

Pigs

Animal Welfare (Pigs) Code of Welfare 2010

A code of welfare issued under the Animal Welfare Act 1999

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National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

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Preface

The Animal Welfare Act 1999 came into force on 1 January 2000. It establishes the fundamental obligations relating to the care of animals. These obligations are written in general terms. The detail is found in codes of welfare. Codes set out minimum standards and recommendations relating to all aspects of the care of animals. They are developed following an extensive process of public consultation and are reviewed every 10 years, or sooner if necessary.

I recommend that all those who care for animals become familiar with the relevant codes. This is important because failure to meet a minimum standard in a code could lead to legal action being taken.

I issue codes on the recommendation of the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee. The members of this committee collectively possess knowledge and experience in veterinary science; agricultural science; animal science; the commercial use of animals; the care, breeding and management of companion animals; ethical standards and conduct in respect of animals; animal welfare advocacy; the public interest in respect of animals; and environmental and conservation management.

The Animal Welfare (Pigs) Code of Welfare 2010 is issued by me, by a notice published in the *Gazette* on 2 December 2010, under section 75 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999. This code comes into force on 3 December 2010 and revokes the Animal Welfare (Pigs) Code of Welfare 2005.

This code is deemed to be a regulation for the purposes of the Regulations (Disallowance) Act 1989 and is subject to the scrutiny of Parliament's Regulations Review Committee.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'David Carter', written over a thin horizontal line.

Hon David Carter
Minister of Agriculture

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is the purpose of this code of welfare?

The purpose of this code is to inform the owners of pigs and persons who are in charge of them about the minimum standards they must achieve in order to meet their obligations under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 (the Act). The achievement of high standards of animal welfare in any pig production system requires skill and good judgement. Unless pigs are managed and handled well, their welfare cannot be adequately protected.

This code therefore stresses the importance of good stockmanship. There are several instances in this code where matters are left to the judgement of the stockperson rather than being prescribed. The minimum standards provided, rather than prescribing how husbandry should be carried out, define the outcomes required for the pigs in order to meet their physical, health and behavioural needs. This approach allows the stockperson to be flexible in resolving problems that have an impact on the animals. Accordingly, this code is intended to encourage all those responsible for its implementation to adopt good practice in husbandry, care and handling.

This code also includes information and example indicators, to provide guidance on ways in which a minimum standard may be met. The inclusion of recommended best practice is intended to encourage all those responsible for its implementation to adopt a standard of husbandry, care and handling exceeding that required by minimum standards.

1.2 Who does this code apply to?

This code is intended for all persons responsible for the welfare of pigs. Under the Act the “owner” of an animal and every “person in charge” of an animal is responsible for meeting the legal obligations for animal welfare. Responsibility for meeting minimum standards relating to the provision, design and maintenance of the facilities and equipment, the allocation of operational responsibilities and the competence and supervision of performance of employees will lie with the owner and every person in charge of the pigs.

The owners or persons in charge may place the pigs in the care of others for purposes such as feeding, day-to-day management, rearing, transport and slaughter but this does not absolve them from their responsibility to ensure these tasks will be carried out in accordance with this code.

Responsibility for meeting minimum standards during the operation of particular tasks lies with the person responsible for carrying out that particular task. That person is “in charge” of the animals at that particular point in time. In practice, the person in charge will depend on the minimum standard in question.

1.3 What animals does this code apply to?

This code applies to the welfare of all pigs in all types of management systems regardless of the reasons for which they are kept (i.e. including pigs owned by non-commercial operators).

1.4 What happens if I do not follow the minimum standards in this code?

Failure to meet a minimum standard in this code may be used as evidence to support a prosecution for an offence under the Animal Welfare Act. A person who is charged with an offence against the Animal Welfare Act can defend him or herself by showing that he or she has equalled or exceeded the minimum standards in this code.

The recommendations for best practice in this code have no legal effect and are included to encourage higher standards of animal welfare.

1.5 How does this code relate to other codes?

Codes of welfare have been developed, or are being developed, for individual species of animals and for the transport of animals. Other codes of welfare should be consulted where appropriate (see Appendix V, “Codes of Welfare”, to this code and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry website at: www.biosecurity.govt.nz/animal-welfare/).

2. Stockmanship

Introduction

Good stockmanship is the most important determinant of good animal welfare. The knowledge, skills, abilities and attitude of the stock handlers are integral to the standard of welfare experienced by the pigs. Stockmanship is the ability to identify an animal's needs and ensure that action is taken to address those needs in a way that demonstrates an affinity with and empathy for the animal concerned.

Regardless of the pig production system employed, there will be inherent problems and particular welfare risks which the stock handler needs to manage for the benefit of the animals. Stock handlers need to be familiar with the risks that are characteristic of the production system in which they work. Good stockmanship is particularly important to ensure the welfare of pigs in larger groups, group housing or in outdoor conditions because it is more difficult to observe pigs individually in those systems.

Those responsible for the care of pigs need to be competent and well trained with an understanding of aspects of pig behaviour to ensure pig welfare when handling the animals and their own safety. Knowledge of the normal appearance and behaviour of pigs is essential for monitoring their health and welfare. It is important that those in charge of pigs are able to recognise early signs of distress, disease or aberrant behaviours so that prompt action is taken or expert (e.g. veterinary) advice sought.

Owners, managers or persons in charge are required to ensure that their staff has either the relevant knowledge and training, or appropriate supervision and support to ensure that the health and welfare needs of the pigs in their care are met. Personnel may undergo training either formally, or on the job, by experienced supervisors. All staff, including contract or temporary staff, need to be trained and competent in their relevant tasks.

Minimum Standard No. 1 – Stockmanship

Pigs must be cared for by a sufficient number of personnel, who collectively possess the ability, knowledge and competence necessary to maintain the health and welfare of the animals in accordance with this code.

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 1 – Stockmanship

- Pig health and welfare is in accordance with the minimum standards listed in this code
- Stock handlers are familiar with the minimum standards listed in the code and a copy of the minimum standards is available on site at all times
- Job descriptions or other documentation of expectations of personnel duties include reference to pig health and welfare
- Evidence of training/competence in the care and maintenance of pigs and how staff's actions may affect the animals' welfare can be demonstrated
- Pigs are well habituated to human contact and do not show abnormal fear of humans

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Stock handlers should attend a training course on understanding human – animal interactions, to help improve animal welfare and the technical performance of the unit.

General Information

Persons involved in the farming of pigs are encouraged to receive external training from accredited training providers where relevant.

Information on qualifications and accredited training providers is available from the Agriculture Industry Training Organisation, PO Box 10 383, the Terrace, Wellington 6143, or from the NZQA web site: <http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/framework/>

3. Food and Water

3.1 Feed: General

Introduction

The amount of food and nutrients pigs require in any management system is affected by factors such as climate, the nutritional composition and quality of the diet, the age, gender, size and physiological state of the pigs (e.g. pregnancy, lactation), and their state of health, growth rate, previous feeding levels and level of activity and exercise.

These factors and the natural variation in the needs of individual animals mean it is not appropriate to specify the complete range of quantities and nutrients required. Approaches that rely solely on a regime of feeding pre-determined quantities are therefore discouraged. The need to adjust feeding levels to meet individual requirements can be determined by monitoring body condition score, or by weighing at regular intervals. (See Appendix I for guidelines.)

Feeding systems for groups of pigs require good design and management to maximise the opportunity for each pig to receive sufficient daily food. Measures to satisfy appetite as well as nutritional needs are important for pig welfare. Hungry pigs housed in groups are prone to showing aggression when competing for food, which can result in serious injury. Therefore, not only do pigs need to have sufficient access to food, they need to be able to get to it without undue competition.

Outdoor pigs have greater feed requirements than indoor pigs because of the greater variability of environmental conditions, levels of activity and feed wastage.

Minimum Standard No. 2 – Feed

- (a) **All pigs must receive adequate quantities of food and nutrients each day to enable each pig to:**
- (i) **maintain good health;**
 - (ii) **meet its physiological demands; and**
 - (iii) **avoid metabolic and nutritional disorders.**
- (b) **Feed must be provided in such a way as to prevent undue competition and injury.**
- (c) **When the body condition of any pig falls to 2 or below (on a scale of 1–5) immediate remedial action must be taken to resolve the issue.**

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 2 – Feed

- Pigs are not vocalising unnecessarily
- Feeding frequency is appropriate to the age and growth rate of the pigs
- Trough space and the number of feeders are appropriate for the number and size of the pigs
- Competition at feeders and feed troughs is actively monitored e.g. by assessing rates of injury, such as vulva bites and other injuries, and where necessary, access to feed or feeder space allowance is adjusted to reduce competition

- The design and operation of automated feeding systems allow access in a way that minimises intimidation, bullying and aggression
- In sequential feeding systems, efforts are made to minimise revisits by animals that have already received their ration
- Automatic feeding systems are checked at least once every 24 hours to ensure they are in working order and any problems are rectified promptly
- The prevalence of shoulder ulcers, an indicator of poor body condition, is monitored and ulcers are treated to alleviate discomfort
- Body weights or body condition scores (see Appendix I of this code) are monitored and maintained at level appropriate for the class of pig:
 - Breeding sows after weaning greater than 2 and preferably not less than 3
 - Breeding sows at farrowing are not less than 3, and are preferably 3.5 - 4
 - Growers, finishers, boars greater than 2 and preferably not less than 3
- The diet is balanced nutritionally
- Dung/manure appearance is “normal” i.e. no evidence of diarrhoea, constipation, or excessive straw from eating the bedding

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Weaners and young growing pigs should be provided with frequent small meals of fresh, palatable feed.
- (b) Adult and growing pigs should be given enough bulky feed or high fibre feed to satisfy hunger and foraging needs.
- (c) Changes in the composition of the diet should be managed to avoid digestive upsets.

