

## **DELIVERABLE**

### **DL.1.1.4: REPORT ON THE 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL REFLECTION BORARD (RB) MEETING**

*The first Reflection Board (RB) meeting between representatives of RB organisations (from the EU Platform on Animal Welfare) and the EU Reference Centre for Animal Welfare of Poultry and other small farmed animals (EURCAW-Poultry-SFA), with the participation of DG-SANTE, and members of the EURCAW-Ruminants&Equines as observers was held remotely via Teams on the morning 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2021. This meeting was the occasion to present the objectives of the Centre, its organization, and the previous and actual work programmes, to exchange, discuss and identify possible future collaborations and interests.*

## **Participants**

In total 14 participants, six of them from the seven EU platform entities forming the RB, three from DG SANTE, four from EURCAW-Poultry-SFA, and one from EURCAW-Ruminants&Equines were connected.

**The reflection board** is composed of Association/institutions/entities member of the EU Platform on Animal Welfare:

1. *Eurogroup for Animals*
2. *Association of Poultry Processors and Poultry Trade in the EU (a.v.e.c.)*
3. *European Rural Poultry Association (ERPA)*
4. *European agri-cooperatives (COCEGA)*
5. *European farmers (COPA)*
6. *European Forum of Farm Animal Breeders (EFFAB)*
7. *Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE)*

The meeting started at 09:05. Virginie Michel, Coordinator of the EURCAW-Poultry-SFA, welcomed the participants and introduced the agenda. A round table was held to present itself and facilitate interactions.

## **Meeting agenda:**

**08:45 Testing of communication equipment**

**09:00 Welcome and meeting aims** (Virginie Michel- EURCAW-Poultry-SFA, and Kirsten Vornhagen - DG SANTE)

**09:15 Presentation of EURCAW-Poultry-SFA** (Virginie Michel – EURCAW-Poultry-SFA)  
*Objective, Missions, Priority areas, Target bodies*

**09:30 The role of the reflection board (Antonio Velarde –EURCAW-Poultry-SFA)**

**09:45 Description of the Work Programme** (Virginie Michel, Antonio Velarde, Leonardo Vinco James, Emilie Nehlig – EURCAW-Poultry-SFA)

**11:00 Break**

**11:15 Discussion about interactions**

**11:45 Conclusions**

**12:00 Closure of the meeting**

### **Presentation of EURCAW-Poultry-SFA** (Virginie Michel – EURCAW-Poultry-SFA, *PDF presentation slides 5-12*)

Virginie Michel presented the aim and activities of the EURCAWs. The three Centres aim at supporting CAs and DG SANTE in improving the enforcement of the legislation on animal welfare, which is one of the Commission's priorities. The EURCAWs provide technical support and coordinated assistance to national Competent Authorities in carrying out official controls in the field of animal welfare. The EURCAWs also contribute to the dissemination of good practices on animal welfare (AW) in the EU. In particular, by providing scientific and technical expertise, carrying out studies and developing methods for improving and assessing the welfare level of animals.

The three centres have five core activities in common:

- ✓ Coordinated assistance - Central contact point for Competent Authorities, networking and prioritising effort.
- ✓ Animal welfare indicators – indicators and methods for assessment and improvement.
- ✓ Scientific and technical studies – Provision of knowledge on priority areas and demonstration of good practices.
- ✓ Training courses - evaluation of training needs and develop standards for effective training.
- ✓ Dissemination of research findings and innovations

### Priority areas for EURCAW-Poultry-SFA:

- 1) Welfare of broilers on farm.
- 2) Welfare of laying hens in alternative systems.
- 3) Assessment of welfare during electrical waterbath stunning for broilers and turkeys.
- 4) From 2021 onwards: Welfare of rabbits on farm with a special focus on alternative systems
- 5) Welfare of Turkeys from 2022 onwards

The EURCAW-Poultry-SFA team was briefly introduced, as what the centre is, and is not.

### **The role of the reflection board** (Antonio Velarde –EURCAW-Poultry-SFA, *PDF presentation slides 13-15*)

*Objectives are to exchange, discuss interactions, participation and identify possible mutual interest.*

Reflection board's role:

- Follow-up the activities of the EURCAW-Poultry-SFA
- Reflection on the Centre activities
- Support the Centre with:
  - Technical information.
  - Indicators.
  - Best practices.
  - Trainings.
  - Disseminate the activities of the Centre among stakeholders.
  - Improve dialogue between inspectors and operators.

