# Report No. 6: Trends and Future Developments in Animal Welfare

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1. Introduction Part I and Part II

This report explores the trends and future developments of farm animal welfare that were identified in interviews with experts working for Swedish authorities, academia, market actors and civil society organizations involved in animal welfare or supply chain issues.

The trends identified through the interviews portray both a hopeful and pessimistic picture for the future of animal welfare in Sweden and the EU. Many of the interviewed experts expressed hope for an improved animal welfare but current reality with severe competition from the rest of the EU was perceived as hindering a positive development. On the consumer side the trend was towards a greater interest in animal welfare but worries were also expressed towards the perception of animal welfare not being enough to convince consumers to pay more in the end anyway. In the control and production sector, several experts hoped that the implementation of animal based measures would be a positive development for the measurement of animal welfare but only a few specifically identified current trends towards implementing them.

The positive views of the raise in interest of animal welfare were accompanied by a great fear by some experts, especially those from the industry or animal welfare researchers. The fear was that of an out-competed Swedish animal production if animal welfare regulations continued to be strict in Sweden and less strict in other countries. Thus, the future of animal welfare is not only a Swedish issue but the experts saw an urgent need for European solutions, through for example harmonization of legislation.

The need for legislative developments was also complemented by the market measures for animal welfare. One of the most popular measures was the introduction of an animal welfare label which was seen as a positive way of informing consumers. However, reactions were not only positive and some interviewees also expressed doubts towards this solution as will be discussed further below.

The present report begins with a discussion on the methodology used in the data collection. After the initial methodological considerations, part I of the report covers the trends and developments in policies for animal welfare discussing firstly a possible harmonization of legislation, secondly the roles of different actors and trends within their sectors, thirdly the debate on product origin and fourthly the trends that relate specifically to animal based measures. In part II of the present report the focus is specifically on the market sector, reviewing current knowledge about different actors’ willingness to pay for animal welfare as well as an animal welfare label as a possible measure to promote animal welfare purchases. In part II the possibility of public institutions to purchase animal welfare-friendly products through public procurements will also be revised.

2. Methodological considerations

This report builds on data collected through interviews with experts within authorities, academia, market actors or civil society organizations that deal with animal welfare. The methodology used to collect the data was semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interview allows the interviewee to answer specific questions as well as freely reflect upon the interview themes. Thus, the data collected consists of both objective knowledge and subjective opinions, and sometimes a combination of the two. In other words, the methodology used does not always allow for a distinction between true or false. However, this is not a weakness of the data since the aim of the
This semi-structured interview is to understand the experts’ point of view. When it comes to analyzing trends and developments within animal welfare the semi-structured interviews, thus, allowed the experts to identify the trends they thought were happening as well as the developments they would prefer for the future or fear could happen.

This study interviewed a total of 15 experts from different sectors. This small number sufficiently covers a general overview of the trends and developments of animal welfare. However, it also implies that the views represented different perspectives and only on a few occasions more than one expert from the same field was interviewed. This adds to the argument that the views presented are individuals’ opinions and perspectives, not objective facts of how animal welfare is, or should be, handled within the whole food chain.

PART I – Trends and Developments in Policies for Animal Welfare

1. Introduction
The part I of this report explores the trends and developments in policies for animal welfare. This section discusses the division of roles and responsibilities of the different actors (authorities, market actors, civil society actors or individuals) identified through the interviews as well as what trends the experts perceived as evolving within these sectors. It highlights both ongoing and plausible trends as well as preferred or undesirable possible futures. Part I also includes discussion on trends in the Swedish product origin debate as well as animal based measures. However, the first trend that will be reviewed is the harmonization of legislation between the EU and Sweden.

2. Harmonization of Swedish and EU policies
The different legislative standards on animal welfare within the EU were an issue discussed by most of the experts interviewed. Many expressed the opinion that Sweden has higher standards, especially when it comes to pig and poultry. The differences have become an increasing dilemma since Sweden’s entry into the EU which has led to increased import and thus increased competition from foreign animal production for Swedish producers. The solution is often portrayed as a need for harmonization between Sweden and the EU. Harmonization is preferably seen as a rising of EU standards of animal welfare. However, some experts also feared that legislation on the EU level has already stagnated and that the most probable outcome of a harmonization between Sweden and the EU would lead to lower Swedish standards.

2.1 Compensation for good animal welfare
Several experts pointed out the need to reward farmers for maintaining high animal welfare standards rather than merely punish them for not doing so. This discourse was applied on two levels. Firstly, within Sweden, farmers who take good care of their animals should receive ‘alleviations’. Secondly, in an EU perspective, Swedish farmers generally believed they are held to higher animal welfare legislative standards than other EU producers and thus should be compensated accordingly. For example, one of the interviewed experts criticized that Sweden now requires that cows be outside in pastures for part of the year, whereas no such standard is required at an EU level. Since this is legislatively required in Sweden, farmers cannot receive subsidies or adequate price premiums
for doing this. Thus, in the farmers’ preferred future their animal welfare-friendly efforts would receive financial compensation through higher prices and governmental support.