General Information

Body condition scoring is a useful method of visually and manually assessing whether animals are receiving adequate nutrition. Refer to Appendix I for a body condition scoring scale in pigs. Note however that weight for age may be a more reliable indicator than body condition score for young rapidly growing pigs, especially those that are genetically bred for fast lean growth rates.

Information on recommended nutrient requirements of different types of pigs can be obtained through recognised industry experts.

3.2 Feed: New-born Piglets

Introduction

It is essential that new-born piglets receive an adequate supply of colostrum from the sow or an appropriate colostrum substitute, as soon as possible after birth, and ideally within 24 hours, when their digestive tract is still able to absorb the proteins that give immunological protection. Colostrum also provides a highly digestible source of energy. Sows' milk contains a range of proteins and other substances that protect the piglets from infections and digestive upsets. Continued access to sows' milk is therefore important for the welfare of the piglets.

Piglets receiving inadequate milk from their sow should, if possible, be transferred (fostered) to another appropriate lactating sow or may be hand-reared.

Minimum Standard No. 3 – Feed: New-born Piglets

- (a) All piglets must receive colostrum or an appropriate substitute as soon as possible after birth, and within 24 hours.
- (b) If piglets are not being fed adequately by the sow, they must be fostered, hand-reared or killed humanely.
- (c) Fostering must be carefully managed to ensure that the nurse sow accepts and is able to feed all of the piglets.

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 3 – Feed: New-born Piglets

- All piglets, including fostered piglets, show typical vigour, body condition, vitality and freedom from injuries
- The sow's udder is in good condition and she allows suckling
- Sow milk production is regularly monitored

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Sows should be managed to prevent piglets from other litters sucking from recently farrowed sows, to ensure the sow's own piglets get the colostrum and milk they require.

3.3 Water

Introduction

The provision of an adequate supply of water is critical for maintaining pig health and welfare. A pig's daily consumption of water varies with factors such as environmental temperature, age, liveweight and diet. Herd hierarchy and social interaction can limit access of individual pigs to drinking water. This may be aggravated in outdoor environments, especially during hot weather, when water consumption will rise, and in winter when water supplies may freeze.

Minimum Standard No. 4 – Water

- (a) An adequate daily supply of water that is palatable, not harmful to health and at a temperature that does not inhibit drinking must be accessible to all pigs, at all times.

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 4 – Water

- Pigs are not vocalising unnecessarily
- Watering points are appropriate for the number and size of pigs and device used
- Competition does not prevent any pigs from having access to water
- Water reticulation systems are checked daily, any problems immediately rectified and the supply and use are monitored
- Recently weaned pigs are monitored more regularly than older animals

- The water reserves are adequate to cope with an average 24-hour demand
- Alternative arrangements are in place in case of water equipment or supply failure to ensure that pigs receive their daily water requirements

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Water chemical and microbiological safety should be monitored on a regular basis. This is especially important for newly established piggeries.
- (b) In hot or very cold weather the water supply should be checked at least twice a day to ensure that the requirements of the pigs are being met.

4. Shelter including Housing Facilities

Introduction

Methods of pig production vary widely and include both indoor and outdoor systems. The standard of the facilities in which pigs are housed and sheltered, and the way in which these facilities are operated, has a direct impact on the health, productivity and welfare of pigs.

Whichever production system is used, pigs of all ages need to be provided with a dry, warm lying area and protection from excessive heat, cold and climatic extremes.

The provision and efficient operation of a suitable environment in indoor systems is typically reliant on technology, and the effective stock handler in this environment must be familiar with its operation. Increasingly, growing pigs are group housed in eco-barns and similar deep litter systems.

The requirements of pigs for space, ventilation, heating and air quality are also defined in this section.

4.1 Shelter for Pigs Outdoors

Introduction

Successful farming of pigs outdoors is dependent on a range of environmental features, of which a free-draining soil, low rainfall, and a temperate climate are the most important. Many areas of New Zealand are unsuitable for large scale systems of outdoor production. Even where environmental conditions are suitable, there will be periods of adverse weather and pigs need sufficient shelter provided to enable them to cope. Since outdoor pigs are directly exposed to climatic variations, the role of the stockhandler is crucial and good facilities are essential if good welfare is to be achieved in outdoor systems.

Minimum Standard No. 5 – Shelter for Pigs Outdoors

- (a) Pigs must be provided with dry and draught-free but adequately ventilated shelter.**
- (b) Pigs must be provided with the means to minimise the effects of adverse weather, including the effects of heat and cold stress.**

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 5 – Shelter for Pigs Outdoors

- Arks or huts are insulated sufficiently to minimise internal temperature variation
- Accommodation is designed to cope with the most demanding weather conditions expected, especially protection from wind and driving rain, sun and overheating
- Ventilation is managed to avoid excess heat in summer and cold in winter
- Bedding material is provided to assist pigs to maintain body temperature in cold weather
- Signs of cold or heat stress in pigs are recognised and addressed

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Between batches of piglets, farrowing arks and huts should be re-sited and bedding such as straw should be replaced in order to limit the build-up and transfer of disease organisms.

General Information

Strategies to manage heat stress include provision of wallows, provision of shade, feeding at night and using paddocks that have good airflow. Because pigs do not sweat, most temperature loss occurs by evaporation through skin and secondarily from lungs and nose. Air movement is a critical component for cooling. Mud is more effective than water for cooling pigs.

Strategies to manage cold stress include providing sleeping enclosures, provision of extra bedding/straw, hanging a movable screen over doorways to retain the warm air and feeding close to the housing. In cold conditions or climates, the benefits of additional space may be offset by chilling and associated health and welfare problems when there are too few pigs to heat the air space sufficiently. Stocking density for pigs kept outdoors will be determined by local government regulations and will depend on the nature of the land and rainfall.

Particular attention needs to be given to new-born piglets because they have difficulty maintaining body temperature independently of their environment.

4.2 Housing and Equipment for Pigs Indoors

Introduction

Provision of adequate space, appropriate temperature and good ventilation are priorities in the design of any piggery accommodation and are interrelated. Space allowances for pigs need to provide for their comfort at all times throughout the year, and throughout their growing cycle. If the environment is not controlled during hot weather, enough space needs to be provided to allow pigs in a pen to lie on their sides without the need to have body contact with other pigs. During cold periods, accommodation needs to provide warmth to reduce huddling or inappropriate dunging patterns.

Based on emerging international research, NAWAC believes the current industry guidelines for space requirements need to be reviewed as 10-50% more space may be required to provide for all pigs' needs, depending on their level of activity and the thermal conditions.

Advice on welfare aspects need to be sought from suitably qualified persons when new buildings are planned, existing buildings modified or equipment purchased.

Minimum Standard No. 6 – Housing and Equipment

- (a) Housing systems must be designed, constructed and maintained in a manner that provides suitable (comfortable) temperatures, fresh air, and hygienic conditions.
- (b) All group housed pigs must be able to stand, move about and lie down without undue interference with each other in a space that provides for separation of dunging, lying and eating areas.
- (c) The minimum lying space allowance for growing pigs must be in accordance with the following formula: Area (m²) per pig = 0.03 x liveweight^{0.67} (kg).
- (d) Inspection of all pigs must be possible.
- (e) The risk of injury, disease or stress for pigs must be minimised by appropriate design, construction and maintenance of housing and equipment.
- (f) Pigs must be provided with natural or artificial light of appropriate intensity for a minimum of nine hours each day.
- (g) All mechanical equipment used in pig production must be maintained in good working order.
- (h) Alternative means of temperature regulation, ventilation, feeding and watering of stock must be available in case of power or computer failure or mechanical breakdown.
- (i) Systems must be designed to minimise the impact of flooding in the event that water pipes or fittings burst.
- (j) Appropriate fire prevention measures and a fire emergency plan that includes feed milling areas adjacent to pig housing, must be in place.

