

some areas, notably into feather pecking and cannibalism. This list of conclusions is a useful summary but it remains to be seen how the points will be translated into action.

The Report was written to provide guidance to the European Council. It is a good review of current knowledge of laying hen welfare and the associated problems. It will be of particular interest to those involved in development of welfare legislation in Europe or elsewhere.

Report on the Welfare of Laying Hens. Scientific Veterinary Committee Animal Welfare Section (1996). Commission of the European Communities: Brussels. 147pp. Paperback.

Pig space requirements

The new space allowances for weaners and rearers specified by Schedule 3 of the *Welfare of Livestock Regulations 1994* (implementing EC Directive 91/630) come into force in the UK on 1 January 1998. The *Welfare of Livestock Regulations 1994* also include the ban on close confinement stalls and tethers which come into effect on 1 January 1999. In answer to requests from pig producers, the Agriculture Departments of England, Scotland and Wales have produced guidelines on the enforcement of provisions on space requirements set out in this legislation.

These guidelines (which are non-statutory) help with the interpretation of various points contained in Schedule 3. For example, they elaborate on the definition of 'being able to turn around without difficulty' which, in future, all pigs must be free to do at all times. The guidelines also expand on the calculation of pen sizes for compliance with minimum pen size regulations and explain exemptions which allow for continued use of close confinement stalls or pens under certain situations (eg for feeding or under free-access). A graph clearly shows the relationship between minimum space allowance and body-weight for finishers and it is made clear that infringements of this allowance will lead, at least, to immediate enforcement action. Extracts from Schedule 3 of the *Welfare of Livestock Regulations 1994* are included as an annex to the guidelines.

Pig Space Requirements: Guidelines on Section 3 of the Welfare of Livestock Regulations 1994. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Scottish Office Agriculture, Environment and Fisheries Department and Welsh Office Agriculture Department (1997). MAFF Publications: London. 9pp. Single copies obtainable free from MAFF Publications, London SE99 7TP, UK.

Farmed ratites in Europe

In April this year the Standing Committee of the European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes adopted a Recommendation (a 15 page document) on the management of farmed ratites (ostriches, emus and rheas). In accordance with Article 9 of the Convention, the Recommendation will enter into force on 22 October 1997. Twenty-four Articles covering a variety of subjects: general provisions, biological characteristics of ratites, stockmanship and inspection, enclosures, buildings and equipment, management, changes in phenotype or genotype, killing and arrangements for review of the Recommendation. Appendices are included which cover topics to be included in the training of ratite farmers, technical details for the catching and handling of ratites, general provisions for ostriches, emus and rheas, and guidelines for size of bedding or fodder chop.

The Recommendation recognizes that scientific knowledge and practical experience of keeping ratites in Europe is limited and that there are particular difficulties with farming non-domesticated species. Important aspects of the biology and management of these birds are covered and all involved in ratite farming in Europe will need to be familiar with this document and its provisions. The document will also be of interest to aviculturalists responsible for ratites in zoos and private collections.

Recommendation Concerning Ratite (Ostriches, Emus and Rheas). Standing Committee of the European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes (1997). Council of Europe: Strasbourg. 15pp. Paperback.