

power of entry for local authorities, by magistrate's warrant, on reasonable suspicion of an offence under the Act would allow the investigation of allegations of an offence under the Act. Under the DWAA, local authorities have power of entry and seizure if a person keeps a dangerous wild animal without the authority of a licence; they also have sole authority to dispose of or destroy animals that they have seized under the Act. There is a potential conflict between the DWAA and the Human Rights Act 1998 over these powers of disposal and destruction, since the owner has no right to appeal against the judgement. The report suggests that this provision be reviewed in order to ensure that it is compatible with the Human Rights Act.

According to the report, penalties from magistrates do not provide an effective deterrent against offences under the Act. Therefore, the report suggests that DEFRA should make sure that the courts are aware of the seriousness of an offence under the Act and discuss the level of fines with the Magistrate's Association.

Pet shops are presently exempt from the Act, allowing unrestricted movement of dangerous wild animals from the premises. A suggestion has been made to either cancel the exemption for pet shops or amend the Pet Animals Act 1951 to control the sale of dangerous wild animals. This would ensure that such animals could not be sold to unlicensed owners. Furthermore, commercial farmers that farm wild boar, ostriches and emus are regulated under the DWAA. The report makes a recommendation to remove farmed wild boar, ostriches and emus from the schedule to relieve the pressure on commercial farmers and to retain the Act for its intended purpose of regulating the private keeping of dangerous wild animals.

At the end of the report, the authors indicate that they believe that the weaknesses in the DWAA can be rectified by appropriate alteration of the Act, the Schedule and the guidance given to local authorities as summarised above. They also state that the general welfare of exotic pet species would benefit from being given a higher profile.

---

Greenwood A G, Cusdin P A, Radford M (June 2001) Effectiveness Study of the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976. DEFRA Research Contract CR0246. Document available at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/consult/dwaa/dwaastudy.pdf>

### **Welfare implications for low-value and surplus farm animals**

In recent years, farmers have experienced difficulties in the disposal of surplus, old and low-value livestock. In 1998, the expansion of 'Specified Risk Material controls' to include the spinal cord of sheep, in conjunction with the relative strength of the pound, reduced the commercial value of poor-quality animals. Also, the withdrawal of the 'Calf Processing Aid Scheme' in July 1999, which provided payments for surplus dairy calves, and a fall in the value of cull ewes, combined to cause a situation that posed a serious threat to the welfare of these animals.

In April 2001, the Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) passed their report entitled 'Advice to Ministers on Welfare Implications for Low Value and Surplus Animals' to UK agricultural Ministers. The report was intended to guide Ministers' considerations of future methods of disposal of low-value and surplus animals. In this document, FAWC makes several recommendations to alleviate some of the problems associated with the disposal of low-value stock. FAWC recommends that Ministers and the livestock industry should explore all possible avenues to assist in the development of effective market solutions for low-value livestock.

FAWC suggests that a fully integrated national scheme should be established for the collection and disposal of fallen casualty or emergency animals. This scheme should be capable of providing a disposal route for unwanted calves and cull ewes at times of depressed prices. Any such national scheme should be easily audited. A system such as this would allow farmers

to cope when normal prices collapse and to deal with the regular problem of the disposal of low-value animals. Furthermore, Ministers are advised to consider various options for funding such a scheme, including a levy scheme, the provision of central funding and the introduction of specialised insurance policies. FAWC also recommends that the operation and funding of national collection and disposal schemes in other Member States be examined to determine whether they could provide an appropriate model for the UK. Additionally, whilst on-farm disposal remains an option under EU legislation, FAWC recommends that farmers who may be required to slaughter stock are properly trained in humane methods and are made aware of relevant legislation. Finally, FAWC recommends that an industry action group be established, co-sponsored by relevant Government departments, to consider issues raised by the disposal of surplus, fallen, casualty and emergency animals.

---

*Advice to Ministers on Welfare Implications for Low Value and Surplus Farm Animals* (April 2001)  
Published by the Farm Animal Welfare Council, 1a Page Street, London SW1P 4PQ, UK. Available at the FAWC website: <http://www.fawc.org.uk>

### **Hard boiled reality — animal welfare-friendly egg production in a global market**

In 1999, as a result of concern for animal welfare, legislation was adopted by the European Community (EC) to phase out conventional battery cages by 2012. The increased production costs associated with better welfare standards for laying hens might make it difficult for EC producers to compete in a global market where cheaper eggs or egg products can be imported from less humane systems. Will freedom of trade in agricultural products within the global market, in accordance with the agreements and rules of the WTO, jeopardise animal welfare standards in the future?

The RSPCA have produced a report entitled *Hard Boiled Reality — Animal Welfare-Friendly Egg Production in a Global Market*, which examines in detail how welfare standards affect egg production costs; the report also considers the implications of raising animal welfare standards in an increasingly competitive global market. The report was written and researched by Chris Fisher and David Bowles and was based on initial research by Promar CEAS International, Wye, UK. It begins by explaining which egg production methods are used in the EC, the USA and Switzerland. These regions were chosen to allow comparison between production units with no minimum space allowances (in the USA), systems with specific standards for battery production (in the EC) and an industry where battery farming is not permitted (in Switzerland). In addition, there is a brief description of caged, barn and free-range production units.

The report indicates that at present, the production of barn eggs in the EC costs 24 per cent more than cage-produced eggs; furthermore, it costs 59 per cent more to produce free-range eggs than battery-farmed eggs. The report also states that at present it costs 42 cents to produce 12 eggs in the USA compared to 58 cents in the EC. Approximately 5 cents of this difference is attributable to welfare factors such as feed and housing. In order to justify any measures that could be introduced to counterbalance the costs of raising welfare standards, it is vital to know precisely what the additional costs attributed to these improvements are. Therefore, the authors calculated exactly what costs would be involved as a consequence of improving welfare standards.

The analysis in this report suggests that by 2012, when the new legislation is enforced, there will be a substantial difference between the EC and the USA. At today's prices, a dozen eggs will typically cost 73 cents in the EC compared to 42 cents in the USA; 20 cents of this additional 31 cents could be attributable to differences in welfare standards. As a result of this, by 2012 it could be economically viable for the USA to export both powdered and liquid egg