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 6 – Housing and Equipment

- Pigs are monitored for lameness and injury and affected animals treated promptly
- Prevalence of aggressive behaviour and the effectiveness of steps taken to lessen the impact of aggression are monitored
- Less than 15% of pigs have skin lesions, bites and scratches from fighting at any one time
- Floors, especially in the mating area, have a non-slip surface and adequate drainage
- Natural and/or artificial light of at least 20 lux at pig level is available
- An equipment maintenance programme exists and a maintenance schedule is documented
- Staff are trained to manage the ventilation and temperature regulation equipment to keep the environmental conditions within the appropriate range for pig welfare
- Spare parts for ventilation and heating equipment are available on site
- The emergency plan is documented and staff are trained to implement it
- A reliable source of feed and reserves are on hand in case of supply or delivery failure
- An alarm is fitted with a back-up power source to warn of ventilation system breakdown from power failure or mechanical reasons
- Electrical fittings and attachments to mains voltage are out of the reach of pigs, or protected from interference or damage by pigs

- Pigs do not have access to toxic hazards e.g. paint, timber preservatives
- Pig distribution and behaviour are monitored during daily inspections and corrective action to adjust temperature or ventilation is taken as required
- Alarm systems, fire fighting equipment and emergency power supply are tested regularly and test results documented

Recommended Best Practice

- The minimum lying space allowance for growing pigs should be in accordance with the following formula: Area (m²) per pig = 0.047 x liveweight^{0.67} (kg).
- Pigs which are regrouped should be temporarily provided with additional space and/or hide areas to minimise injuries during any aggression from social rank fighting.

General Information

Pigs in groups share space to some extent in most conditions. Note the formulae for space requirements given above represent the static area occupied by a growing pig that is lying down. Total space requirements to meet movement and social needs may have to be increased in some situations, depending on the interaction of a number of factors characterising the housing and management system, including feeding strategies, group size, age, breed, temperature, insulation, ventilation, pen shape, flooring, lighting and other husbandry factors.

The same factors apply to space requirements for group housed sows, noting that the smaller the size of the group the more space per sow is required. Increased space allowance and provision of hide areas (visual barriers) for group housed sows reduces the amount and effects of aggression.

Poor maintenance of concrete, slatted or perforated floors can cause lameness or foot damage. An important aspect of slatted floor design is the width of the slat and the width of the gap in relation to the size of the pig it is designed for.

Spraying floors with emulsified oils or water misters may assist in providing good air quality within shelters if they are dusty.

Information is available from industry groups on a range of aspects of housing design. Information on suitable fire fighting equipment can be obtained from Standards New Zealand, www.standards.co.nz

4.2.1 Temperature

Introduction

Pigs have a narrow thermal comfort range so their welfare will be directly influenced by temperature extremes. This is particularly true for newborn piglets, which have a relatively poor capacity to maintain core body temperature.

Minimum Standard No. 7 – Temperature

- Newborn piglets must be housed at temperatures that will assist them to reach and maintain normal body temperatures.**
- Heating devices (e.g. infrared lamps, heat pads) must be securely fixed and protected from interference by the sow and piglets.**
- Ventilation control or other measures must ensure housed pigs do not become overheated or cold stressed.**

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 7 – Temperature

- Bedding is provided for piglets in unheated creep areas
- Piglet behaviour is monitored daily for indicators of thermal discomfort and remedial action is taken if necessary. Hunched backs, sluggish movements, shivering and huddling suggest that the piglets are cold; panting and lying away from the heat source suggest that piglets are hot
- The sow's welfare is not compromised by excessive heat from the creep area e.g. no panting and showing good appetite
- Housed pigs are protected from wide or abrupt temperature fluctuations
- Growing and adult pig behaviour is monitored at least once per day. Corrective action is taken if signs of cold or heat stress are observed
- In periods of hot temperatures (>25 °C), steps are taken to reduce overheating of pigs such as opening flaps and doors, misting, increasing ventilation or shade and providing more space

General Information

The comfortable temperature range for a sow is significantly lower than for piglets, so their varying requirements need to be balanced. Management strategies for indoor systems when ambient temperatures are hot include a reduction in stocking density, ventilation control and the use of cooling devices. These may need to be implemented to ensure that pigs do not experience heat stress when internal house temperature and humidity are high. Industry guidelines on optimum temperature ranges for categories of pigs are available.

4.2.2 Air Quality

Introduction

Control of air quality in enclosed houses is important for pig comfort and welfare. Fresh air is required to remove excess heat and moisture, minimise the transmission of airborne infectious agents, remove waste gases and minimise dust particles in the atmosphere. A balance is also required to keep pigs warm and protect them from draughts.

Minimum Standard No. 8 – Air Quality

- (a) Adequate ventilation must be provided in order to prevent the build-up of dust, and gases such as ammonia, to levels that are harmful to pigs.**
- (b) Immediate and appropriate action must be taken to reduce ammonia levels if they exceed 25 ppm at pig level.**

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 8 – Air Quality

- Humidity, dust or ammonia levels (as detected by smell) are not unpleasant to a human
- Inspections of pigs show minimal signs of discomfort, distress or disease (e.g. sneezing, coughing, heavy breathing, runny eyes or noses)

General Information

Ammonia is produced as part of animal effluent. Increases in air ammonia concentrations can occur for short periods in enclosed housing because of the need to restrict airflow to avoid draughts and chilling of pigs during cold or windy weather. High ammonia concentrations for prolonged periods can cause eye and respiratory irritation in pigs, resulting in discomfort and respiratory disease and reduced growth rates. As a guide to the level of ammonia within the shed, 10-15 ppm of ammonia in the air can be detected by smell and an ammonia level over 25 ppm will cause eye and nasal irritation in people.

The stock handler needs to check regularly for the presence of noxious gases at pig level, since levels that are uncomfortable to the pig may not be recognised at normal human standing height.

Particular care with ventilation is required when pigs are kept over static effluent storage systems as dangerous fumes may result from the effluent. Stirring of effluent during pumping out the tanks poses a particular risk to stock above the effluent pit and is best undertaken when animals are not in the building.

5. Behaviour

Introduction

Meeting a pig's behavioural needs is important for its welfare. Pigs are social animals and prefer to live in groups. At all ages they are very vocal and when given the opportunity will display behaviours such as rooting, nest building, chewing and other forms of oral and nasal stimulation. It is important that pigs are given social contact as well as freedom and choice of movement, so they can express behaviours that are important to them.

While domestication has made pigs easier to handle, some undesirable behavioural traits persist that may need to be managed to ensure pig welfare. These problems occur in all production systems but may require additional attention indoors where there are higher stocking densities. Pigs are hierarchical animals and will seek to establish a social structure which may result in aggression, particularly when mixing unfamiliar pigs. Where pigs of all ages are kept in groups, aggression can create welfare problems, which may be severe if they are not well managed. Aggression can also occur at feeding times and is manifested by bullying, fighting and vices such as vulva, tail or ear biting. It is essential to be alert for these behaviours both to manage them and to identify and minimise the factors that cause them. Aggression can be mitigated by a variety of practices, and a high standard of stockmanship is essential.

Dry sow stalls are employed to manage aggressive behaviour of sows but, in doing so they limit sows' ability to express some other behaviours. One of the purposes of this section of the code is to establish a clear direction towards housing systems which provide pigs with the opportunity to engage in a greater range of behaviours while maintaining physical and health needs.

The minimum standards and associated indicators outlined elsewhere in this code also address the behavioural needs of pigs and provide advice on how these needs can be met.

Minimum Standard No. 9 – Behaviour

- (a) **Pigs must be managed in a manner that provides them sufficient opportunities to express and satisfy their normal behaviours. These include, but are not limited to, feeding, drinking, sleeping, dunging and urination, vocalisation, thermoregulation, and social contact.**

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 9 – Behaviour

- Pigs are alert and attentive
- Pigs are monitored for signs of stereotypic behaviour and vocalisation, and remedial action is taken as necessary
- Pigs are monitored for aggression, tail, ear and vulva biting, and remedial action is taken as necessary
- Less than 15% of pigs have skin lesions, bites and scratches from fighting at any one time

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Rooting material such as straw, or other material that can be manipulated, should be provided for all pigs.
- (b) Pigs with serious ear, vulva or tail bite wounds should be immediately separated from pen mates, where practicable, and treated if necessary. If the pig responsible for biting can be identified, it should be moved to an individual pen.
- (c) Genetic selection methods should be encouraged as a means to promote behavioural traits that minimise welfare problems in pigs.
- (d) Where undesirable behaviours are detected, management, housing and equipment design, and environmental conditions should be reviewed to identify and reduce or remove the cause.
- (e) Facilities in which pigs are group housed but are individually fed, i.e. either at individual feeding stations or via a computerised feeding system, should be monitored to reduce aggression at feeding times.
- (f) Every effort should be made to minimise mixing of unfamiliar pigs. When pigs are destined for slaughter and mixing is inevitable, they should be mixed at the time of loading onto the vehicle rather than before.
- (g) Environmental enrichment should be provided for housed pigs. Such practices may include:
 - the provision of “toys” such as a length of hanging chain, rock, tyre, buoy or “football”
 - positive human contact (such as pats, rubs and talking)
 - the use of a radio in growing sheds to accustom pigs to a range of noises and voices

General Information

Social contact is provided for pigs by physical contact in groups or between pigs housed next to each other, and by keeping pigs within hearing and sight of each other. When pigs are kept in groups, aggression can be mitigated through a variety of practices such as attention to group size and composition, adequate space, feeding method, diet and the satisfaction of appetite, selection for temperament, running a boar with pregnant sows, provision of straw or other bedding to encourage foraging behaviour, individual feeding stalls, individual pens or using baffles such as bales of straw to create escape areas where pigs can withdraw.