The EURCAW-Poultry-SFA proposed at the beginning to meet once per year in order to continue the follow-up and interactions. From some RB delegates' point of view, one yearly meeting of the RB is not enough; maybe twice a year could be a good opportunity. One meeting in 2022 is foreseen in the Work

Programme. RB members can follow up the activities on the Centre's web page. Two web-meeting per year could be envisaged from 2023 onwards.

**Description of the Work Programme** (Virginie Michel, Antonio Velarde, Leonardo Vinco James, Emilie Nehlig – EURCAW-Poultry-SFA)

*The past and present Work Programmes were presented, by activities, with a focus on what was achieved by the Centre, and what is planned for 2022.*

## Activity 1. Coordinated assistance (PDF presentation slides 17-21)

Issues discussed:

### Sub-activity 1.2 technical assistance and query service

Examples of questions and corresponding answers were shown and discussed briefly. The Centre is currently working on the Q2E-Poultry-SFA-2021-004 about feeding space and usable area for pullets.

## Activity 2. AW indicators, methods for the assessment, and methods of improvement (PDF presentation slides 23-35)

Issues discussed:

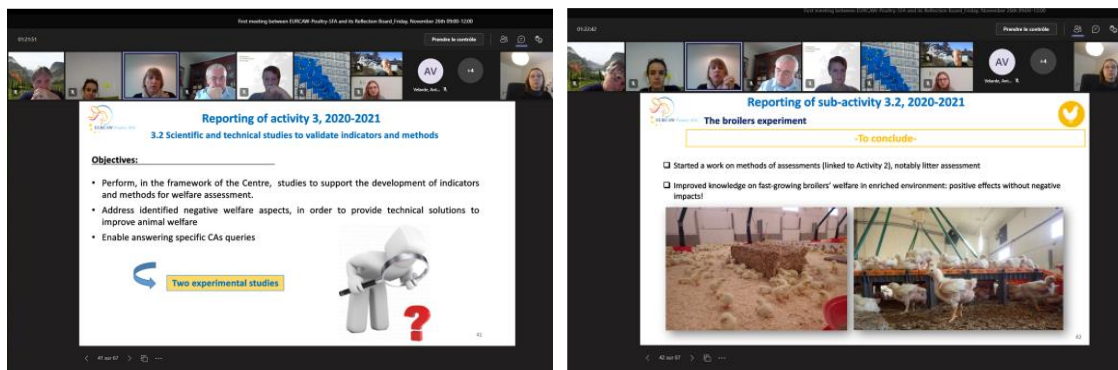
### Sub-activity 2.2. Identification of 'Iceberg' Indicators

- The Ebene system (developed by Itavi) was discussed as a potential system to be used by the Centre to perform measurement and evaluation of AW indicators.
- Connection between growth and AW was raised. However, growth is an ambiguous AW indicator as not always reflects the welfare of the animals.

## Activity 3. Activity 3: Scientific and technical studies (PDF presentation slides 37-48)

Issues discussed:

### Sub-activity 3.2 Scientific and technical studies to validate indicators and methods



- The EURCAW-Poultry-SFA broiler experiment.
- The a.v.e.c presented also their fieldwork: three broilers density on a long-term program, 32 kg, 38 kg, and 42 kg standards chicken were studied. Their conclusion is that very big improvements in animal welfare were seen between 38 kg and 42 kg, no difference between 32 kg and 38 kg. EURCAW-Poultry-SFA and DG SANTE are interested in the fieldwork results.
- Assessment of the state of consciousness in broiler chicken after waterbath stunning at slaughterhouses.

- Interpretation and hypothesis on why 800 Hz compared to 600 Hz negatively affects the stunning effectiveness were discussed.

