

**News about some steps forward for improved farm animal welfare protection**

**New pig welfare Code of Practice**

Compassion in World Farming - Ireland is represented on the Government's Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council (FAWAC), which has recently launched a new 'Code of Practice for the Welfare of Pigs'.

***Compassion in World Farming - Ireland is now urging Agriculture Minister Smith to bring about changes so that all Irish pig farms operate to the standards laid down in the FAWAC Code of Practice, particularly in relation to environmental enrichment and tail docking.***

Regarding enrichment materials, the Code of Practice says: "EU legislation requires that, to enable proper investigation and manipulation activities, all pigs must have permanent access to a sufficient quantity of material such as straw, hay, wood, sawdust, mushroom compost, peat or a mixture of such ...". It also states that EU legislation does not permit routine tail docking.



We have highlighted the barren conditions that most young pigs are reared in on intensive farms in the Republic of Ireland.

Without effective enrichment materials, pigs cannot carry out their natural rooting, exploration and foraging behaviours.

There is a serious risk they will instead resort to abnormal tail biting behaviour in this barren environment.

Tail biting can result in very serious and painful wounds. Farmers usually address this problem by docking pigs' tails. In Ireland 95% of pigs are tail docked\* (even though EU law does not permit routine tail docking).



Members of the FAWAC with Minister Smith (centre front) at the launch of the new 'Code of Practice for the Welfare of Pigs'. Compassion in World Farming - Ireland's Director is 4<sup>th</sup> from the left, back row.

Photo © Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food

Compassion in World Farming - Ireland's Formal Complaint to the European Commission about breaches of EU law in Ireland regarding enrichment materials for pigs and tail docking is under consideration by the Commission.

**Action:**

Please write to Agriculture Minister Brendan Smith and urge him to ensure that the FAWAC 'Code of Practice for the Welfare of Pigs' is put into effect on all Irish pig farms; and that, in particular all pigs are provided with effective enrichment material and routine tail docking is not carried out.

*Write to: Minister Brendan Smith,  
Office of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries & Food,  
Agriculture House, Kildare Street, Dublin 2.*

The FAWAC 'Code of Practice for the Welfare of Pigs' can be read from our website at [www.ciwf.ie](http://www.ciwf.ie)

\*European Food Safety Authority Report on tail biting in pigs, 2007

**Animal sentience in the Lisbon Treaty**



Back in 1991, Compassion in World Farming submitted a petition to the European Parliament, calling for animals to be recognised as sentient beings, capable of suffering.

In 1997, with the Treaty of Amsterdam, animal sentience became a Protocol, with legal status. The new Lisbon Treaty, in force from December 1st 2009, includes animal sentience as an Article, meaning that recognition of animal sentience is now in the main body of the Treaty and carries considerably more weight.

The wording in the Lisbon Treaty says: "In formulating and implementing the Union's agriculture, fisheries, transport, internal market, research and technological development and space policies, the Union and the Member States shall, since animals are sentient beings, pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals, while respecting the legislative or administrative provisions and customs of the Member States relating in particular to religious rites, cultural traditions and regional heritage."

This Article will give us more strength in our negotiations with governments and policy-makers and in monitoring enforcement of the laws that are already in place. For example, the requirement for 'full regard' to be paid to the welfare requirements of animals is a crucial one, as sadly modern farming systems all too often fall short of this. We can now take this legislation and ensure that it is used as a strong tool for lobbying and secure a better future for farm animals.

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Photo © Colin Seaton

**“2020 Strategy” looks at the future for Irish farming**

Photo © Compassion in World Farming



Agriculture Minister Brendan Smith has announced that he has formed a committee to devise a long-term strategy for the agri-food, forestry and fisheries sectors.

Compassion in World Farming - Ireland's view, which we make in our detailed submission to the “2020 Strategy”, is as follows:

*Farm animal welfare is a very important part of Ireland's future agri-food industry.*

*Competing with countries outside the EU on the basis of cost is very difficult for EU farm animal producers because, even if animal welfare standards are the same, these countries benefit from having cheaper labour, land and animal feed.*

*Therefore, a good way forward for Ireland is to compete on quality, by producing high quality food for home and export markets. High animal welfare standards are an integral part of such production.*

*Ireland has many advantages with regard to this type of farming: for example, a clean environment, clean water, good grass, and being an island allows greater protection of both the environment and animal health.*

*Compassion in World Farming - Ireland believes that all exports should be in the form of meat, not live animals, because this is best in terms of animal welfare protection and also keeps jobs in Ireland.*

Minister Smith has invited submissions from individuals and organisations. More details of the “2020 Strategy” consultation process are available on the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food website at: [www.agriculture.gov.ie/2020strategy](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie/2020strategy)

**Action**

Please make a submission to the “2020 Strategy”. You can send in a short, simple submission, saying that you believe high farm animal welfare standards are the way forward for Irish farming; or you can submit a longer account of your views if you wish.

Submissions should be sent to:

Email: [2020@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:2020@agriculture.gov.ie)

Post: “2020 Strategy”,  
Economics and Planning Division,  
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food,  
Floor 6 Centre,  
Agriculture House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.

NOTE! The deadline for receipt of submissions is 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.

**Supporting Compassion in World Farming - Ireland**

Instead of set subscription rates, we now ask supporters to give an occasional donation of an amount they can afford. Any donation, no matter how small, will help our work. Thank you so much for your continued support.

Mary-Anne Bartlett

Director, Compassion in World Farming - Ireland

**Vancouver anti-fur protesters say well done Ireland!**

Anti-fur protestors sent this photo of their Irish-themed protest outside a fur shop in Vancouver, Canada, on St. Patrick's Day. As you can see, they have great praise for Ireland's planned 3 year phase-out of fur farming, as did many passers-by.

Mink on an Irish farm



Photo © Compassion in World Farming/Respect for Animals

The phase-out of fur farming in the Republic of Ireland is in the Programme for Government, agreed in October 2009. We urge the Green Party, whose initiative this wonderful step forward was, to ensure that the necessary legislation is put in place as soon as possible.

**Action**

Please write to Senator Dan Boyle of the Green Party, who has done tremendous work with regard to the ending of fur farming. Urge him to do all he can to

ensure that the fur farming phase-out is put into legislation as a matter of urgency. Also write to Environment Minister, John Gormley, again offering words of encouragement.

Senator Dan Boyle,  
Seanad Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street, Dublin 2  
Email: [dboyle@oireachtas.ie](mailto:dboyle@oireachtas.ie)

Minister John Gormley  
Minister for the Environment, Heritage & Local Government  
Dail Éireann  
Dublin 2  
Email: [john.gormley@oireachtas.ie](mailto:john.gormley@oireachtas.ie)



Photo © Lon Fitzgerald

Vancouver anti-fur protesters congratulate Ireland on its planned 3 year phase-out of fur farming