



Ministry of Agriculture,
Nature and Food Quality

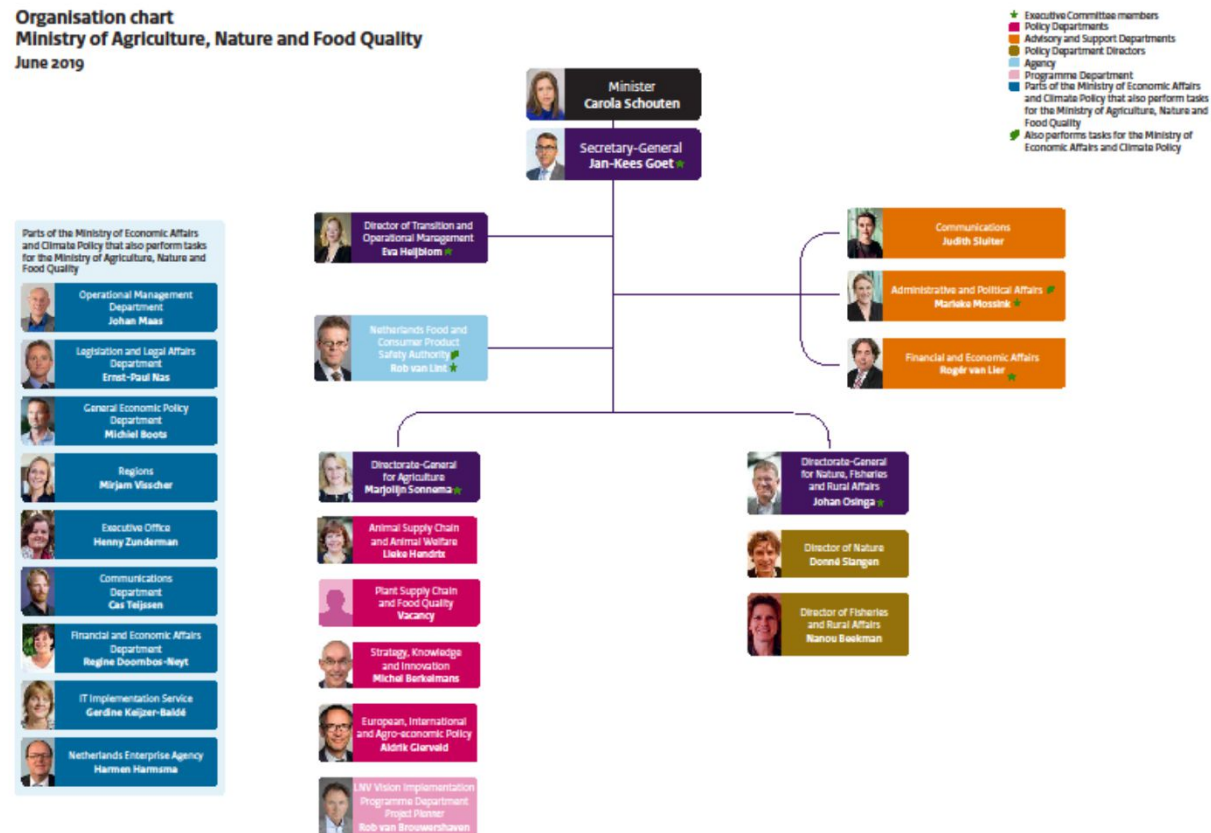
AW Focal Point activities, opportunities, challenges

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Animal Welfare Focal Point Netherlands

Organisation chart
Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality
June 2019





Dutch animal welfare policy

- Animals: living beings with own, intrinsic value (Animals Act)
- Good care for animals: moral duty, with extra efforts from companies: Integrate animal welfare into sustainable farming operations.
- Animals able to demonstrate natural behaviour and needs of animals should be fulfilled
- Minimum requirements in legislation (mainly via EU-directives and –regulations)
- Extra improvements via private initiatives & market





Basic rules NL: Animals Act + Decision & regulation on keepers of animals

- General housing and care standards (for all farm production animals)
- Specific housing and care standards for specific species (Laying hens, broilers, pigs, cattle/calves)





Relation with enforcement and industry representatives

- Enforcement /supervision: NL Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA)
- NVWA has thematic meetings on enforcement matters with industry organisations
- Ministry has high level consultations on policy matters with industry organisations



Reports & drafts from TAHSC and working groups

- Reports TAHSC received (2x/y)
- Reports Ad Hoc Groups
- Draft Chapters consulted with experts on animal welfare, from:
 - Ministry;
 - Wageningen Livestock Research (WUR) or Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UU);
 - KNMvD – Dutch Association of Veterinarians
 - Farmers organisations (LTO)
 - Ngo's (Dutch society for Protection of Animals)



Challenges

- Short time frames
 - EU tries to reach consensus for reaction
 - Try to achieve sufficient minimum standards (cf. EU)
 - Pursue a more level playing field (lpf)
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- Open standards difficult for lpf and to supervise/enforce
 - Animal based measures/criteria difficult for enforcement





Examples of open standards with challenges

- E.g. Space allowance:

Stocking density should not adversely affect normal behaviour of pigs and durations of time spent lying.

Allometric equation beneficial

(cf. EFSA Opinion 2005; $A = k \times W^{0.67}$)

- Preferable group housing of sows:

NL: Sows obligatory in group 4 days after service



Group housing sows

In NL:

in groups 4 days after service

(with minimum space allowance of 2,25 m²/sow; and $\geq 1,3$ m² solid)





Opportunities

- More attention to and discussion on use of animal based measures /criteria
- Animal based may complement criteria on design, environment, management (measuring outcomes)
- May be in future expansion of animal based measures/criteria in EU regulations (e.g. foot pad lesions broilers)