Meeting of IDF and ICAR WGFT at the ICAR 2017 conference on 14-16 June 2017 in Edinburgh, UK

Animal welfare recording & ICAR - overview of the status quo

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Outline

- background: the role of animal welfare and its development
- results of a cross-analysis
- status quo of working documents: animal welfare recording within ICAR, possible extensions and valuable collaborations (synergistic effects)
Background (I)

- increased awareness of the importance of the quality of not only the animal products, but also their production conditions
- increased expectations of consumers regarding animal welfare standards in livestock production
- increased demands of politics and society regarding animal welfare
  - transparency
  - monitoring and efficient control
  - engagement for optimization

Background (II)

- increased awareness of the importance of the quality of not only the animal products, but also their production conditions
- increased expectations of consumers regarding animal welfare standards in livestock production
- increased demands of politics and society regarding animal welfare
  - increased pressure on farmers
    - to keep up and balance (idealistic concepts vs. production framework / economic needs)
    - to justify modern agriculture and strengthen societal acceptance
The role of animal welfare & ICAR

- changed circumstances of milk production
  requiring respective adjustments (all stakeholders)
  - technically
  - conceptually

- requests: ICAR members and ICAR
  - coverage and visibility in the relevant fields of dairy production
    → animal welfare to be included
  - positioning (clear statements through the guidelines provided)
    → direct rather than indirect addressing of animal health and welfare

Actions taken by ICAR

- need for some inventory regarding animal welfare (indicators) to identify concrete needs and proceed efficiently

- Animal Welfare Recording Working Group (ICAR AWR WG)
  - chaired by Pierre-Louis Gastinel
  - members and agreements on information exchange ensuring:
    - involvement of international and interdisciplinary expertise and
    - close links to existing bodies dealing with recording of (potential) animal welfare indicators
  - meeting at ICAR 2014 conference in Berlin, Germany
ICAR Animal Welfare Recording WG

- terms of reference (aims and scope, ...)
  - assessing the level of consistency between recommendations and standards from international bodies about animal welfare and the practices of the recording organizations
  - review of ICAR Guidelines for options of improving consistency

- cross analysis
  - between general principles of OIE and its criteria and practices of recording organizations based on ICAR guidelines
  - recording not only of animal traits (animal-based indicators), but also environmental parameters (resource-based indicators)
  - dimensions:
    - trait description (animal traits)
    - process of recording (pain?, stress?, ...)
    - training of operators

Results of the cross-analysis

- poster presentation at WAFL 2014 (International Conference on the Assessment of Animal Welfare at Farm and Group Level) in Clermont-Ferrand, France
Results of the cross-analysis
Results of the cross-analysis

ICAR AWR WG: internal report

Suggestions:
- improving clearness and visibility of ICAR recommendations for monitoring and improving animal health (restructuring, improved referencing / cross-linking)
- new guidelines for behavior traits (docility, temperament, ...), with appropriate consideration of necessary concurrent recording of animal- and resource-based recording
- consideration of the role of resource-based indicators in ICAR guidelines, with appropriate reference to existing approved guidelines
- reflection of analogous trait recording in beef and dairy cattle in the guidelines (reciprocal structure, improved cross-referencing)
- standardized descriptions of routine on-farm procedures
- consideration of animal welfare principles in training of operators
Animal welfare & ICAR's strategy

- underlining the social impact of animal welfare requirements on the future of producers and their activities
- considering new traits to better address animal welfare among the main strategic goals
- close collaborations within ICAR and beyond
  - ICAR WGFT
  - IDF and IDF Standing Committee on Animal Health and Welfare
  - FAO
  - ...