2.2 Raising EU standards
The difference between Swedish and EU animal welfare standards has led to a call for harmonization of regulations, also called leveling the playing field. In this discourse, Swedish farmers are assumed to be less competitive due to the burden created by costly strict animal welfare standards for which they are not properly compensated. In other words because of strict animal welfare standards it is more expensive to produce in Sweden making Swedish products more expensive for consumers, who are generally believed to prefer cheap products which may not have been produced with such high animal welfare standards. This idea of harmonization offers several paths: raising EU standards, lowering Swedish standards, or a combination of the two.

Many experts explicitly expressed the need to raise EU standards within the context of the harmonization debate. When discussing priorities for policies and action within animal welfare, most of them identified regulations at an EU level. The need for EU regulations might be pressing, but it is also believed that there is currently resistance to raising animal welfare standards within the EU, due to current difficulties in implementing already passed legislation which results in a stagnation of future animal welfare legislation.

From a company point of view, the representative from McDonalds agreed with the sentiment that similar animal welfare standards as those in Northern Europe should apply to all producers in the EU, but did not think this should be legislation lead but rather company driven. However, he did acknowledge that global companies like McDonalds might be unique in their requirements for suppliers to follow certain regulations since they are keen on maintaining equal standards on their food no matter where they sell it and, at least in Europe, requirements on animal welfare is part of what ensures this equal standard.

According to some experts the harmonization of Swedish and EU standards through the lowering of Swedish standards is currently gaining popularity within the industry since the raising of EU standards is expected to be too slow. It is an unfortunate trend but according to some experts may become reality. However, this view is not reflected within the consumer sector. Consumers still take great pride in the good animal welfare standards in Sweden and the trend is rather an increased awareness of animal welfare.

2.3 Global harmonization
A harmonization debate between the EU and the rest of the world was expected to develop over the next five to ten years according to some experts. Similar to the situation of Swedish farmers, who experienced the shock of moving from a protected market with strict regulations to suddenly having to compete with cheap imported products with lower standards, the farmers of the EU who are currently protected will soon face fierce competition from cheap imports with lower standards. This argument assumes that the EU has higher standards than the products that will be imported and that negotiations with the WTO will result in the opening of markets to such products.
3. Roles and responsibilities
During the interviews the division of roles and responsibility between different actors for the improvement of animal welfare was discussed. The main view expressed was that all different actors in the chain have a role to play and that communication within the chain is of importance. The need for transparency was particularly raised. With transparency is meant a communication to the outside of what the self does in terms of animal welfare but also a possibility for other actors to have insight into the handling of animal welfare within the own organization. This should be done by authorities, farmers, civil society as well as market actors. Transparency was seen as a way to portray the true picture of animal production, one which differs from the utopia imagined by consumers but that shows the possibilities of animal production to be animal welfare-friendly as well as sustainable. In addition, a dialogue on sustainability within the whole food chain was desired –possibly an outcome of increased transparency as well as awareness of the importance of shared responsibility for animal welfare.

3.1 Government
The role of governments and political actors was often mentioned by the interviewed experts. It referred to both national government and authorities in Sweden as well as EU institutions. The importance of governmental actors can be seen as a result of the dominant discourse in Sweden where animal welfare is thought best handled through a legislative and regulatory framework. In other parts of Europe, a different approach of market differentiation has been used. The market approach model has, according to one of the interviewed researchers, also been taken up by the EU as a way to improve animal welfare.

3.1.1 Sweden
The role of Sweden both refers to Sweden as a government and authority as well as to Sweden as a European actor. When it comes to Sweden as an authority the view is clear on the need for Sweden to maintain its high regulations on animal welfare. The Swedish government should in that sense take a lead in legislation and regulations. Strict legislation is by several experts from different fields seen as the best way to secure a good level of animal welfare although it can never be a guarantee against individual bad cases. The role of the state as a control authority for animal welfare was also emphasized by some, as well as the government’s role in developing the control systems further. It was also proposed that the state might take an even greater responsibility for animal welfare through the development of a system which actively encourages good animal welfare through subsidies of good practice instead of punishing violators. When it comes to Sweden’s role in promoting animal welfare to the greater public the view that the state has responsibility for informing its citizens was expressed. However, as will be seen below, this responsibility is perceived as shared with many actors in the supply chain as well as within primary animal production.

The Swedish state was also seen as having an important role in clarifying the possibility of procurement to include animal welfare criteria. This was partly a political task but also a task of authorities. The new agency for procurement, Upphandlingsmyndigheten, which is a suggested new establishment, was seen as a possible future actor. However, EU was seen as having the most responsibility for procurement, as will be seen below.
As a European actor, Sweden also has an important role to play. Many experts expressed the need for Sweden to, firstly, be an example of how animal welfare issues can be handled, and, secondly and also more importantly, to take an active role in improving legislation on animal welfare at the EU level. The ongoing trend for Sweden as an actor for animal welfare is thus a continued belief in a regulatory approach, both within Sweden ad in the EU, for which the state is ultimately responsible.