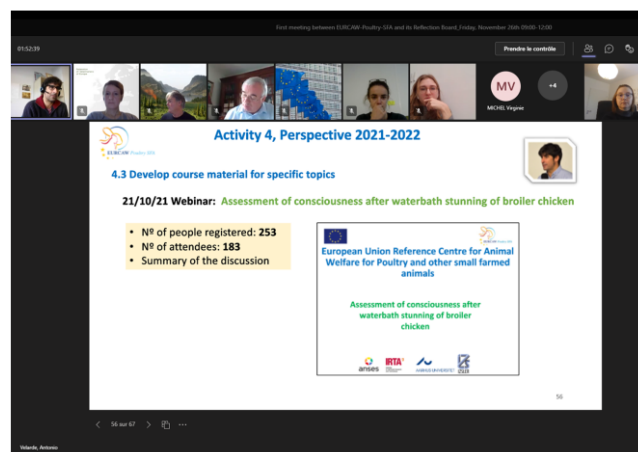
### Sub-activity 3.3 Examples of good welfare practices

- The RB was invited to provide good practices examples to EURCAW-Poultry-SFA without providing any brands, neither publicity (turkeys, rabbits, laying hens in alternative systems). Looking for farms, free range. Welfare issues in any system, so best practices in any husbandry system are welcomed.
- The a.v.e.c can ask farmers. As an association, they are on the same page, and refused to diffuse publicity for any brand or equipment.
- EFFAB and ERPA will interact per e-mail with EURCAW-Poultry-SFA regarding farms visits possibilities.

### Activity 4. Training courses (PDF presentation slides 50-56)

Issues discussed:

- Availability of EURCAW-Poultry-SFA training outputs to stakeholders, farmers, slaughterhouses, organizations. This will be possible soon via online publication on the Centre's website.
- The EURCAW-Poultry-SFA aim is not to overlap with BTSF. The idea is to identify topics or format not covered or used by BTSF for the moment.



### Activity 5. Dissemination of research findings and innovation (PDF presentation slides 58-61)

EURCAW-Poultry-SFA online website visit.

### Welcome/summary by DG SANTE:

Kirsten Vornhagen really appreciated this meeting opportunity and EURCAW-Poultry-SFA's initiative to meet with the RB delegates. She highlighted that stakeholders are an important part of AW improvement. The RB will be a big help for the Centre. She thanked all participants for the active work, the questions, the agreement intention, and availability to discuss, and provide information. The EURCAW's creation is laid down in the official control regulations. Their tasks are to support EU MSs' official controls. EURCAW-Poultry-SFA's website has just started. The published documents will be accessible to stakeholders too, via the website. She spoke about the Green Deal and the Farm to Fork adoption, the EU AW today and tomorrow Stakeholders conference (09.12.21) and the open public

consultation on the revision of EU animal welfare legislation. DG SANTE really appreciates comments, information, suggestions on how to improve the legislation (at farm, during transport, ban the cages) going to AW improvement. The EU Commission really appreciates stakeholders' involvement.

### Discussion about interactions

Issues discussed:

- Dissemination of the RB meeting slides. Small report and slides will be sent to meeting participants as soon as possible, and will be published on the Centre's website end of December 2021 or early January 2022.
- RB members are invited to interact per e-mail with EURCAW-Poultry-SFA
- The EURCAW-Poultry-SFA is interested to have access to and visit farms (e.g. quail, gamebirds, and breeders) as it is always better to see by oneself.
- Can EURCAW-Poultry-SFA work on experimental laboratory animals' welfare?  
It is not in the scope of the Centre. However, experimental animals are mentioned in the legislation and might be considered in the future.
- Interest of some RB delegates to be part of the EU experimental laboratory animals' welfare network.
- Interest in the EURCAW-Poultry-SFA newsletter.

### Wrap-up

Dr Virginie Michel reminded to RB delegates not to hesitate to come back to the Centre, and disseminate the Centre's work, published online, all around the European Union.

Kirsten Vornhagen thanked again the delegates. The open discussion was very fruitful. She explained that working on experimental laboratory animals' welfare is something DG SANTE and EURCAW-Poultry-SFA have to have a look all together and EURCAW-Poultry-SFA could maybe include that later in their future Work Programme. Regarding the experimental laboratory animal welfare network, it is a network between MSs CAs and National Reference Centers. How to involved stakeholders has to be discussed first with the MSs.

### Closure of the meeting

Virginie Michel thanked again everybody. EURCAW-Poultry-SFA and RB members will see each other soon at the next platform meeting. The Centre and the RB will keep in touch via e-mail until next year meeting.

The meeting was closed at 11.30