Techniques used to minimise aggression when mixing unfamiliar pigs include introducing pigs into a pen that has feed on the floor, introducing all of the pigs into a new pen at the same time, using group sizes of more than 50 pigs and using a pen with room for the pigs to move away, or with baffles such as bales of straw that pigs can hide behind.

5.1 Managing Interactions between Sows and Piglets

Introduction

Sows' behaviour during and after farrowing can be a hazard for their piglets. They can crush the piglets as they lie down and may also kill and eat piglets.

The purpose of any farrowing facility is to provide the piglets with an area where they have ready access to the sow, where they can maintain body temperature and where they can avoid being crushed by the sow. The facility needs to also provide for the welfare needs of the sow. Meeting the needs of piglets can conflict with the needs of the sow, so systems used to manage farrowing sows and suckling piglets have to balance their differing requirements.

In outdoor production, an ark is the farrowing facility. The most common indoor facility is the farrowing crate. Both have the objective of ensuring the highest practicable survival of piglets. Farrowing crates also aid with fostering piglets between sows, a process which protects the welfare of smaller piglets or excess piglets from large litters where there are more piglets than the sow can feed adequately. Crates also provide the advantages of enabling individual feeding and health care. The disadvantages of farrowing crates for the sow include the restriction of movement and a reduced ability to carry out nest building behaviours.

As stated in the 2005 code of welfare, NAWAC wants to see indoor housing systems shift progressively to those in which the lactating sow and piglets have the benefits conferred by farrowing crates while giving the sow increased opportunity to move and express a greater range of behaviours, including nest building. NAWAC strongly encourages the industry to identify and adopt such systems as soon as possible.

Minimum Standard No. 10 – Managing Interactions between Sows and Piglets

- (a) Accommodation for farrowing and lactating sows must be of suitable design and sufficient size to allow the sow to lie down at full length and without leg restriction.**
- (b) Support, such as barriers or sloping walls to lean against, must be provided for the sow as she lies down, and she must be able to rise and stand comfortably without undue risk of injury to her litter.**
- (c) When standing in a farrowing crate the sow must not touch both sides of the crate simultaneously, and her back must not touch any bars along the top.**
- (d) The farrowing system must provide an area to which the piglets can retreat when the sow moves.**
- (e) If sows are to be confined in farrowing crates before farrowing, it must be for no more than five days.**
- (f) If sows are to be confined in farrowing crates for lactation, it must be for no more than four weeks after farrowing.**
- (g) Notwithstanding (f), nurse sows may be retained in a farrowing crate for a further week for fostering purposes. This is conditional on no more than 5% of sows in any herd at any one time being retained as nurse sows.**
- (h) Sows, in any farrowing system constructed after 3 December 2010, must be provided with material that can be manipulated until farrowing.**

Note:

Section 73(3) of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 provides that the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) may, in exceptional circumstances, recommend minimum standards that do not fully meet the obligations to ensure that the physical, health and behavioural needs of the animal are met. In making this recommendation NAWAC must have regard to, among other things, the feasibility and practicality of effecting a transition from current practices and any adverse effects that may result from such a transition, and the economic effects of any transition from current practices to new practices.

NAWAC considers that the confining of sows in farrowing crates for extended periods does not fully meet the obligations of the Act. Minimum Standards 10 (e) and (f) restrict the time sows are confined in farrowing crates to a maximum of five weeks in any reproductive cycle.

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 10 – Managing Interactions between Sows and Piglets

- There is an unobstructed area behind the sow when farrowing
- All piglet mortality and causes are monitored, recorded and remedial action taken as necessary
- Piglets are able to move to an area where they are safe from being crushed
- Sows can lie down at full length and without leg restriction, and rise and stand comfortably
- The configuration of the sides of the farrowing crate or ark provide support for the sow as she lies down
- There is space for the sow to suckle all piglets together at the same time and space is available on the narrowest side of the crate to allow piglets to escape
- The floor in the piglet area has a solid surface or is covered with a mat, or is littered with straw or another suitable material
- Hygiene standards ensure adequate dung and urine removal so the nest area is kept clean
- Manipulable material, e.g. straw, is provided to sows from the time they enter the farrowing system until the time of farrowing, in all farrowing systems constructed after 3 December 2010

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Sows should be introduced to clean farrowing quarters three to five days before the piglets are due to be born.
- (b) Sows should be provided with nest building material e.g. straw from at least 48 hours before farrowing.
- (c) Sows should not be kept in farrowing crates for more than 10 days after farrowing.
- (d) Sows in farrowing pens should have free access to separate feeding, dunging and lying/nesting areas.
- (e) New-born piglets, born in outdoor systems, should be confined to the farrowing ark for the first week after birth.

General Information

Most piglet mortality occurs within the first four days after farrowing. After that time the piglets become more active and are better able to get out of the sow's way.

There are many farrowing crate designs in use. The most common have bowed or finger rails and slatted flooring. Adjustable crates are encouraged. Some older farrowing crate designs are no longer suitable for larger modern sows and do not meet the minimum standards in this code.

Alternative systems to farrowing crates include outdoor huts, deep-litter group lactation and farrowing pens. There are a large variety of farrowing pen designs in use and being further developed, internationally. These often have separate sow and piglet areas, and there is a growing interest in

designs that allow the piglets to stay in a nest area where nursing occurs and allow the sow to leave for other activities.

5.2 Managing Dry Sows

Introduction

Sow stalls were developed 30 years ago as a means of managing the negative aspects of hierarchical aggression. The first point at which stalls are used is at weaning, when sows still have a full udder, come on heat, and are at risk from being ridden and injured by other sows. Dry sow stalls continue to be used during pregnancy when sows can be particularly aggressive. Although dry sow stalls are still widely used, the emphasis today is on using other methods to manage aggression so that sows can be housed together in groups.

Mixing of sows can result in fighting as the sows establish a hierarchy. Although this is a natural behaviour it may reduce the wellbeing of some individuals if it is not carefully managed.

Dry sow stalls and group housing both have welfare benefits and costs. The benefits of dry sow stalls are that sows can be individually managed, particularly for feeding, and there are no injuries from fighting. The benefits of group housing are the greater freedom of movement and ability to express other behaviours such as foraging, social and explorative behaviour in a varied environment.

NAWAC does not believe there are sufficient scientifically supported animal welfare benefits of dry sow stalls. Therefore NAWAC has decided that the use of dry sow stalls must be discontinued.

The transition from individual to group housing presents significant management challenges and requires a high level of stockmanship. Skilled stock handlers who are alert to aggressive interactions in dry sows and mated gilts, and in the development of methods to manage aggressive interactions will be increasingly important. Key factors in effectively managing aggression are space, group size, pen structure, feeding system, the time and method of mixing and individual sow characteristics, including genetics. Sows in larger groups with more and varied space generally fight less.

Minimum Standard No. 11 – Managing Dry Sows

- (a) Sows may only be confined in mating stalls for service for no longer than one week.**
- (b) Where sows and mated gilts are group housed, they must be managed to minimise the effects of aggression.**
- (c) Where sows and mated gilts are housed in dry sow stalls, they must be able to stand in their natural stance without contact with any side of the stall and be able to lie comfortably on their sides without disturbing neighbouring sows.**
- (d) Sows in stalls must have a dry, smooth, non-slip sleeping area.**
- (e) Between 3 December 2012 and 3 December 2015 mated sows and gilts must not be confined in dry sow stalls for more than four weeks after mating.**
- (f) After 3 December 2015 mated sows and gilts must not be confined in dry sow stalls after mating. If individually confined in a pen, sows must have sufficient space so that they can stand up, turn around without touching the walls, and lie comfortably in a natural position, and be provided with separate dunging, lying and eating areas.**
- (g) Individual pigs that are not coping well must be provided with alternative management.**
- (h) Pigs must not be restrained by tethering.**

Note:

Section 73(3) of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 provides that the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) may, in exceptional circumstances, recommend minimum standards that do not fully meet the obligations to ensure that the physical, health and behavioural needs of the animal are met. In making this recommendation NAWAC must have regard to, among other things, the feasibility and practicality of effecting a transition from current practices and any adverse effects that may result from such a transition, and the economic effects of any transition from current practices to new practices.

NAWAC considers that the use of dry sow stalls does not fully meet the obligations of the Act. Minimum Standard 11 (e) provides a two year transition from current practice to a more limited practice, and Minimum Standard 11 (f) provides that from 3 December 2015 dry sow stalls will not be used after mating.

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 11 – Managing Dry Sows

- Less than 15% of sows have skin lesions, bites and scratches from fighting at any one time
- Sows do not show stereotypic behaviours
- Sows can lie down at full length and without leg restriction, and rise and stand easily and comfortably
- Sows are not forced to lie down in water, faeces or urine
- Sows are alert and attentive
- From five years after the issue of the code (and for all but early pregnancy after 2012), all mated sows and gilts will have an area where they can lie down, stand up and turn around comfortably, with separate dunging and eating areas

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Sows should be provided with additional space, a solid floor and bedding during the first days of group formation.

General Information

Continuous welfare improvement and new management developments are strongly encouraged to enhance the welfare of breeding pigs. This can be achieved through development of systems that allow individual management of feed and health, and a greater freedom of movement, while improving opportunities to express normal behaviour and minimise aggressive behaviour.

