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Consumer Concerns About Animal Welfare And The Impact On Food Choice¹

**The nature of consumer concerns about animal welfare -
the German Focus Groups Report**

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Executive Summary

This report is about findings from five focus groups conducted in Northern Germany to explore consumer concerns about animal welfare and the impact on food choice. The focus groups were divided into two parts: a general discussion intended to address a list of topics and a discussion about various animal production systems shown in a video.

General discussion

- Health and food safety, followed by food production, were spontaneously the most frequently mentioned themes in relation to food. Food production and processing were often perceived to have an impact on food safety and human health.
- Modern animal based food production was largely negatively perceived, also on grounds of poor animal welfare.
- The specific issue of animal welfare in food production did spontaneously play a role in three of the four main focus groups. It is not really different from other specific issues in that it was spontaneously mentioned only by a minority of participants. Animal welfare should not be neglected in a list of specific spontaneous consumer concerns. The level of spontaneous awareness about animal welfare issues is similar to other specific issues about food production.
- When asked what animal welfare and appropriate keeping exactly mean, answers vary. Many people were ready to define animal welfare, in terms of certain perceived animal needs and conditions needed to assure them. On the other hand the concept of appropriate keeping (artgerechte Haltung) was felt to be inherently vague.
- Humans were seen to have an ethical responsibility to ensure that the animals they eat have a good life before slaughter. It was criticised that animals in modern animal farming systems are not treated as an end in themselves. Slaughter itself was not accepted as an ethical problem.

- Various advantages of 'animal friendly' products were proposed: Participants said to have a better conscience and feel better, when they live up to their perceived ethical responsibility. Some said that more animal friendly produced products taste better. A widely held opinion was that better animal welfare ensures better human welfare in the sense that the products are healthier.
- Stated reasons why people do not live up to their self-defined responsibility towards animals include repression and lack of imagination, everyday problems which absorb all energy, good taste and perceived nutritional value of animal products and also fatalism.
- Low trust in marketing claims was mentioned as a major obstacle for purchasing allegedly better animal products. A pre-packaged meat product marketed as appropriately and organically produced was much criticised and even ridiculed due to its plastic packaging. Some people became interested in the product only after the video, when the moderator drew attention to it. Marketing mix instruments perceived as inconsistent are a barrier to product acceptance.
- Many participants who bought animal products directly from farmers or butchers, trusted that these were 'animal friendly'. Others were more hesitant to trust their butchers. Organic production and high animal welfare were often equated. This points to the problem that due to lack of direct and reliable information on production processes, participants need to use alternative information as indicators.
- Price was mentioned as another important obstacle for buying more 'animal friendly' products, especially for people who do not have the opportunity to buy animal products directly on a farm. On the other hand, regular butchery customers did not think the prices for 'animal friendly' products too expensive. Low price animal based products in supermarkets were not trusted to provide high animal welfare.

Video discussion

- Production systems shown on the video and commented in the description were mostly disapproved, except for the outdoor systems. Participants did mostly not accept positive information about a production system, or played it down, when their spontaneous reactions to the video were negative.
- Views expressed about the systems were more unanimous than views about personal consequences.
- Participants found it difficult to differentiate between systems, when a lot of different ones were shown.
- Many participants were moved by the video and said it would influence their behaviour to some extent.

Section I: Introduction

This report has been prepared as part of the ongoing European research project 'Consumer concerns about animal welfare and the impact on food choice'. It presents empirical results of five focus groups conducted in Germany in January and March 1999.

It was the intention of the focus groups to contribute further towards understanding the nature and extent of consumer concerns about animal welfare, to shed light on meanings and consequences of animal welfare for consumers and on the perceived responsibility of consumers for animal welfare. It was further aimed to investigate the impact of concerns about animal welfare on food choice and willingness to pay. Finally factors affecting concerns, food choice etc. were hoped to be discovered.

The structure of this report is as follows: Section II explains the methodological approach taken. Section III summarises important findings from semi-structured discussions in the first part of the focus group sessions. The section reports findings concerning the main points set out in the discussion guide. Section IV reports reactions to the video on various animal production systems, shown in the second part of the group sessions. Section V discusses whether factors like gender, age, socio-economic status, region, pets and family impact on concern about animal welfare. Conclusions are drawn in section VI. Problems and limitations discussed in section VII.

