

Integrating Animal Welfare in a Holistic Approach

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Activists Are Narrow-Minded!

- Activism: a policy of taking direct and often militant action to achieve an end, especially a political or social one (Collins English dictionary)
- Focusing on one and only one end, they forget the other parameters of the production system



World Meat Demand Is Increasing

- Stronger growth rates in developing world
 - Demographic growth
 - Economic growth
 - Move from vegetal to animal protein
 - Move from cheap poultry to more expensive red meats
- Other animal protein sources in decline
 - Declining fish catches and lesser aquaculture growth rate
 - Fewer terrestrial wildlife
- Hence a need to produce to help meet the demand of the world population

Society Demands Weighing on Meat & Livestock Industries



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AW Cannot Be Isolated

1. AW - animal / public health interactions

- A controlled environment limits contamination possibilities
 - Raising pigs outdoors increases trichinosis risks
- Prophylactic measures may be considered anti AW
 - Avian flu threat imposes poultry confining
 - Sanitary rifle
 - Parasiticides and parasite welfare?
- Unforeseen animal health impact of well-intended AW measures
 - EU transport regulation imposed unloading livestock at specific rest points
→ increased animal health risks due to:
 - Cohabitation of animals of different origins
 - Difficulties in disinfecting the facilities
- Cold chain not available everywhere, hence need for live transport

AW Cannot Be Isolated

2. AW – environmental protection interactions

- Intensification concentrates polluting agents thus facilitates ... depollution, recycling
- Depending on the context, intensification may also be a means to limit
 - Further encroachment on natural habitats (e.g. Amazon forest)
 - Soil degradation and erosion (e.g. Sahel)

AW Cannot Be Isolated

3. AW – traditional/cultural or religious habit interactions

- Wet markets still predominant in a number of countries → need for live transport
- Halal and kosher slaughtering practices
- Massai cattle bleeding practices
- Etc.



AW Cannot Be Isolated

4. AW – economic performance interactions

- Livestock and meat industries' mission: to provide meat at an affordable price
- Citizen requirements seldom endorsed by shoppers!
- Building up additional constraints
 - Introduces unfair competitive advantages
 - Results in “exporting” the issue
 - Will in the end lead to less consumption and possibly nutritional disorders



Good Intentions Not Enough To Regulate

- Exporting the issue is no solution!
On AW grounds, the EU stopped restitutions for live cattle exports to Lebanon
 - Slaughter animals now imported to LB from BR (3 to 4 weeks sailing instead of 1 from the EU)
 - Same companies involved!
 - No change in landing facilities in LB
- Operators warned the EU Commission that unloading livestock at specific rest points would increase stress (unloading, loading, new environment), but welfarists had their way!
- In both cases, where is the AW improvement?

Valuing Operator's Experience

- The sector knows it works with sentient beings
- Only operators have a grasp of all parameters affecting the production system
 - Understand the consequences of changing one parameter on the others
 - Associate all of them in a holistic approach of the system
- Only operators have an economic incentive to animal well being
- The sector welcomes all sound scientific input to AW understanding