NAWAC wants to see indoor housing systems shift to those in which the sow is not confined in a stall at all, including for mating. NAWAC strongly encourages the industry to identify and adopt new systems that are being adopted, such as the recent research concept of mating while the sow is still lactating, thus eliminating the need for stalls during mating and hence eventually adopt a system in which stalls would not be required for management at all.

Exposure to or contact with a boar (or boars) may help reduce aggression between sows kept in group situations.

5.3 Managing Boars

Introduction

While artificial insemination is widely used in New Zealand pig farming systems, most farms also keep a number of boars for breeding purposes. Breeding boars may be kept on their own, in small

groups, or with a group of breeding gilts or sows. Boars that are kept on their own are normally taken out several times a week for heat detection or mating purposes and will receive behavioural and social enrichment from this activity.

Minimum Standard No. 12 – Managing Boars

- (a) Boars must be provided with sufficient space so that they can stand up, turn around and lie comfortably in a natural position, and that provides for separation of dunging, lying and eating areas.**
- (b) Boars must not be tethered or kept in stalls.**

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 12 – Managing Boars

- All boars have an area where they can lie down, stand up and turn around comfortably, with separate dunging and eating areas
- Less than 15% of boars have skin lesions, bites and scratches from fighting at any one time

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Boars should be provided with sensory stimulation (i.e. an enriched pen with stimulation from other animals in the room).
- (b) Mixing of unacquainted boars should not occur.

General Information

Boars need adequate exercise to ensure that their physical needs are met. Where boars are kept in groups, they need to be selected for mutual compatibility.

Boars can be kept with a group of breeding gilts or sows, provided that persistent bullying does not occur.

Reintroduction of boars to a previously familiar group (e.g. after period of illness) needs to be done with great caution to minimise the risk of aggression and injury.

6. Handling and Husbandry Procedures

6.1 Handling

Introduction

Minimisation of undue stress and the avoidance of injury are key considerations whenever pigs are being restrained or handled.

Minimum Standard No. 13 – Handling

- (a) Pigs must be handled at all times in such a way as to minimise the risk of pain, injury or distress to the animals.
- (b) Pigs, including piglets, must not be picked up or suspended by one front leg, ears or tail.
- (c) Handling facilities must be available to deal with all pigs and piglets undergoing routine procedures and for animals that are sick and requiring treatment.
- (d) Stress of handling must be minimised by appropriate design of the facilities, especially entrances and raceways.

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 13 – Handling

- Less than 1% of pigs show injuries attributable to handling
- Facilities are available to allow the handling of all classes of pigs

General Information

Nose snares are used to restrain pigs when carrying out minor husbandry procedures. Care is required to ensure that the nose snare is of appropriate strength and design (rope snares are preferable) to hold the pig and that it does not injure the pig's nose as the pig pulls back. It should also allow for quick release once restraint is no longer required.

6.2 Moving Pigs

Introduction

Patience, care, good stockhandling and well designed facilities will ensure that any distress when moving pigs is minimised, and injury to either the pigs or stock handler is avoided. Calm pigs are easier to move than fearful pigs. Therefore, a good understanding of pig behaviour can be particularly beneficial in ensuring the welfare of the pigs and the efficiency of the procedure.

Minimum Standard No. 14 – Moving Pigs

- (a) Only the minimal force required must be used when moving pigs.
- (b) Pigs must not be prodded in sensitive areas, including the eyes, nose, anus, vulva or testicles.
- (c) Electric prodders and whipping must not be used.

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 14 – Moving Pigs

- Pigs flow easily when moved
- Less than 1% of pigs show injuries, such as welts or bruises, resulting from stock movement
- Pigs are not excessively nervous in the presence of handlers

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Dogs (unless they are specifically trained for the purpose) and plastic pipes should not be used to move pigs.
- (b) If an aid is required to assist in moving pigs, or to protect the stock handler, backing (moving) boards, rattles and distractants, such as a plastic bag on the end of a handle, should be used.
- (c) Alleys and corridors used for moving pigs should be free from distractions, sharp contrasts between dark and light, visual 'dead ends' and other obstacles.

General Information

Gate shyness is a potential problem where gateways have been electrified and it is helpful to use gate markers so that the pigs can identify when the gateway is open.

6.3 Weaning

Introduction

Weaning can be a stressful time for sows and piglets and good management is required. Problems associated with weaning are generally related to the piglet's size and physiological maturity. Early weaning systems require good management and nutrition of the piglets.

Minimum Standard No. 15 – Weaning

Weaning must be managed in a way that avoids undue stress on the sow and piglets and minimises negative impacts on their health and welfare.

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 15 – Weaning

- Recently weaned pigs are warm and have access to palatable food and clean water
- The smallest pigs (runts) are individually fed or are separated into a group and specially cared for
- Age at weaning is greater than 21 days
- Piglets look healthy and vigorous after weaning

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Groups should be constituted as soon as possible after weaning.
- (b) Weaned pigs should be kept with litter mates if possible, and weaner groups should be kept as stable as possible.

- (c) Piglets should be at least 28 days at weaning.

6.4 Elective Husbandry Procedures

Introduction

Castration, tail docking, teeth clipping, tattooing, ear tagging and notching, nose ringing and tusk trimming are covered by the general provisions of the Animal Welfare (Painful Husbandry Procedures) Code of Welfare 2005. Minimising the stress, pain or discomfort of these procedures requires attention to the suitability of the area in which the operation is performed, the catching facilities, the type and amount of restraint, the selection and maintenance of appropriate instruments, good hygiene, the subsequent care of the animals, and the skill of stock handlers carrying out the procedures. Aligned with a justification for the procedure, the producer has to consider farming methods and systems which would reduce the need to routinely perform these painful procedures.

Minimum Standard No. 16 – Elective Husbandry Procedures

- (a) Elective husbandry procedures must only be carried out where they are justifiable to prevent undesirable consequences that could subsequently result in animal suffering.**
- (b) Tail docking of pigs over seven days of age or surgical castration at any age must be carried out by a veterinarian.**
- (c) Clipping or grinding of needle teeth must be carried out before five days of age.**
- (d) If nose rings, clips or wires are used they must be placed through the cartilage at the top of the snout or in the tissue separating the nostrils.**

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 16 – Elective Husbandry Procedures

- Procedures are documented and only undertaken when justified
- Pain and distress are minimised during and after the procedure
- A veterinarian has undertaken all invasive procedures over seven days of age and any significant surgical procedures at any age

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Pain relief should be given when any elective husbandry procedure is carried out.
- (b) Surgical castration should not be undertaken.
- (c) Other measures to control tail biting should be considered before tail docking is undertaken.
- (d) Where tail docking is undertaken as a preventative measure for tail biting, it should be carried out on the piglets within 72 hours of birth. Only one-third to one-half of the tail should be removed.
- (e) Needle teeth should be ground down rather than clipped.
- (f) Where performed, ear notching should be done within 72 hours of birth.
- (g) Tusks may be trimmed as a precaution in aggressive boars. Where tusk trimming is performed, appropriate methods of restraint should be used and tusks should be severed above the level of the gums without causing damage to other tissues. Current knowledge indicates that there is no

nerve supply to the tusk above the gum line; however if practical experience suggests that a boar experiences pain during trimming, analgesics should be used.

General Information

Where it is necessary for permanent identification, the ears may be notched, tagged, punched or tattooed. Alternatively, the body may be tattooed, or an electronic identification system used.

Tail docking reduces the occurrence of tail biting, but does not address the underlying causes. Other methods of managing tail biting include the provision of straw, more food and additional space.

Grinding or clipping the needle teeth prevents laceration of the sows' udder and damage to litter mates.

Nose rings are used to discourage pasture damage from rooting.

6.5 Pre-transport Selection

Introduction

Transporting pigs can present problems, particularly if they are not accustomed to being herded. Patience is essential, and the proper design of yards, loading ramps and other associated services is needed to facilitate loading with minimum distress and bruising.

It is a specific requirement of the Act that animals must be fit enough to withstand a journey without suffering unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress.

Transport of pigs will also be covered by additional codes of welfare relating to the transport of animals.

Minimum Standard No. 17 – Pre-transport Selection

- (a) Pigs must be inspected prior to transport to ensure all are fit to be transported.**
- (b) All pigs must be able to stand and bear weight on all four limbs and be fit enough to withstand the journey without suffering unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress.**
- (c) Sows likely to give birth during the journey must not be selected for transport.**

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 17 – Pre-transport Selection

- All pigs selected for transport are healthy, able to support their weight on all four limbs and are able to walk unaided

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) Pigs should be moved from their housing and loaded into the transport vehicle in a single operation.
- (b) Stocking densities on transport vehicles should be adjusted to minimise heat stress.
- (c) Mixing of unfamiliar pigs on the transport vehicle should be avoided.
- (d) Pigs should receive no more than two tattoos before being transported to slaughter.

General Information

Pre-travel rest is not relevant for pigs, so they can be loaded direct from their housing pen.

