Protection of chickens kept for meat production

2005/0099(CNS) - 28/06/2007 - Final act

PURPOSE: to lay down minimum rules to protect chickens kept for meat production.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Directive 2007/43/EC laying down minimum rules for the protection of chickens kept for meat production.

CONTENT: the Council adopted this Directive by qualified majority (the Austrian delegation voting against) with the objective of introducing animal welfare improvements in the intensive farming of chickens.

The main points are as follows:

Scope: the Directive applies to chickens kept for meat production. However, it does not apply to: holdings with fewer than 500 chickens; holdings with only breeding stocks of chickens; hatcheries; extensive indoor and free range chickens; and organically reared birds.

Requirements: general requirements for houses (including e.g. requirements for drinkers, litter, noise, light, cleaning and record keeping as well as monitoring and reporting of post mortem inspection, with a special care for lesions correlated to poor welfare) are set out in Annex I of the Directive. The required inspections and the monitoring and follow-up, including those provided for in Annex III, must be carried out by the competent authority or the official veterinarian. The maximum stocking density in a holding or a house must not at any time exceed 33 kg/m2, subject to a derogation under certain circumstances when the maximum stocking density in a holding or a house of a holding does not at any time exceed 39 kg/m2. The owner must comply with additional requirements.

Reward system: when the criteria set out in Annex V(Criteria for the use of increased stocking density) are fulfilled, Member States may allow that the maximum stocking density be increased by a maximum of 3 kg/m2.

Guides: Member States must encourage the development of guides to good management practice which shall include guidance on compliance with the Directive. The dissemination and use of such guides will be encouraged.

Training: keepers who are natural persons must have received sufficient training in their tasks and appropriate training courses should be available. These training courses must focus on welfare aspects and cover in particular the matters listed in Annex IV of the directive. Furthermore, a system must be established for the control and approval of training courses. The keeper of the chickens shall hold a certificate which is recognised by the competent authority of the Member State concerned, attesting to the completion of such a training course or to having acquired experience equivalent to such training. Member States may recognise experience acquired before 30 June 2010 as being equivalent to participation in such training courses and shall issue certificates attesting to such equivalence.

Report: based on a scientific opinion of the European Food Safety Authority, the Commission shall no later than 31 December 2010 submit to the European Parliament and to the Council a report concerning the influence of genetic parameters on identified deficiencies resulting in poor welfare of chickens. That report may be accompanied by appropriate legislative proposals, if necessary.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 01/07/2007.

TRANSPOSITION: 30/06/2010.