3.1.2 EU
As has been seen above, the harmonization of EU policies on animal welfare is currently a lively debate. The common view expressed by the experts was that EU has an important role to play as a legislative authority/organization. According to the Swedish experts, EU should take a lead in animal welfare legislation since an increased level of animal welfare is preferred for all animals instead of just a few animals within certain schemes or countries. However, doubt was also expressed towards their possibility to do so due to shifting priorities as a result of the financial crisis as well as the current focus on climate change, a discourse the experts felt will overpower animal welfare.

According to most interviewed experts from Sweden, the role of the EU is to continue the development of regulatory measures in a similar way as the Swedish case. To a certain extent this could be seen as currently taking place, through for example EU’s CAP. CAP was seen as a measure that should be used for the promotion of good animal welfare throughout the whole of EU. However, according to one interviewed animal welfare researcher from the UK, EU is rather acting as a promoter of market solutions for animal welfare at present. Although regulation is a small part of the current EU strategy, the focus is on the differentiation of products based on animal welfare and a belief that consumer demand will move the development forward. In the long run, the preferred result of this ongoing trend is a development of animal welfare as a norm for all animal production.

The role of the EU as a legislator was also emphasized within the debate about procurement. Although the legal possibilities to include animal welfare claims in procurement remain unclear, the experts that work with procurement locally claim that current EU legislation limits their possibilities of including it, mainly due to EU principles of non-discrimination. EU thus has a great responsibility for, firstly, clarifying the actual possibilities, and, secondly, developing legislation that allows institutional buyers to purchase animal welfare-friendly products if they so wish. For Swedish national, regional as well as municipal authorities this question is of great importance and purchases are seen as a possible way for them to contribute to a more sustainable development.

3.2 Market
The idea that market actors such as retailers, restaurants and food industry should play a role in promoting animal welfare was common among the experts and the interviewed experts identified growing animal welfare awareness among market actors. However, the views of the role and responsibility of the market varied as some perceived the market as a complement to the more important governmental approaches while others believed that the market should be the driving force.
In addition, there was a group of experts representing industry, control authority, and civil society who did not want the market to play a major role in animal welfare. In these perspectives, the market is not seen as a potential solution to animal welfare. Instead, the focus should be on regulation of production in Sweden or the EU and standards for importation of animal products. Essentially this view argues that consumers are not well enough informed to make good decisions about animal welfare while purchasing or simply that they should not be given the opportunity to buy non-welfare friendly products. One of the beliefs underpinning this perspective is that animal welfare is for all animals. Buying a product that is specifically sold as animal friendly is good for the animals under that scheme, but the welfare of all animals should be taken into account. Therefore, market differentiation does not make sense because all products sold should have a basic animal welfare assurance. This focus on regulation is expressed by the vast majority of the Swedish experts, although not all of them focus on regulation to the exclusion of market differentiation. One academic expert offered a bridge between these ideas by explaining that ideally animal welfare issues should be taken care of by governments; however, in this ‘messy’ world we live in one needs to be open to allowing the market to be part of the solution.

One of the often awaited steps towards implementing animal welfare in the market was the development of an animal welfare label. This was seen positively by most experts within authorities, academia, consumer and civil society organizations based on the assumption that it would be easier for consumers to acquire information about animal welfare-friendly products as well as to act out their consumer power. However, as will be seen below, companies and retail were more hesitant towards this development.

### 3.2.1 Retailers & companies

Within the supply chain retailers and companies that supply food, such as restaurants, play an important role in implementing animal welfare within their organizations. In Sweden, retailers, such as ICA in particular, are powerful market actors and a few dominate the market, although competition from foreign retailers has increased in recent years.

The powerful position of retailers and companies led many of the experts to claim that retailers could play an important role in promoting animal welfare, although some experts were reluctant to assign too big a role to retailers or companies. According to the interviewed expert from McDonalds, the companies themselves are the ones who should lead the development and implement animal welfare controls within their own supply chain in order to guarantee animal welfare-friendly products. Animal welfare was seen as part of a necessary mean for providing a quality product rather than an expensive ethical commitment. Although not expressing it equally strongly, ICA also perceived animal welfare as an important product attribute and saw their role as providers of animal welfare-friendly products. To ensure the animal welfare quality both ICA and McDonalds have internal standards where animal based measures are included. The view was that they worked well and especially McDonalds encouraged other companies to implement them since it enabled controls across countries with varying legislation.

Whether the role of retailers and companies was to inform consumers about animal welfare was a debated issue. The great majority of experts believed that it was definitely the role of retailers and
companies in combination with the industry to let consumers know how animal production looks like. The expert from McDonalds agreed and encouraged companies to open up for visitors on farms as well as spreading information on the possibility of guaranteeing good animal welfare within animal production today. However, the expert interviewed at ICA disagreed on this point. According to the expert, ICA is responsible for providing correct information on the wrapping of the product regarding type of production system as well as origin but it was seen as the food industry’s responsibility to provide information on how animal production looks like to consumers. ICA was also hesitant towards the production of an animal welfare label. The role of ICA was rather perceived as to develop certain animal welfare concept products than labeling all products as animal welfare or not. The differentiation between products was also viewed skeptically by McDonalds and the internalization of animal welfare in all products was seen as a better option.

