

## REPORTS AND COMMENTS

### Care and control of companion, stray and feral cats

This publication addresses many of the welfare and management problems arising from the domestication of the cat. Although we tend to think of the cat as a companion animal, many stray from or are thrown out of their homes, and some may become feral or are born as feral animals.

Section 1 of the booklet addresses the topic of cats as companion animals and argues the case for sterilization to prevent the problem of excess unwanted kittens and to improve the welfare of adult cats. Section 2 outlines the management options for strays, which include fostering or adoption through rehoming centres or shelters. Shelter design and housing management practices are touched on but the detail would not be sufficient to set up a shelter. The aim appears to be to outline the issues that need to be considered.

Section 3 explains the various options for dealing with feral cats and here there is a great deal more detail, reflecting the expertise of the editor. The options, which amongst others include rehoming, relocation and extermination, are covered briefly but most of the information concentrates on neuter and release schemes. Trapping, handling and programme management are all discussed with good illustrations throughout. Finally, Section 4 covers legislation and education. The legislation section is short, there is no detail on differences between countries in their legislative provisions, and it really only states that there should be 'adequate' legislation. There seems to be no particular reason why education should be lumped with legislation but the section on cat behaviour and care is useful and interesting.

The publication ends with a case history of WSPA's cat population control project in Lamu, Kenya, which seems misplaced as it does not make any substantive points not made elsewhere in the text and reads as if it came from an annual report. Perhaps the intention was to show that WSPA has practical experience in the area. Much more useful is the list of organizations that can be contacted for further reading.

*Cat Care and Control* tries to do too many things in a rather short booklet. It is a little patchy, (for example it does not discuss the controversial procedure of de-clawing or mention the *Pet Trade Industry Association Model Licence Conditions and Guidance for Cat Boarding Establishments*) but it does collate useful information from a number of sources into one document.

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*Cat Care and Control: A Practical Guide to the Management of Companion, Stray and Feral Cats.* Edited by Jenny Remfry (1997). World Society for the Protection of Animals: London. 37pp. Paperback. Obtainable from the publishers, 2 Langley Lane, London SW8 1TJ, UK. Free.

### FAWC report on the welfare of laying hens

This Report considers the main systems of egg production in the UK (battery cages, deep litter, perchery, aviary and free-range) and makes recommendations for the improvement of hen welfare. On the opening pages, the FAWC Chairman Sir Colin Spedding, in a covering letter to the Agriculture Ministers, introduces the Report and highlights key points. These include the recommendation that Directive 88/166/EEC, which sets the minimum space requirement at 450cm<sup>2</sup> per bird, should be amended immediately to require a minimum space of 600cm<sup>2</sup> in all battery cages within 5 years. Furthermore, the Council recommends that conventional battery cages should be phased out in the long-term subject to three provisions (a) the UK industry must be protected from unfair competition within the EU (b) imports of eggs and egg products into the EU from countries in which battery cages are still used must

be banned and (c) the phasing out of battery cages should not be effected until injurious pecking and cannibalism have been eliminated or successfully controlled.

The Report is presented in seven parts: introduction, overview of the UK egg industry, systems of production, main welfare issues for various production systems, other important topics (consumer and environmental issues), and a summary of recommendations. The subjects are clearly presented and discussed and recommendations are picked out in italics at appropriate places throughout the text.

The summary of recommendations is divided into matters for early action, those for longer term implementation, and recommendations for research and development. The 21 recommendations for early action include, for example, the avoidance of feeding poultry products to reduce disease transmission risks, and specifying light intensities of at least 5 lux and preferably not less than 10 lux in cage and multi-level systems. Among the five recommendations for longer term implementation are that the Governments should pursue the improvements of harmonization of registration of veterinary medicines within the EU to increase the range of licensed poultry medicines available and that it should be compulsory for eggs to be labelled according to their system of production. Subjects identified as requiring research and development include: links between animal protein intake and injurious behaviour in hens, relationships between light intensities and wavelengths and injurious pecking behaviour, and the incidence of beak trimming in all systems in the UK.

This is a valuable document which clearly identifies and prioritizes a variety of problems and constructive approaches to their solution. It proposes important but difficult challenges for the Agriculture Ministers (such as possibly seeking an amendment to GATT/WTO arrangements) and it will be interesting to see how influential the document will be in the awaited review of EU controls on hen welfare.

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*Report on the Welfare of Laying Hens.* Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) 1997. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food: London. 40pp. Paperback. Obtainable from FAWC, Government Buildings, Hook Rise South, Tolworth, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 7NF, UK. Free.

### **The welfare of animals during transport**

The UK's *Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 1997* came into force on 1 July 1997. This Order updates and supercedes the *Welfare of Animals during Transport Order 1994* and other pieces of UK animal welfare legislation relevant to animal transport, and implements Council Directive 91/628/EEC as amended by Council Directive 95/29/EEC.

The Order is, on the whole, clearly set out and written and considerably more comprehensive than the legislation it replaces. It makes provision for the welfare during transport of all vertebrates (except man) and 'cold-blooded animals' (this presumably covers a range of invertebrates). The Order primarily covers the commercial transport of animals, but certain provisions – those specifying that transport must not cause injury of suffering and that animals must be fit for travel – also apply to non-commercial transport including, for example, the transport of pet animals. It covers the following: space allowances, fitness for travel, the treatment of sick animals, feeding and watering, travelling times and rest periods, accompaniment by competent persons (required for vertebrates only) and duties of transporters. It also specifies the requirements for authorization and registration, route plans, certification and details of enforcement and offences.