Section VIII refers to the literature. The appendices in Section IX contain the discussion guide, a video description and the recruitment questionnaire.

Section II: Method

2.1. The Focus Group Method

The German literature reviews found numerous pieces of quantitative evidence on consumer concerns about animal welfare [Wildner (1998), Alvensleben, Köhler and Wildner (1998)]. But qualitative evidence as well as qualitatively grounded quantitative work was rare.

The current research project fills a methodological gap, as it has been designed to start with qualitative explorations and grows increasingly quantitative at later stages. Qualitative research, and focus groups in particular, can be used to explore research questions and also aid interpreting earlier quantitative work [Stewart and Shamdasani (1990), p. 141].

Focus groups are a very flexible qualitative research tool. This flexibility comes at the price that there is not always a consensus about when and how best to conduct them. Partly in contrast to Mangold, Nissen (1977, p. 64) argues that focus groups are best used if the investigated opinions are ordinarily formed and translated into behaviour in discussion like processes. The focus group should ideally be identical with the group that influences real life opinions and decisions.² Nissen concludes, that focus groups can produce more valid results than other methods in these conditions.

According to this argument, focus groups are not more valid than other qualitative methods, if food consumption and shopping are conducted relatively uninfluenced by others. If anything, focus group participants should constitute pre-existing groups, which allow these effects (if relevant) to be captured. Why then, were the participants of the presented focus groups selected to be complete strangers?³ The reason is that existing groups have pre-established lines of communication, which make results difficult to analyse. "Because communications are so sophisticated in these settings it makes analysis almost impossible" [Krueger (1994), p.88].

² Halk (1992) might have followed this advice. She interviewed existing groups.

Another point debated in the literature is whether or not to use homogeneous group compositions. Melchers (1994b, p. 34) suggests that since the fundamental role of focus groups is to unravel the structure of arguments about an issue, it is important to prevent consensus building among participants as far as possible. He therefore suggests heterogeneous group compositions. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990, p. 53) agree, that "the composition of the group has important implications for the outcome of the discussion". They, however, leave it open to the research objective, to determine the degree of homogeneity or heterogeneity, but state, that "many types of focus groups require only very generally defined groups of individuals".

Krueger (1994, p. 77) suggests that homogeneous groups should be sought for those characteristics which influence sharing within the group discussion. Sufficient variation may be allowed in (other) criteria to allow for contrasting opinions. In case of conflict between expected willingness to share opinions and expected range of opinions, he seems, from his personal experience, tend to favour the former. He recommends not to mix people of different lifestyles and life stages, but rather "either to conduct a separate series of focus groups with each segment or to target the most important group if resources are limited".

Due to resource limitations a compromise between the latter two expressed options was chosen for this research project: Mainly woman were interviewed, since they were in the literature reviews⁴ identified to be relatively consistently more concerned about animal welfare than man.

³ This goal was not always realised: three of the pilot focus group participants were relatives and the moderator suspects that about two to four woman in the village group already knew each other.

⁴ The national literature reviews are Cowan, Meehan, Winkless (1998) for Ireland, Miele, Parisi (1998) for Italy, Ouédraogo (1998) for France, Alvensleben, Köhler and Wildner (1998) and Wildner (1998) for

2.2. The Procedure

On the basis of literature reviews in all study countries (UK, Ireland, Italy, France, Germany) a semi-structured discussion guide was developed. The discussion guide as well as the video were refined after the pilot focus group⁵, held in January 1999. Both an original English and a translated German version of the discussion guide are presented in the Appendix. The discussion guide was not used to strictly structure the discussions, but more as a reminder for the moderator about which points needed to be addressed.

The main focus groups were conducted in Schleswig-Holstein, Northern Germany, in March 1999; two in a city (Kiel) and two in a town (Eckernförde). The revised discussion guide (see Appendix) was used to ensure that all topics of interest were covered.