The duration of transport and the time pigs will be held in lairage before slaughter needs to be considered when deciding the timing of the last feed before transportation to slaughter. Feeding close to the time of transport may increase transport stress from travel sickness. Ideally the time from last feed to slaughter should not exceed 24 hours, so the conflicting needs to minimise hunger, travel sickness during transport and potential contamination from gut spillage during processing are balanced. However a readily accessible supply of drinking water needs to be available until loading.

7. Disease and Injury Control

Introduction

There is a relationship between the health and welfare of pigs. Normally a healthy pig has a good appetite, and is active, curious and vocal. To ensure the welfare of pigs, it is necessary for pig owners and stock handlers to be familiar with normal pig behaviour and the signs of good and poor health.

Minimum Standard No. 18 – Management of Health and Injury

- (a) The owner or person in charge must check pigs at least once each day for signs of ill-health or injury and must undertake timely preventative or remedial action as appropriate.
- (b) Those responsible for the care of pigs must be competent at recognising the signs of good health, ill health, or injury and must consult a veterinarian as appropriate.
- (c) Medication must only be used in accordance with registration conditions, and the manufacturer's instructions or professional advice.
- (d) Piglets must receive sufficient iron to prevent anaemia.
- (e) Contaminated bedding, faeces and urine must not accumulate to the extent that they pose a threat to the health and welfare of pigs.

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 18 – Management of Health and Injury

- Daily inspections and remedial outcomes, including prompt treatment, are documented
- Animals that have failed to respond to treatment are destroyed humanely and promptly
- Cause of death, illness or injury is determined as far as possible and records of these are maintained and reviewed on a regular basis
- When the early signs of a disease outbreak are recognised or suspected, or mortalities are greater than expected, expert advice is sought promptly and any intervention is documented
- There is a documented herd health plan that includes prophylactic treatments such as vaccination schedules and parasite management
- Hygiene standards protect against ill health and spread of disease
- Pigs are not rubbing or scratching excessively
- Less than 5% of pigs have lameness, claw lesions or leg injuries at any one time
- Less than 1% of pigs have abscesses at any one time

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) The frequency of inspections should be increased during extreme weather conditions, during outbreaks of disease, when farrowing is expected, or when groups of pigs have been recently mixed.

- (b) A veterinarian should be consulted for advice on establishing a health programme covering disease, injury and parasite control.
- (c) Separate accommodation should be available to house sick and injured pigs during their treatment and recovery.
- (d) Piglets should be given an iron supplement within 48 hours of birth if it is needed.
- (e) Pigs that become lame should receive appropriate treatment or be culled promptly and humanely.
- (f) Records detailing deaths, sick animals, treatments given and responses to treatment should be kept to assist disease investigations.
- (g) Veterinary advice should be sought where there is:
 - (i) significant injury or disease
 - (ii) persistent or chronic pain
 - (iii) persistent ill-thrift and poor performance that does not respond to treatment
 - (iv) concern about the welfare of the animal.
- (h) If an animal is suffering from an incurable condition or a condition that does not respond to treatment, then it should be euthanased humanely and promptly.

General Information

Inspections are most easily made at feeding times as sick pigs will generally show reduced appetite.

Regular cleaning programmes or replenishment of litter needs to be carried out to ensure that contaminated bedding, faeces and urine do not accumulate to a level such that they pose a threat to the health and welfare of pigs. The frequency of cleaning and disinfection required will depend on the housing system, ambient temperature, the type of flooring and stocking density.

Supplemental iron can be provided orally or by injection, to compensate for the lack of iron in sows' milk and a lack of access to iron from soil.

A herd health plan may include vaccination, parasite management, culling, medication, post-mortems, disposal of dead pigs and genetic selection.

8. Emergency Humane Destruction

Introduction

There are circumstances when pigs with injury or disease need to be killed on the farm for humane reasons or in an emergency. It is an offence, under the Act, to kill an animal in such a manner that the animal suffers unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress. This means that the method of killing should cause immediate loss of consciousness which persists until the animal is dead. It is also important that the animal be handled quietly beforehand to ensure it is not unnecessarily distressed or alarmed.

Minimum Standard No. 19 – Emergency Humane Destruction

- (a) When pigs have to be killed it must be done by persons competent in the handling and killing of pigs and death must be confirmed by inspection of the animal.**
- (b) When a pig needs to be killed it must be handled, restrained and killed in such a manner as to minimise unnecessary pain and distress prior to death.**
- (c) Pigs must be rapidly rendered insensible and remain in that state, until death.**
- (d) Animals rendered insensible by a blow or shot to the brain must be bled out immediately to ensure death occurs before recovery from stunning.**

Example indicators for Minimum Standard No. 19 – Emergency Humane Destruction

- Humane destruction protocols are documented
- Persons undertaking humane killing are appropriately trained
- Any pig being killed on farm is managed gently and calmly at all stages of the process
- Any equipment used to undertake humane killing is well maintained in order to operate efficiently
- All pigs are stunned before killing. (This includes a method of stunning (e.g. shooting) that results in immediate insensibility)
- All pigs killed are inspected following the procedure to confirm death

General Information

Killing for welfare reasons needs to be undertaken in any circumstance where there is likely to be an unacceptable delay in treating the source of suffering, where the source of suffering is untreatable, or where transportation of the animal would perpetuate or aggravate the condition to a significant extent.

Humane killing requires that pigs are stunned, rendering them unconscious, then, in order to ensure that death occurs, the main arteries in the neck or chest need to be severed. The animal needs to be inspected to ensure that it is dead. Signs of death include: not breathing, the heart has stopped beating, the pupils have dilated and there is no corneal reflex.

Methods of humane destruction are:

- Pigs up to weaning: a blow to the frontal region of the skull, sufficient to fracture the skull, followed by bleeding out
- Grower, finisher and adult pigs:
 - (i) use of a captive bolt pistol, held against the head at the point of intersection of a line between each eye and the opposite ear; or
 - (ii) shooting with a rifle directed at the same site, but held several centimetres away from the head; or
 - (iii) shooting with a 12-gauge shotgun, loaded with buckshot, directed behind an ear from a distance of 20 centimetres toward the opposite eye.
- Large pigs: the skulls of large pigs are very dense so a captive bolt may not penetrate the skull. A shotgun or rifle is the preferred method.

The correct position of the blow or shot is critical for humane and effective killing. The optimum position for pigs is on the midline just above eye level, with the shot directed down the line of the spinal cord.



Figure source: Based on Humane Slaughter Association (2005) Guidance Notes No. 3: Humane Killing of Livestock Using Firearms. Published by the Humane Slaughter Association, The Old School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, Hertfordshire AL4 8AN, UK. www.hsa.org.uk.

9. Welfare Assurance System

Introduction

The maintenance of good records is an integral part of a welfare assurance system and good farm management.

Recommended Best Practice

- (a) To ensure that standards of animal welfare and husbandry are maintained, each commercial pig facility should implement a welfare assurance system with written procedures for the delivery of high standards of welfare and husbandry that incorporate monitoring and reporting protocols.
- (b) The elements of the welfare assurance system should provide for the minimum standards and, where possible, the recommendations for best practice of this code. They should primarily be directed at the assessment of the welfare of the animal itself, and secondarily at management and housing aspects.
- (c) The welfare assurance system should provide for all incidents resulting in significant sickness, injury or death of animals to be fully investigated and documented. Where the results of an investigation may have implications for current industry management practices, a report outlining the incident and implications should, as soon as it is available, be forwarded to the appropriate industry body for consideration.
- (d) The welfare assurance system should require continual review of existing practices and procedures that will improve the welfare of pigs.

General Information



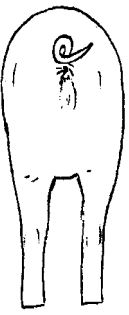
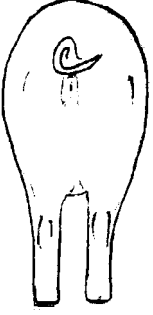
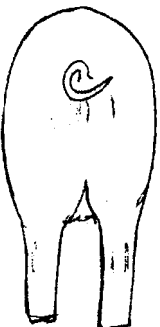
The adoption or adaptation of an industry generic welfare assurance programme for welfare and husbandry procedures may meet these recommendations.

Pork producers and New Zealand Pork actively encourage ongoing assessments of management practices that may improve the welfare of pigs. Where improvements to current practice are identified, these are communicated to pork producers via appropriate technology transfer methods such as seminars, workshops, and industry newsletters.

While the quality system should be based on the general principles of Standard AS/NZ 9002 or similar quality system it is not essential that it be certified under the JASANZ (Joint Accreditation Standards for Australia and New Zealand) certification scheme.

Accurate identification of animals is important.

Appendix I: Condition Scoring of Pigs

	Numerical Score	Pelvic Bones, Tailhead	Loin	Vertebrae	Ribs
	1	Pelvic bones very prominent. Deep cavity around the tail head.	Loin very narrow. Sharp edges on transverse spinal process. Flank very hollow.	Prominent and sharp throughout the length of the backbone.	Individual ribs very prominent.
	2	Pelvic bones obvious but some slight cover. Cavity around tail head.	Loin narrow. Only very slight cover to edge of transverse spinal process. Flank rather hollow.	Prominent.	Rib cage less apparent. Difficult to see individual ribs.
	3	Pelvic bones covered.	Edge of transverse spinal processes covered and rounded.	Visible over the shoulder. Some cover further back.	Covered but can be felt.
	4	Pelvic bones only felt with firm pressure. No cavity around tail.	Edge of transverse spinal processes felt only with firm pressure.	Felt only with firm pressure.	Rib cage not visible. Very difficult to feel any ribs.
	5	Pelvic bones impossible to feel. Root of tail set deep in surrounding fat.	Impossible to feel bones. Flank full and rounded.	Impossible to feel vertebrae.	Not possible to feel ribs.