3.2.2 Industry
The responsibility to communicate the real picture of how animal welfare looks like at the farm was also seen as the role of the food industry and individual farmers. Today, consumers are becoming more and more alienated from farm life and animal production and consumers often have an idealized picture of grazing cows and foraging hens. This idealized picture aggravates the effects of animal scandals of maltreatment or disease. By providing a true picture of animal treatment on the farm the industry could, thus, prevent loosing trust from consumers in case of scandals as well as be able to promote the handling of animal welfare on their farm or within the industry.

Whether a communication of animal welfare production standards to consumers was a future possible trend was not revealed through the interviews. However, Svensk Mjölk currently includes animal based measures as a control system for risk assessment. This is an internal development and so far it has only been developed as far as communicating the concept of healthy milk to retailers. The current trend, thus, seems to be towards informing supply chain actors but not consumers. Nevertheless, the long term aim of this project is to communicate this system to consumers through a producer label, although it is currently a distant goal.

3.2.3 Consumers
The role of consumers was also a debated issue. Consumers’ possibility as well as their willingness to purchase animal welfare products was perceived as positive by some and negative by others.

The growing consumer interest was a reoccurring theme that was viewed as a positive trend today. Consumers were believed to know more as well as to wanting to buy animal welfare products to a greater extent than before. However, this view was also contrasted by pessimistic views that consumers are not interested, do not have necessary information and that it is not possible for even interested consumers to acquire knowledge since information is not available today. The lack of animal welfare labeling also limits consumers’ ability to make conscious choices while shopping. In addition, some experts even expressed the view that the choice of buying animal welfare should not be left up to consumers at all, but rather all products available for purchase should represent a certain level of animal welfare.
The difference between individuals as consumers and as citizens was discussed by only a few experts. One expressed view was that the trust in the Swedish control system is high in Sweden and, thus, individuals do not see the need to act as citizens but merely believe that their purchases as consumers include good animal welfare since they are produced in Sweden. According to one expert from an animal welfare organization, consumers were believed to feel confidence towards goods sold in Sweden in general.

Consequently, the general belief in animal welfare regulation and control in Sweden seems to result in a lack of belief in the ability of, or maybe the need of, individuals to exercise influence over animal welfare policies as citizens. The exception to this was one animal welfare organization that saw it as their responsibility to affect general opinion towards animal welfare as well as affect consumption of animal products in general due to mistrust of other actors. However, the general view is that individuals should exercise influence mainly as consumers, although their willingness to do so was contested by many.

### 3.3 Civil society

One identified trend was that the interest in animal welfare is growing and the involvement of other political or civil society actors is increasing. The role of the civil society is seen as mostly informative. Information is a powerful tool and the current development in animal welfare is by some seen as been driven by scandals in animal welfare. The civil society is seen as playing an important role in providing this information, either by animal rights organizations or consumer organizations.

However, the information portrayed has to be both of positive and negative nature according to most experts. For example the media could work more on showing the good examples and not only the bad. Naturally, the type of information put forward also depends on the scope of the organization. One expert working with animal welfare control at a regional office stated that secret surprise inspections that are sometimes carried out by animal welfare activists could also harm the animal welfare agenda since it destroys trust for the government’s controls. In addition, the industry experts thought that it could affect the farmers’ will to continuing producing animal products. In the long run it could thus lead to a decrease in availability of products produced under Sweden’s high animal welfare standards. The role of civil society is thus viewed as an important one, but one which needs to be exercised with care.

### 4. Origin ('Swedishness') debate

During the interviews with experts it became clear that one measure that many favor is the labeling of origin. This is already a reality on many products. For example ICA always label origin on their ICA-branded products, but cannot demand their suppliers to do the same. In addition, origin label is desired on all kinds of products including animal products, such as sausages or cheese. This is not done today and many producers are skeptical due to increased costs for labeling when meat or milk ingredients may come from varying destinations depending on supply.

Origin labeling is desired because it is an easy way to communicate the standards of production and consumers can easily choose what they already know as better animal welfare. Many emphasize that there are substantial differences between Swedish animal production and that in other EU countries but this was debated. Some of the standards that were particularly highlighted were the lower
standards for pig and veal production as well as the higher levels of antibiotics and hormones used in other EU countries. It was suggested that origin label is a good way to communicate animal welfare as long as EU standards are not harmonized and Swedish standards are stricter.

However, some experts also expressed concern with linking Swedish production to good animal welfare. The main argument was that all animal production is not necessarily good because it is Swedish and that marketing Swedishness would require extensive information campaigns about the welfare standards in Swedish animal production in order to not fool the consumer. To assume that Swedishness implies good animal welfare was, according to some experts, considered discriminatory based on ignorance of the real situation.

The simplicity of labeling national origin seems to attract most of the experts interviewed. Due to the traditionally high standards of animal welfare in Sweden, Swedish origin is assumed to be sufficient information to consumers on the level of animal welfare. However, whether this conveys an actual overarching good standard of animal welfare was debated. It might neither be true that consumers know that Swedish animal welfare is better, although they supposedly do, according to most experts. The question of labeling animal welfare is thus not solved by the origin label. Origin label might be one way forward although not sufficient.

5. Trends in animal-based measures

Trends for control systems and animal-based measures (ABM) focus on the role of non-traditional actors in the control system. An increasingly active role is being taken by civil society in control systems through secret inspections. Also, market actors have been the most accepting of ABMs and are integrating them into control systems more readily than governmental control authorities.