Participants had to meet certain quota with regard to gender, age, socio-economic status, region and number of children. A recruitment questionnaire (see Appendix) was used to ensure certain other criteria (e.g. no vegetarians were wanted). It was difficult to meet the criteria for the male group and therefore in the end it was badly attended.

Participants were told in advance that the focus groups were to commence with a general discussion about food and that a video about different animal production systems was to be shown in the second part. They were also promised a financial incentive of DM 30,-, which was then given to them at the start of the focus group sessions.

Various recruitment techniques were employed. Announcements were published in newspapers and leaflets were distributed. Some recruitment took place outside of supermarkets. Telephone recruiting was intensively used for the town (Eckernförde).

The group compositions are shown in Tables 1 to 4. Artificial names are used to respect privacy. Three women's groups and one men's group were conducted.. Two of the women groups were in the age range 40 to 65 (Tables 1 and 4) and one 25 to 39 (Table 3). The

Germany and Harper, Henson (1998a) for the UK. A comparative literature review has been written by Harper, Henson (1998b).

⁵ Unless otherwise stated, both the pilot and the main focus groups will be analysed together in the later chapters.

male participants were all aged 25 to 30 (Table 2). Socio-economic status is divided into the two criteria education and household income before tax.

Table 1: Women's focus group, village, older age group

	Occupation	Age	Years/ level of education [⊗]	Income over or under DM 5000,-?	Children (number)	Size of household	Have pets?
Woman V40+1	Fish processing	51	11	Over	Yes	2	Yes
Woman V40+2	Housewife	58	High school, business and domestic science training	?	Yes (1)	2	Yes
Woman V40+3	Administration	58	18,5	Under	Yes	?	?
Woman V40+4	Retraining	41	13	Over	Yes (3)	3	No
Woman V40+5	Housewife	46	12	Over	Yes (1)	3	Yes
Woman V40+6	Housewife	49	Elementary school	Under	Yes	2	Yes
Woman V40+7	Housewife	40	Elementary school	?	Yes (1)	?	Dog, cats, fish
Woman V40+8	Administration	50	14	About DM 5000,-	Yes (1)	2	Yes
Woman V40+9	Retired	60	Social worker	Under	Yes (2)	1	No

Table 2: Men's focus group, village, younger age group

	Occupation	Age	Years/ level of education [⊗]	Income over or under DM 5000,-?	Children (number)	Size of household	Have pets?
Man V25+1	Accountancy	25-30	A-level	Under	No	?	?
Man V25+2	Student	27	A-level	Under	No	4	Dog
Man V25+3	?	30	12 years + professional training and university studies	Over	No	2	?
Man V25+4	Nursery school teacher	26	15	Under	No	1	No

[⊗] Years at school, professional training, university and other education were counted. Some people found it easier to mention their highest degree, which is then stated.

Table 3: Women's focus group, city, younger age group

	Occupation	Age	Years/ level of education ^A	Income over or under DM 5000,-?	Children (number)	Size of household	Have pets?
Woman C25+1	Construction	28	16	Under	No	2	No
Woman C25+2	Housewife, unemployed	32	A-level, medical university degree	Under	No	2	No
Woman C25+3	Student	26	A-level, apprenticeship, university studies	?	No	1	Used to have rabbits
Woman C25+4	Lecturer	31	University degree	Under	No	1	no
Woman C25+5	Housewife	37	14	Over	Yes (2)	4	Used to have a dog
Woman C25+6	Housewife	33	13 + 2 years retraining	Over	Yes (3)	4	Guinea pig
Woman C25+7	Student	26	18	Under	Yes (1)	3	No
Woman C25+8	Student	25	18	Under	No	1	No

Table 4: Women's focus group, city, older age group

	Occupation	Age	Years/ level of education ^A	Income over or under DM 5000,-?	Children (number)	Size of household	Have pets?
Woman C40+1	Housewife	40	15, social worker	Under	Yes (2)	3	Cats
Woman C40+2	Housewife	50	psychologist	Over	Yes (2)	4	?
Woman C40+3	Retired	60	10 + master in domestic science craft	Over	Yes (2)	2	Hens
Woman C40+4	Social worker	52	21, degree in social pedagogy	Over	Yes (1)	1	No, used to have mice
Woman C40+5	Retired	52	social worker, polytechnic degree	Under	Yes	2	?
Woman C40+6	?	58	16	Under	Yes	1	?
Woman C40+7	Housewife, student	61	A-level, learned insurance broker	?	Yes (3)	2	Used to have a bird, daughter has dog
Woman C40+8	Trainee	45	Psychologist	Under	No	2	?
Woman C40+9	Nurse	42	A-level, nurse, continues education	Over	Yes (2)	4	?