Appendix II: Interpretation and Definitions

Act	The Animal Welfare Act 1999.
adult	A pig more than 9 months old.
adverse weather	Weather conditions that may pose harm or risk to the animals, including excessive heat and cold.
animal	<p>As defined in the Act:</p> <p>“(a) Means any live member of the animal kingdom that is –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) A mammal; or(ii) A bird; or(iii) A reptile; or(iv) An amphibian; or(v) A fish (bony or cartilaginous); or(vi) Any octopus, squid, crab, lobster, or crayfish (including freshwater crayfish); or(vii) Any other member of the animal kingdom which is declared from time to time by the Governor-General, by Order in Council, to be an animal for the purposes of the Act; and <p>(b) Includes any mammalian foetus, or any avian or reptilian pre-hatched young, that is in the last half of its period of gestation or development; and</p> <p>(c) Includes any marsupial pouch young; but</p> <p>(d) Does not include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) A human being; or(ii) Except as provided in paragraph above, any animal in the pre-natal, pre-hatched, larval, or other such developmental stage.”
ark	A weatherproof, moveable structure for housing sows and/or piglets in outdoor production systems.
available technology	NAWAC takes to mean technologies which are used practically to care for and manage animals, for example, existing chemicals, drugs, instruments, devices and facilities.
boar	An uncastrated male pig over 9 months of age.
body condition score	A five-category scoring system used to classify the condition of pigs, based on the amount of fat and/or muscle covering they have.

colostrum	Milk secreted by the sow for the first few days after farrowing, characterised by high protein and antibody content.
corneal reflex	Involuntary closing of eyelids in response to stimulation of the cornea (surface of eyeball) by touch.
crate	Crates are independent pieces of equipment designed for confining pigs for a number of husbandry functions, including weighing, handling for veterinary interventions, farrowing and assisting with other reproductive processes.
creep area	A separate area within a farrowing facility where piglets are protected from crushing or overlying by the sow, and which is usually heated to help piglets maintain their body temperature, at the same time as maintaining the comfort of the sow.
deep litter system	A type of group housing system in which pigs are kept on a deep layer of bedding material, usually straw or sawdust.
dry sow	A non-lactating sow.
dry sow stall	An enclosure in which gilts and sows are kept individually. Dry sow stalls are normally joined together in rows and used for total confinement of the animal.
elective husbandry procedures	A non-essential procedure that may be done to aid management of pigs.
farrowing	Giving birth to piglets.
farrowing crate	An enclosure in which sows are kept individually during and after farrowing. Most crates prevent sows from turning around.
farrowing pen	An enclosure for confining individual sows and their litters during and after farrowing. Such pens contain a creep area and may contain a farrowing crate or other structure for confinement of the sow.
feeder	Equipment from which feed is dispensed.
feeding station	An enclosure used in group housing systems, which animals enter into one at a time to be fed.
finisher	Pigs that are generally above 70 kg liveweight, until they are sold or retained for breeding. The same meaning applies for pigs referred to as "finishing".
foster	A management practice whereby a piglet is moved soon after farrowing, so that it is fed by a sow that is not its mother.
gilt	A young female pig, selected for reproductive purposes, before she has had a litter of piglets.

good practice	NAWAC takes to mean a standard of care that has a general level of acceptance among knowledgeable practitioners and experts in the field; is based on good sense and sound judgement; is practical and thorough; has robust experiential or scientific foundations; and prevents unreasonable or unnecessary harm to, or promotes the interests of, the animals to which it is applied. Good practice also takes account of the evolution of attitudes about animals and their care.
grower	Pigs generally with liveweights between 30 and 70 kg. The same meaning can apply for pigs referred to as “growing”.
growing pigs	Weaners, growers and finishers.
husbandry	Care and management practices in pig keeping.
hut	See definition for “ark”.
lactating sow	A sow that has given birth, and is producing milk to feed her piglets.
lux	An international measure of light intensity (not to be confused with watts).
mated gilt	A young female pig that has been mated, but has not had a first litter.
mating stall	An enclosure in which gilts and sows are kept individually for the purpose of mating.
minimum standards	Minimum standards provide the details of specific actions people need to take in order to meet the obligations in the Act. They are identified in the text by a heading, and generally use the word “must” or similar. They are highlighted in boxes within the text.
needle teeth	Any small sharp teeth in piglets, but principally the canine teeth.
nurse sow	A sow that is used to suckle piglets that are not her own.
owner	As defined in the Act: “in relation to an animal, includes the parent or guardian of a person under the age of 16 years who – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Owns the animal; and (b) Is a member of the parent’s or guardian’s household living with and dependent on the parent or guardian.”
pen	An enclosure for confining pigs in which they can turn around. Pens may be used for housing pigs in groups, housing boars individually, management purposes such as mating or farrowing, or for confining pigs individually.
person in charge	As defined in the Act: “in relation to an animal, includes a person who has an animal in that person’s possession or custody, or under that person’s care, control, or supervision.”
piglet	A pig up to the time it is weaned from the sow.

recommended best practice	<p>NAWAC takes to mean the best practice agreed at a particular time, following consideration of scientific information, accumulated experience and public submissions on this code. It is usually a higher standard of practice than the minimum standard, except where the minimum standard is best practice. It is a practice that can be varied as new information comes to light. Recommendations for best practice will be particularly appropriate where it is desirable to promote or encourage better care for animals than is provided as a minimum standard.</p> <p>Recommended best practices are identified in the text by a heading, and generally use the word “should”.</p>
reproductive cycle	The period from mating to the following mating, which in the context of this code is defined as 150 days.
rooting	A behaviour of pigs whereby they use their nose to dig in the ground or in any available material.
scientific knowledge	<p>NAWAC takes to mean knowledge within animal-based scientific disciplines, especially those that deal with nutritional, environmental, health, behavioural and cognitive/neural functions, which are relevant to understanding the physical, health and behavioural needs of animals. Such knowledge is not haphazard or anecdotal; it is generated by rigorous and systematic application of the scientific method, and the results are objectively and critically reviewed before acceptance.</p>
sow	An adult female pig that has had one or more litters.
stereotypic behaviour	A repeated, relatively invariant sequence of movements that have no obvious goal or function.
tethering	A method of restraining pigs whereby a neck or girth collar is attached to a short length of chain, which is in turn fixed to the floor or the front of a pen.
weaner	A pig after it has been weaned from the sow up until approximately 30kg in liveweight.

Appendix III: Legislative Requirements

The Animal Welfare Act 1999 (the Act) imposes obligations on every person who owns or is in charge of an animal. This code has been issued pursuant to section 75 of the Act and will provide guidance on how to comply with the legislative requirements. However, this code does not provide an exhaustive list of the Act's requirements, and owners and those in charge of animals should note that they must comply with the minimum standards in this code *and* the general provisions in the Act. A copy of the Act is accessible at: <http://www.legislation.govt.nz>.

Contents of Codes

Section 69 of the Act provides that a code of welfare may relate to one or more of the following:

- a species of animal
- animals used for purposes specified in the code
- animal establishments of a kind specified in the code
- types of entertainment specified in the code (being types of entertainment in which animals are used)
- the transport of animals
- the procedures and equipment used in the management, care or killing of animals or in the carrying out of surgical procedures on animals.

In deciding to issue a code of welfare, the Minister must be satisfied as to the following matters set out in section 73(1) of the Act:

- that the proposed standards are the minimum necessary to ensure that the purposes of the Act will be met
- that the recommendations for best practice (if any) are appropriate.

Despite the provisions of section 73(1), section 73(3) of the Act allows NAWAC, in exceptional circumstances, to recommend minimum standards and recommendations for best practice that do not fully meet the obligations of:

- sections 10 and 11 – obligations in relation to physical, health and behavioural needs of animals
- section 12(c) – killing an animal
- section 21(1)(b) – restriction on performance of surgical procedures
- section 22(2) – providing comfortable and secure accommodation for the transport of animals
- section 23(1) and (2) – transport of animals
- section 29(a) – ill-treating an animal.

In making a recommendation under section 73(3), section 73(4) requires NAWAC to have regard to:

- the feasibility and practicality of effecting a transition from current practices to new practices and any adverse effects that may result from such a transition
- the requirements of religious practices or cultural practices or both
- the economic effects of any transition from current practices to new practices.

This code provides for the physical, health and behavioural needs (as defined in section 4 of the Act) of pigs. These needs include:

- proper and sufficient food and water
- adequate shelter
- opportunity to display normal patterns of behaviour

- physical handling in a manner which minimises the likelihood of unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress
- protection from, and rapid diagnosis of, any significant injury or disease,

being a need which, in each case, is appropriate to the species, environment and circumstances of the animal.