Both the EU and Sweden have witnessed an increase in surprise inspections of farms by animal welfare campaigners. Secret inspections have garnered both praise and critique. Many agreed these inspections were at least good in that they brought to light animal welfare abuses to be corrected and one academic expert pointed out that animal welfare legislation has been largely driven by animal welfare scandals. Other experts noted the power of these activities to raise public interest in animal welfare issues and thus keep animal welfare on the agenda. However, governmental control authorities and producer experts were highly critical of these actions. A veterinarian pointed out that trust in the Swedish control authority may be threatened by secret inspections. According to him, it should be the government inspectors (the County Administrative Boards) doing the inspections and to have activists finding examples of poor animal welfare only undermines public trust in the official control system. Both he and the industry expert agreed that there will always be a few farms with poor animal welfare, but on average Swedish standards are quite high. Thus, these secret inspections damage the image of a sector with otherwise generally high levels of animal welfare.

Animal-based measures as a framework of looking at the animal as the end result is popular among experts and expected to continue to grow in influence within control systems. An expert from the Swedish control authority sees them as the ‘future’ of animal welfare control. However, the EU does not appear as ready to embrace animal-based measures due to their general resistance to change of EU animal welfare policies as well as to their strong focus on resource-based measures. Control
systems of the EU and Sweden were both seen as overly detail-oriented. Desire was expressed for more holistic inspections and animal-based measures were seen as a good tool for achieving this.

Although Swedish experts tend to focus on regulation, examples of implementation of animal-based measures were found in control systems of private and producer companies. McDonalds Europe reorganized its interior control systems around the concept of ABMs and Svensk Mjölk has a health milk package that utilizes ABMs. Whereas, an official control authority expert claimed that ABM are not currently in use in official controls at all.

PART II: The Market as an actor in Animal Welfare

1. Introduction

This section explores the possibilities of the market to be part of the improvement of animal welfare. In addition, it will explore the willingness to pay as well as the debate on an animal welfare label in particular.

A common answer among the experts is that the market needs to be a part of the solution. Market actors such as ICA and McDonalds agree on the possibility to use animal welfare as a market concept. The interviewed expert representing McDonalds emphasized that companies themselves need to take animal welfare into account and the expert from ICA expressed the possibility for retailers such as ICA to use animal welfare as a competitive advantage against other retailers. There is also a general agreement on that animal welfare can be seen as a quality of the product, or by some rather referred to as production quality. The possibility to market this quality through an animal welfare label will be discussed in detail below.

However, opinions against a market solution were also pronounced by some experts. The expert working at Svensk Mjölk as well as veterinarians working with control did not believe in the market being a solution by offering consumers the choice of buying animal welfare-friendly or not since consumers were not seen as knowledgeable enough. The view of consumers’ buying habits not stimulating animal welfare was shared by one expert representing an animal welfare organization since consumers would often be very keen on buying animal welfare when the issue was in focus due to animal welfare scandals but they would soon forget about it and go back to letting price motivate their choices. The willingness to pay will be analyzed more in detail in this section.

The role of retailers was also discussed, and their divided interests were brought up by a few. According to an expert representing a consumer organization retailers have no actual will to communicate animal welfare due to the decreasing Swedish animal production and their need to import to satisfy the demand for meat in Sweden.

The last section of Part II will discuss the possibilities of procurement to include animal welfare as a criterion for purchases. As will be seen, the experts working within procurement would welcome a development of such a possibility but did not perceive it as possible today.
2. Willingness to Pay

The general perspective that was brought up in the expert interviews was the view that Swedish consumers today are prepared to pay for a better animal welfare. The reason for this was mainly because animal welfare is more and more being regarded as a quality of the product. From experts dealing with consumer issues it was also stated that animal welfare is an aspect which is increasingly becoming a crucial criterion for the product itself, in line with the crucial criteria of taste and safety of the food.

The result from the Eurobarometer (2005) confirms this picture. While 15 percent of the Swedes firmly state that they would not be willing to pay any additional price premium as many as 81 percent of the Swedes are willing to pay an additional price premium starting from 5 percent and upwards with the largest group being the one willing to pay an additional 10 percent price premium (39 percent of the respondents). This can be compared to the opinions in the whole of EU where 34 percent do not want to pay any additional price premium while 57 percent claim to be willing to pay an additional price premium of 5 percent or more. (See figure 1)

Figure 1: Willingness to pay for animal welfare

What additional price premium would you be willing to pay for hen’s eggs sourced from an animal welfare friendly production system? Source: Eurobarometer 2005, p. 50

Interesting to note is also that 63 percent of the Swedes and 62 percent of the Europeans are prepared to change the place where they shop in order to buy more animal welfare-friendly products (see figure 2) (Eurobarometer 2007). This suggests a willingness to act on their intention to buy more animal welfare-friendly products although it does not say whether the consumers are willing to pay an additional price for those products.