2.3. The Analysis

The groups were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Transcription was done by a professional company and checked. Since the more difficult parts of the interviews were left out by the company, these had to be transcribed by the moderator, since he seemed to have the best ears for it. He did also put in all the names, aided by minutes taken by focus group assistants.

The formatted transcripts were imported into NUD*IST. The text was read and coded. The most coding was done in two ways: The text was coded in categories which reflect the themes addressed in the interview guide and the table of contents for sections III to V of this report. These broad categories were then sometimes further coded, the coded text read and interpreted for this report. Free node coding was also used. Due to the limited time available, coding work has not be completely finished yet. Especially for the analysis in section V coding was not really sufficient. This also applies to the relation between various stated behavioural aspects and concern about animal welfare. A section on this important aspect is missing in this report.

Section III: Concern about food-related issues

3.1. Issues and Concerns

Initially all focus group participants were asked to note general associations, issues and concerns about food on a piece of paper and then to share their thoughts. This served to locate concerns about animal welfare in a wider context. I will not follow all strands which emerged in response to the introductory question and also restrict myself mainly to report on the notes taken by participants.

The importance of food was widely acknowledged. Food was noted to satisfy ones hunger, to taste good or bad, be delicious and enjoyable, to pose a temptation for some and to provide the opportunity to meet other people.

Yet one theme occurred more often than other themes. It is related to what a participant discovered to be implied in the German word for food ("Lebensmittel"), i.e. that food is vitally important and enables us to live. Healthy food was associated with bodily well-being, strength and curing effects and unhealthy food was seen to cause diseases and allergies. An important figure which emerged from the noted associations is the health and safety conscious consumer.

Health issues raised had many facets. Issues of food production and processing relevant in this respect were important (but quantitatively not most important) and are remarkable. Participants were concerned about food additives, animal feeding, BSE, swine fever, hormones and antibiotics given to animals and contained in food, food origin, natural versus artificial food, organic production, pesticides, genetic engineering and salmonella in battery eggs. These are examples for how concerns about health and food safety were interrelated with concerns about food production and processing.

Issues of food production less directly related to health and food safety include genetically modified food, food origin, factory farming and cruelty to animals, feeling sorry for chicken, products of the season, use of pesticides and general environmental impact.

Given the important role of health concerns overall, one is lead to suspect that these also play a role for some of the latter mentioned production issues. While this can be substantiated by parts of the discussion., other motives, like empathy with animals, identification with a particular region and environmental consciousness also have a role to play.

Looking at all issues raised, less issues related to food production than to health and food safety. Nevertheless, food production was one of the important areas. One is lead to suspect this to be a unique characteristic of food consumables as distinct from non-food consumables.

Most issues were expressed without specifically referring to either animal products and production or non-animal products and production. They were instead often applicable to either animal or non-animal products. About a quarter of coded text units of participant notes related to animal products or production and less to non-animal food products or production.⁶

Eleven of twenty nine participants who submitted notes to the moderator mentioned animal production in some way or another. All references were critical. Four people spontaneously addressed the perceived poor welfare of animals in the farming systems.⁷

Is this a lot or is it little? It is certainly little when compared to the 29 participants who mentioned items somehow related to health and food safety. It is also little when compared to the number of people who referred to an item related to overall food production. But these are not adequate comparisons, since both general health and food production are each divided into many specific subcategories. It is of little use to compare sub-categories and umbrella categories in this respect.

⁶ The numbers do of course again refer to percentages of coded text units and not raised issues. Many text units contain more than one issue. This and rounding differences lead to the result that the above percentages do not add up to 100.

