



Ministry of Agriculture,
Nature and Food Quality

Advancing sustainable animal products in Northwest Europe

Date 30 October 2020
Subject Summary thematic workshops ASAP conference

In October of 2020, the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature, and Food Quality hosted a series of thematic workshops on the following topics:

- Animal welfare and sustainability labelling
- Financing the transition to sustainable animal products
- The role of the government
- Towards a level playing field in the EU

These themes emerged during the previous country-based workshops. Both these thematic and country-based workshops took place within the context of the conference 'Advancing Sustainable Animal Products (ASAP)' of 2 December 2020.

The participants of the workshops were relevant NGOs, market actors, and governments from the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, France, Belgium, and the United Kingdom. In order to make the conclusions of these interesting workshops available to a wider audience, this document provides a concise summary of the main takeaways of the workshops. This summary is based on contributions from the participants and does not necessarily reflect conclusions that were shared by all participants.

Animal welfare and sustainability labelling – 21 October 2020

Participants: the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, Deutscher Tierschutzbund e.V., Verbraucherzentrale Niedersachsen e.V., Animal Protection Denmark, Arla Foods, Danish Veterinary and Food Administration, COV, RSPCA, Tesco, Red Tractor, Stichting Beter Leven Keurmerk, True Food Projects, SMK, ABN AMRO, Verbraucherzentrale Bundesverband e.V., COOPERL, Compassion in World Farming, Flemish department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Dairy Data Warehouse B.V.

- Make a system that we can all understand in Europe. All labels cannot be harmonized into one. The goal is to create a shared MOP system, with space for existing labels that are different. The system should be based on a rough order that specifies the method of production (the way an animal was raised).
- Improve animal welfare for as many animals as possible.
- A prerequisite for trustworthy labelling is good, validated data. If you can't measure it, you can't improve it.
- Sustainability labelling is also important, but should not immediately be included in animal welfare labelling.

Financing the transition to sustainable animal products – 22 October 2020

Participants: True Food Projects, FNSEA, ALPRO & DANONE, Ahold Delhaize, COV, the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, ABN AMRO, Flemish department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Verbraucherzentrale Bundesverband e.V., Rabobank, Compassion in World Farming, Dairy Data Warehouse B.V.

- We need to communicate more with a positive tone about what farmers are doing. There are a lot of initiatives that are not known to consumers and as businesses, we need to show them to the consumers.
- The challenge next decade: to create a sustainable food chain but still a productive food chain.
- The question is not what banks need, but what do farmers need to improve their sustainability and a sustainable cash flow.
- True price is a tool in the toolbox, but not the only tool.
- An EU or across the border benchmark or level of recognition would be very useful to refer to and associate with.

The role of the government – 28 October 2020

Participants: the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, True Food Projects, Deutscher Tierschutzbund e.V., FVST, Verbraucherzentrale Bundesverband e.V., Flemish department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Dairy Data Warehouse B.V., Stichting HubOranje!

- The government has a role to play. It is necessary to have a strategy to transform the industry. Consumers need orientation. The market itself cannot do this all alone.
- Governments should get market actors and other stakeholders together to motivate them to make more efforts for sustainability.
- The EU has to set the common standards, but they should be enforced by national governments.

Towards a level playing field in the EU – 29 October 2020

Participants: the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals, COV, True Food Projects, Verbraucherzentrale Bundesverband e.V., Dairy Data Warehouse B.V., Danish Crown, Danish Agriculture & Food Council, Blue Engineering, Danish Bacon & Meat Council, Flemish department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Danish Veterinary and Food Administration, Stichting HubOranje!, Deutscher Tierschutzbund e.V.

- A level playing field is not necessarily created by prohibiting certain practices and that information and communication play a very important role. Consumers need to have clear information and communication.
- Selling sustainable products to different markets can trigger interest in sustainable supply chains.
- We should find methods that promote frontrunners.