Figure 2: Willingness to change shopping place
Would you be willing to change your usual place of shopping in order to be able to buy more animal welfare friendly food products? Source: Eurobarometer 2007, p. 39

The question of what type of production system consumers most often buy eggs from (Eurobarometer, 2005) demonstrates the buying behavior of Swedish versus European consumers in general. 63 percent of the Swedish consumers claim that they buy eggs from hens kept in free-range systems compared to 36 percent of the European consumers (see figure 3). Although this seems to portray that consumers actually buy eggs that have a better animal welfare standard, it has to be kept in mind that this is still the individual’s assessment of their own behavior and not actual numbers on what is sold on the market. However, one expert working with consumer issues pointed out that a current trend is that Swedish consumers spend more money on food and are acting out their willingness to buy animal welfare friendly product to an increasing extent than before.

Figure 3: Buying eggs
When you buy eggs do they mostly come from hens kept...? Source: Eurobarometer 2005, p. 36

However, there were some experts that expressed different opinions. Some stated that the price consumers were prepared to pay was not enough or expressed the belief that they are not really willing to pay at all since in the end price decides what products consumers choose when shopping for food. The opinion that animal welfare was something that consumers should not be asked to decide upon was also an issue brought up. The expert working for McDonalds, claimed that the company itself should be responsible for handling issues of animal welfare. Consumers should not need to decide between better or worse animal welfare since their choices are determined by product price in the end. This view was echoed by many of the experts supporting a regulatory approach instead of market solutions.

The opinions on whether consumers are willing to pay thus differ. In addition, some experts criticize the retail sector for not being willing to pay their share or being willing to communicate animal welfare to consumers. This could be exemplified by the reluctance of the retailer ICA to back the development of an animal welfare-friendly label which was identified through the interviews and will be discussed further bellow.

The discussion on whether animal welfare has to result in more expensive animal products was also brought up by a few. According to one expert on consumer issues it is partly a myth that good animal welfare has to become more expensive since, for example, a good animal welfare could lead to less disease and thus less production loss or cost for medication whereas space requirements do limit the size of production units. However, no matter whether it is a myth or not, producers must be able to demand higher prices if they are producing a product with better quality, but then the increase in price must be related to actual increases in costs.

When it comes to institutional consumers, the general view among the experts working with procurements is that municipalities and authorities are prepared to pay a higher price for animal welfare-friendly products. One expert working with procurement emphasizes that since governmental actors deal with animal welfare controls it is in their interest to also consume animal
welfare-friendly products. It was added by another expert on procurement that on the municipal level in Gothenburg, the current willingness to pay more for organic products as well as the choice of Swedish meat (currently 80 percent) when individual kitchens buy their raw materials suggests that also the municipality is prepared to pay more for meat which has been produced in an animal welfare-friendly way.

3. Animal welfare labels and labeling

The possibility of consumers to identify animal welfare-friendly products while shopping is an important aspect of whether consumers buy animal welfare friendly or not. According to the Eurobarometer (2005) 72 percent of the Swedish consumers claimed that they could easily identify whether eggs, milk or meat products are sourced from an animal welfare-friendly production system from the label of the product whereas 23 percent of the Swedish consumers could not. In the EU in general 43 percent claimed to be able to identify such products whereas 51 percent could not (see figure 4). Two years later the Eurobarometer (2007) asked whether the respondents agreed on that a costumer can easily find information on products from animal welfare friendly production systems in shops. In Sweden 40 percent of the respondents agreed while 56 percent disagreed, compared to 33 percent agreeing in the EU in general and 55 percent disagreeing (see figure 5). In the same survey respondents were also asked whether they believed that current labels of food products allowed them to identify products sourced from animal welfare friendly production systems. 53 percent of the Swedes claimed that they could not do it whereas 56 percent of the European costumers claimed they could not (see figure 6).

Figure 4: Ability to identify animal welfare on the label

![Figure 4: Ability to identify animal welfare on the label](image)

When purchasing eggs, meat or milk can you easily identify from the label those products sourced from animal welfare friendly production systems? Source: Eurobarometer 2005, 31

Figure 5: Easy to find animal welfare products
Could you tell me to what extent you agree with the following statement: In shops and supermarkets, customers can easily find information on products sourced from animal welfare friendly production systems.
Source: Eurobarometer 2007, p. 42

Figure 6: Ability to identify animal welfare friendly products from labels

Do you think that current labels of food products allow you to identify those products sourced from animal welfare friendly production systems? (proportion) Source: Eurobarometer 2007, p. 45

The difference in answers from year to year as well as from question to question reveals that the phrasing of a question plays an important role in respondents understanding of questions and, thus, also their answers to the questions. The appeared rise in the Swedish respondents’ impossibilities to identify products from animal welfare friendly production systems, 23 percent in 2005 (see figure 4) compared to 53 percent in 2007 (see figure 6) could mean that information on the products has gotten much worse but it could also be a sign of a changed perception of what is to be considered animal welfare friendly production systems, or simply that the wording of the question influence the
way people chose to answer it. However, the Eurobarometer (2005; 2007) does show that information to consumers about animal welfare as it is today is not straightforward.