⁷ Three people directly referred to poor animal welfare and cruel farming practices and five noted the catchall "factory farming". Two of the notes about "factory farming" were at the end of the item list and might have been added later in the discussion. After checking individual initial contributions to the focus groups only one person, who mentioned factory farming was included into the group of people concerned about animal welfare.

The following categories facilitate better comparisons: 9 participants noted items related to taste and sensory aspects, 8 items related to food origin, 6 items related to food price and costs, 5 items related to organic produce, 5 items related to genetically modified organisms (gmo's), 2 items related to BSE. Thus while animal welfare is spontaneously not the most prominent issue, it should not be neglected either. These results want to be qualified:

- Due to the statistically small number of 29 participants the random error is large.
- A single question is not enough to reveal with sufficient precision who is concerned about animal welfare and whether or in which way concern reflects in related purchasing habits or intentions. E. g. a woman who did not spontaneously mention animal welfare in response to the first question was one of the few people, who noticed that a tin of tuna on the table carried a "dolphin-friendly" label. Asked for issues related to animal-products, she spontaneously noted, that she would like to eat meat again without all these negative impressions in the back of her mind about how animals are reared or transported. On the other hand a woman, who mentioned factory farming as an issue, later showed strong reservations against too critical views about modern farming and was not willing to sacrifice buying bargain meat, even if that would be factory farm produced. However, her contribution was not included in the above calculations.
- Participants were probably strongly motivated by intrinsic factors to attend the focus groups.⁸ Intrinsic factors are most likely positively correlated with concern about animal welfare.
- Participants were seated around a table with many animal products, partly marked as from organic and/or animal friendly production. They were told during recruitment

⁸ This is so since a participant needs to overcome many good reasons against attending a focus group session. Yet the extrinsic motivation offered in the form of money (DM 30,-) was comparatively low compared to the likely opportunity costs. If the extrinsic motivation offered does not make up for the individual opportunity costs incurred, then an intrinsic motivation should be expected to be at work.

that the focus group discussion was on the subject of food products and that a video about different animal production systems would be shown.

As to the discussion which evolved when everybody subsequently shared thoughts, most contributions were again critical about modern food and food production. Issues raised more specifically in the area of animal welfare include the following: General and specific concerns about animal suffering in various production systems. Defence of slaughter as quick and relatively painless. Approval of eating animals but concern about animal welfare. Low prices as a cause of factory farming and cruelty to animals. Life transportation was regularly mentioned and criticised. Concern about highly sensitive pigs. Disapproval of keeping ostriches in Germany. Concern about what animals eat.

This subsection did not delve into a comprehensive analysis of spontaneous consumer concerns about food and food production. Instead it sketched some rough lines. Health and food production are major issues and areas of concern to people. The issue of animal welfare as a specific item was spontaneously raised in all female groups by one or two participants.

3.2. Meanings of animal welfare

What is the meaning of animal welfare? One class of responses referred to the inherent vagueness of the concept and of definitions in everyday life. ManT25+3 mentioned free-range geese seen as a child. They left a negative impression on him, since only a small area was allotted to them. Yet, he knew, that they were sold as "free-range". He therefore criticised, that the word might convey a good impression, where there is nothing to be impressed about. He also pointed to the possibly changed meaning of the term over time and supposed that the term was more strictly used some decades ago. Someone else defined "Artgerechte Haltung" (appropriate keeping) as "the animal cares for its own food and lives freely in nature". Somebody, who accepted this definition drew the conclusion, that there is no such thing as "artgerechte Haltung", since animals have long been bred into dependence on human care. The issue of trying to recover old farm animal species was raised.

Also the exact meaning of the term "Massentierhaltung" (factory farming) was discussed: A woman wasn't very happy to define factory farming as the ratio of animals per farm worker; widely supported were definitions of factory farming like "I believe factory farming starts when an animal cannot move around adequately" or "Factory farming is animals trapped in cages they will never leave"; other suggestions include "fattened in stalls", "not appropriately kept", "bad breeding", "fast rearing", "animals that are kept solely for the purpose of making a profit" "factory animal production".