This code also takes account of:

- good practice
- scientific knowledge
- available technology.

Legal Obligations of Owners and Persons in Charge of Animals

The owner or person in charge of an animal has overall responsibility for the welfare of the animal in his or her care. The legal obligations set out below are not an exhaustive list of the obligations in the Act.

- (a) The owner or person in charge of an animal must:
- ensure that the physical, health and behavioural needs of the animal are met in a manner that is in accordance with both good practice and scientific knowledge
 - where practicable, ensure that an animal that is ill or injured receives treatment that will alleviate any unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress being suffered by the animal or that it is killed humanely.
- (b) The owner or person in charge of an animal must not without reasonable excuse:
- keep an animal alive when it is in such a condition that it is suffering unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress
 - sell, attempt to sell or offer for sale, otherwise than for the express purpose of being killed, an animal, when it is suffering unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress
 - desert an animal in circumstances in which no provision is made to meet its physical, health and behavioural needs.
- (c) No person may:
- ill-treat an animal
 - release an animal that has been kept in captivity, in circumstances in which the animal is likely to suffer unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress
 - perform any significant surgical procedure on an animal unless that person is a veterinarian, or a veterinary student under the direct supervision of a veterinarian, or a person approved by a veterinarian
 - perform on an animal a surgical procedure that is not a significant surgical procedure (as defined by the Act) in such a manner that the animal suffers unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress
 - kill an animal in such a manner that the animal suffers unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress.

Regulations Review Committee of Parliament

Codes of welfare are deemed to be regulations for the purposes of the Regulations (Disallowance) Act 1989. As such, they are subject to the scrutiny of the Regulations Review Committee of Parliament.

Any person or organisation aggrieved at the operation of a code of welfare has the right to make a complaint to the Regulations Review Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington.

This is a parliamentary select committee charged with examining regulations against a set of criteria and drawing to the attention of the House of Representatives any regulation that does not meet the criteria.

Grounds for reporting to the House include:

- the regulation trespasses unduly on personal rights and freedoms;
- the regulation is not made in accordance with the general objects and intentions of the statute under which it is made; or
- the regulation was not made in compliance with the particular notice and consultation procedures prescribed by statute.

Any person or organisation wishing to make a complaint should refer to the publication *Making a Complaint to the Regulations Review Committee*, which can be obtained from the website:

<http://www.clerk.parliament.govt.nz>, or by writing to: Clerk of the Committee, Regulations Review Committee, Parliament Buildings, Wellington.

Strict Liability

In the prosecution of certain offences under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 committed after 19 December 2002, evidence that a relevant code of welfare was in existence at the time of the alleged offence and that a relevant minimum standard established by that code was not complied with is rebuttable evidence that the person charged with the offence failed to comply with, or contravened, the provision of the Animal Welfare Act to which the offence relates. (See sections 13(1A), 24(1) and 30(1A) of the Animal Welfare Act 1999, as amended by the Animal Welfare Amendment Act 2002.)

Defences

It is a defence in the prosecution of certain offences under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 if the defendant proves that there was in existence at the time of the alleged offence a relevant code of welfare and that the minimum standards established by the code of welfare were in all respects equalled or exceeded. (See sections 13(2)(c), 24(2)(b) and 30(2)(c) of the Animal Welfare Act 1999, as amended by the Animal Welfare Amendment Act 2002.)

If a defendant in a prosecution intends to rely on the defence under section 13(2)(c) or 30(2)(c), the defendant must, within seven days after the service of the summons, or within such further time as the Court may allow, deliver to the prosecutor a written notice. The notice must state that the defendant intends to rely on section 13(2) or 30(2) as the case may be, and must specify the relevant code of welfare that was in existence at the time of the alleged offence, and the facts that show that the minimum standards established by that code of welfare were in all respects equalled or exceeded. This notice may be dispensed with if the Court gives leave. (See sections 13(3) and 30(3) of the Animal Welfare Act 1999, as amended by the Animal Welfare Amendment Act 2002.)

The strict liability provisions and the defence of equalling or exceeding the minimum standards established by a code of welfare apply to the following offences:

- Failing to Provide

Section 12(a): A person commits an offence who, being the owner of, or a person in charge of, an animal, fails to comply, in relation to the animal, with section 10 (which provides that the owner of an animal, and every person in charge of an animal, must ensure that the physical, health and behavioural needs of the animal are met in a manner that is in accordance with both good practice and scientific knowledge).

- Suffering Animals

Section 12(b): A person commits an offence who, being the owner of, or a person in charge of, an animal, fails, in the case of an animal that is ill or injured, to comply, in relation to the animal, with section 11 (which provides that the owner of an animal that is ill or injured, and every person in charge of such an animal, must, where practicable, ensure that the animal receives treatment that alleviates any unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress being suffered by the animal).

Section 12(c): A person commits an offence who, being the owner of, or a person in charge of, an animal, kills the animal in such a manner that the animal suffers unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress.

- Surgical Procedures

Section 21(1)(b): A person commits an offence who, without reasonable excuse, acts in contravention of or fails to comply with section 15(4) (which provides that no person may, in performing on an animal a surgical procedure that is not a significant surgical procedure, perform that surgical procedure in such a manner that the animal suffers unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress).

- Transport

Section 22(2): A person commits an offence who fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with any provision of section 22(1) (which provides that every person in charge of a vehicle or an aircraft, and the master of or, if there is no master, the person in charge of, a ship, being a vehicle, aircraft or ship in or on which an animal is being transported, must ensure that the welfare of the animal is properly attended to, and that, in particular, the animal is provided with reasonably comfortable and secure accommodation and is supplied with proper and sufficient food and water).

Section 23(1): A person commits an offence who, without reasonable excuse, confines or transports an animal in a manner or position that causes the animal unreasonable or unnecessary pain or distress.

Section 23(2): A person commits an offence who, being the owner of, or the person in charge of, an animal, permits that animal, without reasonable excuse, to be driven or led on a road, or to be ridden, or to be transported in or on a vehicle, an aircraft, or a ship while the condition or health of the animal is such as to render it unfit to be so driven, led, ridden or transported.

- Ill-treatment

Section 29(a): A person commits an offence who ill-treats an animal.

Inspection of Premises

Section 127(1): Inspectors appointed under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 have the power to enter any land or premises (with the exceptions of dwellings and marae), or any vehicle, aircraft or vessel, at any reasonable time, for the purpose of inspecting any animal.

Inspectors include officers of MAF Enforcement, inspectors from approved organisations (e.g. Royal New Zealand SPCA) appointed by the Minister of Agriculture, and the Police.

Liability of employers, principals, directors and officers of bodies corporate

Sections 164 and 165 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 set out further provisions relating to offences committed by employers and charges against bodies corporate.

Appendix IV: Codes of Welfare

Codes of Welfare

- Animal Welfare (Broiler Chickens: Fully Housed) Code of Welfare 2003
- Animal Welfare (Rodeos) Code of Welfare 2003
- Animal Welfare (Layer Hens) Code of Welfare 2005
- Animal Welfare (Zoos) Code of Welfare 2005
- Animal Welfare (Circuses) Code of Welfare 2005
- Animal Welfare (Painful Husbandry Procedures) Code of Welfare 2005
- Animal Welfare (Companion Cats) Code of Welfare 2007
- Animal Welfare (Deer) Code of Welfare 2007
- Animal Welfare (Dairy Cattle) Code of Welfare 2010
- Animal Welfare (Commercial Slaughter) Code of Welfare 2010
- Animal Welfare (Dogs) Code of Welfare 2010
- Animal Welfare (Sheep and Beef Cattle) Code of Welfare 2010

Codes of Recommendations and Minimum Standards

- Sea Transport of Sheep from New Zealand, September 1991
- Welfare of Deer During the Removal of Antlers, July 1992, amended August 1994, August 1997
- Welfare of Horses, February 1993
- Care of Animals in Boarding Establishments, August 1993
- Sale of Companion Animals, September 1994
- Welfare of Animals Transported within New Zealand, November 1994, amended June 1996, August 1998
- Welfare of Animals at Saleyards, May 1995
- Emergency Slaughter of Farm Livestock, December 1996
- Welfare of Ostrich and Emu, September 1999

Guidelines

- Guidelines for the Welfare of Livestock from which Blood is Harvested for Commercial and Research Purposes, March 2009
- Welfare of Yearling Fallow Deer During the Use of Rubber Rings to Prevent Antler/Pedicle Growth, September 1997
- Welfare of Red and Wapiti Yearling Stags During the Use of Rubber Rings to Induce Analgesia for the Removal of Spiker Velvet, September 1998

<p>Codes and guidelines may be obtained from:</p> <p><i>Executive Co-ordinator Animal Welfare MAF Biosecurity New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry PO Box 2526 WELLINGTON 6140 Tel: 04 894 0366 email: animalwelfare@maf.govt.nz</i></p>	<p>Or can be inspected at:</p> <p><i>Animal Welfare Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Pastoral House Reception Level 10 25 The Terrace WELLINGTON 6011</i></p>
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Codes and guidelines are available on MAF's website.

The web page address is: <http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/animal-welfare>.