To explore the possibilities of communicating animal welfare to the consumers in a clear manner the issue of an animal welfare label was discussed with the experts interviewed. The general view shared by experts revealed a positive approach towards animal welfare labels. It was argued that anything that gives more information to the consumers was good. However, there was a great range of opinions on how such a label should be framed and what criteria it should be based on. Speaking from a Swedish perspective one of the animal welfare researchers argued that a new label must avoid the introduction of additional control and be based on the animal welfare controls that already exist in Sweden in order not to introduce further costs for producers. Another expert who works with animal welfare controls for Livsmedelsverket, suggested a label that provides the same information about production system such as is currently done for eggs. However, he also saw a risk with such a label since it would be difficult to control and open up for possibilities for producers and industry to mislead consumers. One animal welfare organization imagined a future animal welfare label that would mark all kind of products and where only vegetarian alternatives would qualify into the top category. In addition, this label would require the inclusion of national origin as well as be a label working throughout the whole EU.

The question whether a future animal welfare label should be on a European level or not was also an issue that divided the experts. Some experts thought that it would be necessary for it to be an EU-based label which should start with the highest possible criteria that the European countries could agree upon and then increase the requirements with time. Others thought that the usefulness of a label would be severely undermined if it would be based on an EU-level since the criteria would be far too low. In addition, Swedish producers would perceive it negatively because it would not allow them to portray their production as better than general EU production and thus competition from outside would be harsher.

Although there was a general positive approach towards labels the different opinions on how to implement it were also accompanied with doubts on whether it could be possible to implement at all. Neither did the experts discuss who they believed most suitable to introduce such a label. It is possible that retail could be one part of developing such a label but according to the interviewed expert from ICA, ICA does not believe in a label as a measure to communicate animal welfare to consumers. The argument was that packages today already include a lot of information and that it would require time and resources to make the consumers understand a new label. Instead of labeling, ICA is currently working with certain products or lines of products with animal welfare-friendly production, such as ICA Selection Gårdsgris. These niche products communicate animal welfare standards as part of the production quality but do not have a specific animal welfare label on the package. In addition to niche products, the expert from ICA was positive towards marketing whole companies as animal welfare-friendly. Developing an animal welfare-friendly slogan for the whole company was seen as a better option than labeling although it was also perceived as difficult to manage with the great amount of products that ICA supplies. Therefore, the trend for the future is that ICA will rather continue to profile certain products as animal welfare-friendly than brand the
whole of ICA as animal welfare-friendly as there are no discussion of such a development within ICA today.

4. Procurement

Within the market sector important actors to take into consideration in Sweden are the public institutions that do procurements for state and regional authorities or municipalities. Some of the interviewed experts expressed a frustration regarding the Swedish state demanding producers to follow strict animal welfare legislation but then not demanding public institutions to purchase products produced under the Swedish law. One of the experts representing a consumer organization expressed the opinion that the possibility for governmental actors to include animal welfare-friendly criteria when purchasing has existed since 2006 but is an issue that has not attracted much attention in practice.

However, according to the experts interviewed that work with procurements this view was not shared. They claim to have no possibilities at present to specifically demand animal welfare-friendly products due to present legislation on procurement. In addition, they do not view it as a contradictory situation because they are following other legislations whose most important goal is to work against any kind of discrimination (including nationality) within the EU. However, if it can be proven that animal products from a certain production system has other qualities and, thus, are a better option it would be possible to include it as certain criteria within procurement. An example of this could be to specify that meat should be free from antibiotics. In this way you are not obstructing the free market but asking for a specific product on the market.

Once the procurements have been carried out the possibility of include animal welfare criteria is slightly better. The individual kitchens that in the end buy food can chose to purchase a certain meat from the products the supplier provides. According to one of the experts on municipal procurement this possibility was the reason why the proportion of meat purchased by Gothenburg in the end was 80 percent from Sweden. Although this opens up for individual possibilities the influence that authorities could have on the supply chain is severely weakened.

Whether it is currently possible or not to include animal welfare criteria thus remains unclear. It could be that there is a lack of knowledge among the ones working with procurements or that the legislation is still unclear. However, the procurement experts all agreed that the way forward is to include the possibility of purchasing animal welfare-friendly products within legislation dealing with procurement. It was also expressed that this should be an issue dealt with by the soon to be established authority for procurement in Sweden, Upfhandlingsmyndigheteten. In addition, an increasing demand for locally produced products within the municipality was identified but with the current regulation it is impossible for procurement to deal with such demands today, thus, requiring additional changes in legislation on procurement.

Conclusion to Part I: Policies
The measures and approaches to the improvement of animal welfare that were presented in Part I focused on policies as a way forward. Policies in this chapter relate to legislative and regulatory
policies implemented by government actors as well as voluntary measures carried out by market actors, civil society organizations or individual consumers. The trends and developments identified emphasize the need for all these actors to take responsibility for animal welfare. However, there are different views on how this should be done.

The dominant discourse that guides the preferred future trends is a regulatory approach in both Sweden and the EU. Among the Swedish experts there is a firm belief that maintained high animal welfare standards or improvements of animal welfare standards are achieved through a regulatory framework. This regulatory discourse is influenced by the belief that animal welfare is not a product attribute by which products with better or worse animal welfare should be differentiated but that good animal welfare is a universal requirement that all animals should have. In addition, the regulatory discourse frames the view that consumers do not purchase or demand animal welfare-friendly products simply because they do not need to worry about it, as long as they buy Swedish products.

