Fallen Stock

Animal welfare concerns and consequences

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What we are talking about

Farm animals

Animal By-Products (ABP)

Food for human consumption

From production of products of animal origin

From slaughter process

Fallen Stock

EU: >20 million tons Animal By-Products annually (EFSA)
Fallen Stock

- Bodies of dead farm animals not intended for human consumption
- Died from diseases/injuries or have been killed for certain reasons
- "Waste" of livestock production
- Potential source of risks to public and animal health (i.e. BSE, Food and Mouth Disease)
- Has to be disposed properly according to EU and national rules (EC) No 1069/2009, (EU) No 142/2011
Fallen Stock - Processing

- Collection, movement, processing and disposal of ABP
- Animal Waste Processing Plant
- Blood meal, meat meal, animal oil, pet food, hides, ...
Background

- Indication from veterinary authorities that
  - Some fallen animals die miserably
  - Lack of appropriate intervention by stockman
- No evidence in literature and no control in routine procedure
- (EC) No 1069/2009 (53) ... Official controls should be carried out ...
  ... to ensure the ... compliance with ... animal welfare rules

Objective of our study

Clarify situation of fallen cattle & pigs from welfare point of view
Method

- Data on fallen stock and livestock production in Austria
- 1 (of 4) Austrian Animal Waste Processing Plant
- Evaluation of 100 collecting transporters at 20 work days
- Inspection of fallen cattle (n=1070) and pigs (n=987) by vets
- Registration of pathological signs indicative to severe pain a/o prolonged suffering
  - Body condition
  - Decubitus ulcers
  - Claw problems
  - Injuries, swellings, abscesses
  - Signs of proper killing
- Descriptive statistics
Results - Fallen Stock in A

2009: 361.403 ton ABP
       38.300 tons fallen stocks (10.6 %)

Number of fallen stock in 2008

- Calves: 69,902
- Cattle >1 year: 24,632
- Pigs >30 kg: 283,801

Percentage of population

- High loss rate
- Increase over time (cattle ~40%)
- Database incomplete and inconsistent?
1070 cattle inspected: 797 calves (74%) + 273 cattle >1 year
124 bodies (12.5%) with one or more pathological signs

- More calves end as animal waste
- More fallen adult cattle show noticeable pathological signs
Cattle - Pathological Signs

- Decubitus ulcers most common!
- Often more than 1 symptom

### Cattle - Pathological Signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Number of Cattle</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bad body condition</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decubitus ulcers</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claw lesions</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swellings</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injuries</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirtiness</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cattle - Bad Body Condition

- 23 cattle with cachexia
Cattle No. 65

Multiple deep decubitus ulcers at hind legs
Cattle No. 35

Calf with cachexia and abnormity with decubitus ulcer at right hind leg
Cattle No. 35

Wound at fetlock joint (right hind leg) caused by a bandage
978 pigs inspected

- Fatteners: 517
- Sows: 124
- Boars: 49
- Piglets: 153

Pie chart showing percentages:
- Fatteners: 66%
- Sows: 18%
- Boars: 15%
- Piglets: 1%

Bar charts showing counts with categories:
- Fatteners with Noticable path. signs
- Sows with Negativ
- Boars with Negativ
- Piglets with Noticable path. signs
Pigs - Pathological Signs

- Bad body condition: 6 (6.2%)
- Decubitus ulcers: 80 (12.8%)
- Claw lesions: 14 (1.4%)
- Swellings: 30 (3.1%)
- Skin lesions biting: 125 (12.8%)

Pigs with path. signs (N=978)
- Cachexia and multiple deep ulcers in a fallen pig
- 8.2 % of fallen pigs with ulcers
Pig - Wounds caused by biting

13% of fallen pigs
- Tail
- Ears
- Neck and rump
3 % of fallen pigs
Discussion

- High number of farm animals end as animal by-products
- **Severe** pain & **prolonged** suffering of a **few** fallen animals
  - up to 1% of animals kept for human consumption may be concerned
  - difficult to put the right conclusion from inspection to case history

- Improper care of sick / injured animals
  - Economic reasons, herd size, housing
  - Lack of knowledge a/o inability of stockmen to proper kill moribund animals
  - ...

- Training of animals caretakers needed
Proper treatment

Adequate therapy with **reasonable** effort!
‘no success’ EUTHANASIA to prevent pain/suffering!

Stunning with captive bolt gun + bleeding by severing major arteries of neck
Conclusion

- Welfare problem in fallen animals identified (only in Austria?)
- Further clarification needed
- Develop a valid and feasible control protocol
  - Pre-selection of severe cases during collection of fallen animals
  - Final evaluation by official veterinarian

- Animal By-Product sector is complex and accident-sensitive
- Caution about risks for human and animal health
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