

# DECISION-MAKING ON THE EUROPEAN UNION LEVEL

# **3 institutions interact to create EU laws & policies:**

- European Commission
- European Parliament
- Council of Agriculture Ministers

# EUROPEAN COMMISSION:

- DG SANCO is main Directorate-General dealing with farm animals
- DG AGRI also has an influence on farm animals

Laws are proposed by Commission

Must lobby Commission to persuade  
them to propose a strong law

# Lobby Commission by:

- Letters
- Meetings
- Get your supporters to write to Commission
- Get your supporters to send Postcards to Commission

## Role of:

- Scientific Panel on Animal Health and Welfare of European Food Safety Authority
- Commission's Food & Veterinary Office

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Can influence Commission's policy, for example:

- Persuading it to press Member States to enforce laws properly
- Persuading it to propose strong laws

# How to influence MEPs

- Letters
- Meetings
- Get your supporters to write to MEPs
- Get your supporters to send Postcards to MEPs

Suggestion: write to your MEPs  
asking for a meeting

Say you will be in Brussels for a particular  
Tuesday & Wednesday - could they meet  
you on one of those days

# Parliamentary Questions

- To get specific information
- To make Commission or Council aware of policy concerns

# How Parliament Considers Proposed Law

- Lead Committee: usually Agriculture Committee
- Committee appoints Rapporteur who produces a draft report
- Committee sets Deadline for Tabling of Amendments
- Committee votes on Report
- Vote by full Parliament – the Plenary

# COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

- Usually for us, Council of Agriculture Ministers
- Traditionally most powerful institution
- Consists of Agriculture Minister from each Member State
- So, when lobbying Council must above all lobby your own Agriculture Minister

# How Council Considers Proposed Laws

- Working Groups of officials
- Chief Veterinary Officers
- The Member States' Permanent Representatives in Brussels: Agricultural attachés & COREPER
- The Ministers

# Important Considerations

- Scientific research: show your case is supported by scientific evidence
- Economics: try to show requested reform will not be expensive
- Show there is a practicable, economically viable alternative
- Do not be party political

# **Eurobarometer survey in 2005:** *Attitudes of consumers towards the welfare of farmed animals*

- In 15 of the 25 Member States, most people feel that not enough importance is given to animal welfare in the agricultural policies of their own country
- 58% of respondents think the welfare of laying hens is fairly or very bad
- 74% of EU citizens think they can influence the welfare of farmed animals for the better through their purchasing behaviour

# **Community Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals: 2006-2010**

- Upgrading existing Directives
- Possibly new Directives for species not currently dealt with
- Improving consumer awareness of current farming practices
- Possible creation of European Centre for the protection and welfare of animals

# Existing EU legislation

- Veal crates prohibited from 2007
- Battery cages prohibited from 2012
- Sow stalls prohibited from 2013
- Sentient Beings Protocol

# Veal Crates

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# Veal Crate System

- Crates prohibited from 2007
- Calves must be kept in groups from age of 8 weeks
- Even before that age veal crates are banned – calves may be kept in individual pens, but they must be large enough to enable calf to turn round
- All-liquid diet with no iron prohibited since 1998

# Sow Stall

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# Sow Stalls & Tethers

- New stalls prohibited from 2003
- Existing stalls prohibited from 2013
- From these dates sows must be kept in groups
- Very disappointingly, sows may still be kept in stalls for first 4 weeks of pregnancy. This should be amended to prohibit stalls throughout pregnancy
- Sow tethers prohibited from 2006

# Other Sow Reforms

- Fully-slatted systems for pregnant sows prohibited.
- Applies to new farms from 2003 & existing farms from 2013
- Sadly, does not apply to fattening pigs
- Since 2003, in order to satisfy their hunger, pregnant sows must by law be given bulky or high-fibre food as well as high-energy food

# Industrially farmed fattening pigs



# Straw & Tail-docking

- Since 2003 all pigs must be given permanent access to a sufficient quantity of straw or similar material to enable proper investigation & manipulation activity
- Since 2003 tail-docking must not be carried out routinely. Before carrying out docking, other measures must be taken to improve the pigs' conditions in order to prevent tail-biting

# Battery Cages

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# Battery Cages: 1

- New cages prohibited from 2003
- Existing cages prohibited from 2012
- Very disappointingly, ‘enriched’ cages are not prohibited

# Battery Cages: 2

- Ban on battery cages under threat as the ban is currently being reviewed
- Many egg producers are pressing for the ban to be postponed for many years
- CIWF believes ban must not be postponed. It must come into force in 2012: the date set by the Directive

# Transport

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# **Transport Directive & new Regulation that comes into force in 2007**

- Allow animals to be transported on huge journeys of 50-90 hours right across Europe
- Cattle & sheep may be transported for 28 hours and pigs & horses for 24 hours. Then they must be unloaded and given food, water and 24 hours rest. This cycle can be repeated indefinitely

# Transport Regulation: Desired Reform

- A maximum **overall** limit of 8 hours should be placed on journeys to slaughter or for further fattening.
- After at most 8 hours animals must have arrived at the slaughterhouse or, if they are being transported for fattening, at the farm where that is to take place

# New Transport Regulation

- Some good points:
- All transport firms must be authorised
- Vehicles used for long journeys must have certificate of approval
- From 2008, drivers must be trained, independently assessed and have certificate of competence
- Improved enforcement
- **BUT will it be taken seriously by the Member States?**