Parallel to the regulatory discourse there is a view that the market has a role to play for the promotion of animal welfare. Market solutions are by most experts seen as a compliment to regulatory approaches that should be implemented in order to facilitate for consumers to purchase animal welfare-friendly products or as a way for the market actors to act responsibly. However, here one can identify a disparity between the Swedish experts mostly working in authorities or from civil society organizations and international experts or experts working within market actors. For the international experts as well as experts from market actors the belief in market solutions is more noticeable. For them, the role of the market is to implement animal welfare as part of its own structure and, thus, market actors can have a proactive role in demanding animal welfare as well as supplying it.

The trends and developments in policies on animal welfare are thus based on two different discourses; one regulatory and one market oriented. Although the regulatory discourse dominates in Sweden it is seen as complimented by the market discourse. The actual trends that have been identified by the experts relate to both of these discourses but are more often oriented towards market solutions, especially on the EU level.

**Conclusion to Part II: Market**

Part II of this report has dealt with market based measures to improving and promoting animal welfare. The three areas discussed here, willingness to pay, animal welfare labeling and procurement were identified as moving in a positive direction for animal welfare. However, the positive trends in all of these arenas were also accompanied by difficulties and doubts expressed by several experts.

The market oriented discourse, which encompasses the three areas in focus in part II, is, once again seen as a compliment to other animal welfare measures carried out by governmental actors. The possibility of consumers to drive development forward through the demand for animal welfare-friendly products seems to be supported by the Swedish consumers’ willingness to pay as presented in the Eurobarometer (2005; 2007). In the expert interviews a few agreed on this picture of high demand and saw it as an increasing trend. However, many of the experts also expressed doubts
towards the ability of consumers to influence the development as consumers were seen as not interested in animal welfare or simply not willing to pay for it. Only when it comes to procurement it was clearly expressed that governmental actors could influence the implementation of animal welfare in the supply chain, if they were given the chance to include animal welfare criteria in procurements.

The creation of an animal welfare label was highly desired by most experts under the argument that the more information you give to consumers the better. However, most experts in Sweden once again saw it as a compliment to high regulatory standards instead of leaving the choice to consumers of buying animal welfare-friendly products or products produced within “unfriendly” production systems. The culture of equivalence which was previously discussed in relation to the supply chain (see report no. 3: Supply Chain Report Sweden) is, thus, still an important factor that influences the view of animal welfare as well as possible measures of improvement in Sweden.

**General Conclusions to Report no. 6**

This report has focused on identifying trends and developments for animal welfare particularly in Sweden but also in the EU in general. The report has focused on several actors, their responsibilities as well as the implementation of different policies within these actors. The report has also looked closer at market measures and the developments within that sector. The general findings suggest that the regulatory discourse as well as the market oriented discourse influence the current trends in Sweden as well as the preferred development expressed by the experts. In the Swedish context in particular, the regulatory discourse is strong and there is a high trust in that the government and authorities will deal with animal welfare and provide it for all animals.

The Swedish experts’ preference of regulatory measures to improve animal welfare is strongly expressed but it is contradicted by the current EU development of animal welfare issues. In the EU, the market model is increasingly becoming the dominating discourse that guides animal welfare policies. The idea is that animal welfare will be improved through product differentiation and letting consumer demand for good animal welfare influence the supply of products. Considering that Sweden is a European actor that both influences the EU and is influenced by the EU the contradiction between the two discourses becomes apparent. The question that arises is whether the regulatory or the market oriented discourse will take the leading role in the future. In addition, it should also be asked which one of the two discourses should take the lead, and, who should be able to decide on which way to choose? Or is the preferred future one in which regulatory and market solutions coexist and build on each other for an improved animal welfare?

However, the present work on animal welfare has demonstrated that the implementations of animal based measures are not necessarily dependent on one of these two discourses. Experts preferring a regulatory approach as well as experts preferring market approach all agreed on the usefulness of animal based measures. In themselves, animal-based measures are neither good nor bad for animal welfare. That depends largely on how they are defined and implemented, as well as on perspective. One question raised by ABMs debate is that of trade-offs between different criteria as well as between control systems. Could better health and positive emotional experience compensate for
poor environmental conditions? If so, how is the decision made for what is most important –since there are limited resources for controllers- and who determines it.

Although sustainability is not a recurring theme throughout the paper, it deserves mentioning in trends and developments within animal welfare. Whether animal welfare should be defined as part of sustainability or pushed out of the discourse remains to be seen. The will to act sustainably was only mentioned by procurement experts. Currently, animal welfare has only questionable standing in procurement despite regulations allowing to consider sustainability issues in purchasing. This begs the question: is good animal welfare a part of sustainable production and consumption of food? Experts fear that discussions surrounding sustainability in terms of climate change will overpower animal welfare discourses in future food discussions. Some experts saw them as intertwined in that animal production and animal product consumption do have an impact on climate change, but whether that concern will include animal welfare is yet to be determined. On the other hand, sustainability might not be the discourse that pushes animal welfare forward and it should rather be understood in the context of rights or ethics.

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