

Declaration of Noordwijk

Introduction

In the Netherlands much attention is given to raising animal welfare to an even higher level, on the part of the business sector, non governmental organisations and political parties alike. Castration of pig(let)s is an important issue in this respect. On grounds of their social involvement, parties go for short-term abolition of non-anaesthetised castration of pig(let)s.

Starting-point

Dutch supermarkets have indicated that as of January 1, 2009 they only wish to sell fresh pork that originates from pig(let)s that have been castrated under an anaesthetic. Other parties within the retail, industrial and food service sectors have by now taken up this position as well.

Message

We accept our social responsibility and aim to put an end to the castration of pig(let)s in a responsible way, by 2015 at the latest. We consider castration under an anaesthetic a compromise as long as this goal has not been attained. Our effort in this respect is to limit the duration of this compromise as much as possible. What we wish to achieve is that castration under an anaesthetic will be possible by way of a method that can be applied by the pig farmer in person. Castration under an anaesthetic involves higher costs. These costs will be reimbursed by the market parties whose terms of procurement include demands on pig farmers concerning non-anaesthetised castration.

We aim for supermarkets and market parties in the food service and food industry in the Netherlands to start putting in an effort to include in their offer as many processed meat and meat products, apart from fresh meat, originating from litters of pigs whose boars were castrated under an anaesthetic.

Action plan

We will take action to realise our objectives. We will prepare a calculation model of the costs, as well as a proposal on how to cover these costs. Our proposals will be reviewed by LEI of Wageningen University and Research centre. We will be working towards a practical, affordable way of anaesthetising pig(let)s. We will also make it transparent for the parties involved how to set about assuring this procedure.

We are putting in a great effort to introduce the Dutch approach among our European partners through our umbrella organisations in Europe. Our objective is to realise castration under an anaesthetic within an EU-perspective as well, and in the long run to put an end to castration as a whole.

Before July 1, 2008 we will account for our efforts with regard to this declaration.

Conclusion

We hereby call on everyone to join this declaration by publicly endorsing it.

The Declaration of Noordwijk was signed on November 29, 2007.

Signatories of the Declaration of Noordwijk:

1. Centraal Bureau Levensmiddelenhandel (*Dutch Food Retail Association*), hereafter named CBL

Represented by its director, Mr Theo Roos

2. Centrale Organisatie voor de Vleessector (*Central organisation for the meat industry*), hereafter named COV

Represented by its deputy chairman, Mr Siem Korver

3. Land- en Tuinbouw Organisatie Nederland (*National farmers' organisation*), hereafter named LTO

Represented by its chairwoman for the “LTO vakgroep Varkenshouderij” (*LTO pig farmers association*), Mrs Annechien ten Have-Mellema

4. Nederlandse Vakbond Varkenshouders (*Dutch pig farmers' union*), hereafter named NVV

Represented by its chairman, Mr Wyno Zwanenburg.

The Declaration of Noordwijk is also supported by:

- Mrs Gerda Verburg, Dutch Minister of Agriculture, Natural Environment and Food Quality
- Mr Frank Dales, director of the “Nederlandse Vereniging tot Bescherming van Dieren” (*Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals*)