EEC, as amended).
- Fibrous food (point 11 of the Annex of Council Directive 91/629/EEC, as amended).
- Regular testing of the alarm (Council Directives 91/629/EEC, as amended and 91/630/EEC).

The absence of the criteria from the checklist or standard report form developed in the different ASLs may account for the failure that not all the relevant requirements were properly checked. Furthermore, the lack of instructions contributed to a weak assessment of certain criteria. Difficulties for the inspectors were especially observed regarding technical aspects such as ventilation and alarm systems and when assessing criteria for which only principles are laid down in the legislation, such as tail docking, fibrous food and environmental enrichment.

Equally, the lack of instructions to inspecting veterinarians on what action to take when deficiencies are detected has led, on some occasions, to unclear orders for corrective action being given by the inspecting veterinarians. The few reports seen from previous inspections were often not properly completed, which would make a follow-up of the inspection very difficult and may not give sufficient judicial evidence in case of a court case.

Evidence of adequate recording of results, corrective actions, follow-up and sufficient sanctioning was not presented in the regions visited. The main policy for achieving compliance or when infringements were detected was to give advice and provide information to farmers. There are two types of sanctions provided by Italian legislation in case of breach: the administrative fines and criminal acts. However, there was not enough evidence to support that sufficient use had been made of these possibilities. The application and monitoring of sanctions has not yet been adequately addressed by the CA and needs further improvement.

6.2. Overall conclusion

The competent authorities visited, have dedicated resources and organised mostly integrated checks regarding animal welfare on holdings with pigs, calves and laying hens. However, not all requirements of the EC legislation concerned were properly checked and in general, there has been a lack of adequate follow-up when infringements have been detected. The application and monitoring of sanctions is an essential part of enforcement, which has not been adequately addressed in the regions visited.

7. CLOSING MEETING

A closing meeting was held on 26 October 2001 with one representative of the central competent authority, Ministry of Health. At this meeting, the main findings and conclusions of the mission were presented by the inspection team. The mission team acknowledged the co-operation given by the CA during the mission. Regarding the majority of the findings, the representative indicated that they would wait until they had received the draft report and would provide the comments in writing. The representative of the Central Competent Authority stated that the Ministry is drawing up guidelines that include new data collection forms. These guidelines were submitted after the mission and they will be taken into consideration prior to the preparation of the final report.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. To the competent authorities of Italy

The competent authorities are requested to inform the Commission 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 1 month of receipt of the final mission report.

1. The Central Competent Authority should take measures to further develop and harmonise the system for carrying out inspections, so that all requirements are checked, the results are properly documented and that where necessary appropriate corrective action is taken. The follow-up actions should be clearly documented and the deadlines for corrective actions respected.

2. The Central Competent Authority should take measures to ensure the effective application of sanctions as required by Article 11 of Council

Directives 91/629/EEC, as amended and 91/630/EEC and Article 10 of Council Directive 98/58/EC.

3. The Central Competent Authority, together with each region, should ensure that inspecting veterinarians receive adequate guidelines, supervision, information, training, guidance or other forms of support in assessing and enforcing the applicable requirements of Council Directives 88/166/EEC, 91/629/EEC, as amended, 91/630/EEC, 93/119/EC and 98/58/EC. In particular related to:

- The care of sick and/or injured animals (Council Directives 91/630/EEC Annex, point 14 and 98/58/EC, Annex, point 4),
- Euthanasia of animals (Council Directives 93/119/EEC, Article 12 and 98/58/EC, Article 3)
- Environmental enrichment and the justification for tail docking pigs (Council Directives 91/630/EEC, Annex, Chapter I point 16 and Chapter III, point 4) and
- Artificial ventilation system, appropriate back-up system and an alarm system (Council Directives 88/166/EEC, 91/629/EEC, as amended, 91/630/EEC).
- Provisions for fibrous food for calves (Council Directive 91/629/EEC, as amended, Annex, point 11).

9. ADDENDUM

In the reply of the Italian CCA dated 20-02-2002 the general matter of reporting inspections to the higher levels as a bases of supervision has been addressed.

The general lack of uniform national guidelines (check-lists) have been explained by the impossibility of transposing the relevant Commission Directive (98/58/EC) and Decision (2000/50/EC) until May 2001, when Legislative Decree No 146 of 26-03-2001 was issued. With the distribution of *Circolare del Ministero della Salute* No 10 of 05-11-2001 uniform national guidelines were set, which will allow most of the points raised by the inspection team to be met.

The reply gives a commitment that the CCA and the regional authorities will ensure adequate surveillance of the correct implementation of these guidelines.