It was felt that "a hen belongs out on the court-yard"; a farm with ten cows on a pasture was not regarded as factory farming; the more space an animal has the better it was seen to be for the animal; calves with the opportunity to suckle at their mother cows were taken as a sign of good animal welfare; the issue of climatic conditions was raised in connection with ostrich farming in Germany, which was disapproved of; animal welfare was taken as a prerequisite for animal health; better taste was associated with higher animal welfare by some people; participants with more direct experience of animals mentioned their need to conduct natural behaviour like wing-flapping of hens; provision of bedding material was spontaneously regarded as important by one person; animal food was several times wished to be natural; the general appearance of an animal, its coat and the proportions of its limbs were mentioned as indicators of animal welfare; large scale dairy farming was criticised as exploiting and degrading cows; good transport conditions were mentioned and regarded as important for assuring animal welfare.

In one focus group the moderator tried to probe further into how much space exactly participants would allot to pigs, in order to provide adequate conditions. One woman replied she would put a maximum of three to four pigs into a room the size of the meeting room in which the focus group was held (approximately 35 m²). She then hesitated to put numbers on it and called those numbers of the EU-Norm in the video description "horrible". Another woman replied, that they were not in a position to judge in any detail what was appropriate for pigs and cynically added, that of course, these EU-Norms somehow needed to be created. Thus there seems to be some apprehension against measuring animal welfare in numbers. Numbers in descriptions of production systems probably provoke different reactions than purely verbal descriptions.

Focus group participants did not know in advance that "concerns about animal welfare" would be of major interest. As the moderator drew attention closer to this point often slight confusions of words occurred: Animal welfare as indicated by the German word "artgerechte Haltung" was often not well distinguished from "Organic production". Further it was noticed that in the context of hens, "free-range" was often the word spontaneously used by participants.

A further class of statements relates to what animal welfare means to the interviewed person. Already mentioned was that some people perceived better taste. Other people argued that better animal welfare, like a free-range system with extensive grazing, would reduce animals susceptibility to diseases. Animals would therefore need less antibiotics and thus have positive effects on human health. Finally better conscience and a good feeling were mentioned, if one could be sure that the product claim about high animal welfare was valid. These points were spontaneously mentioned in the course of the discussions and were not prompted by the moderator's question about animal welfare. The issue is again taken up in the section on "advantages and disadvantages of higher animal welfare".

3.3. Sources and reliability of information

Information about food production used in the course of the discussions, was mostly drawn from the media, especially television and newspapers. They were confidently referred to, to underpin the expressed views and concerns. Directly asked, the Media was still seen as the major supplier of information. But then there was also concern about the quality of media information. Still, its important role was often acknowledged.

Another important source of information was direct experience, which was often referred to by people with contact to animals and farming in their childhood, people who live or used to live in rural areas and participants who have or had direct contacts to farmers.

The perceived low reliability of information at point of purchase was seen as a major problem. Claims about food production standards on product labels were often not trusted

very much, especially by non-purchasers of specific brands and people with no additional prior information. Thus it was questioned whether the claim "appropriate keeping" would really constitute high welfare standards for the respective animals. Distrust of product claims was frequently mentioned as a major inhibiting factor for adopting purchasing patterns more in line with consumer concerns about food production.

Interactions between marketing claims about food production and other indicating factors were important for the level of trust given to claims. A frozen broiler presented on the table during some discussions was temptingly labelled as "Prädikatshähnchen" with claims about guaranteed health of the chicken and antibiotic-free food. When asked the women were unsure about whether or not the chicken was produced under 'factory farm' conditions. Once the moderator mentioned the surprisingly low price, this uncertainty was removed. It then seemed obvious that the broiler was produced in an ordinary barn system under cramped conditions. Plastic-packaging of meat posed a stumbling-block for several participants. It was hard for them to believe that something was produced better, while the packaging itself was less preferable compared to non-packed meat.

Some people argued, that production was important to them. But since they saw only scant and hardly reliable information available to them, and furthermore, they could not easily check out the farmers themselves, they would, as a compromise, buy only products of their own region. Reputation of certain supermarkets like 'Aldi' or 'Real' was not very good. These were sometimes alleged to have animal products produced under inferior conditions.

Some participants were surprised to hear egg-declarations to be legally defined. This increased their trust in labels for "free-range" or "barn" eggs significantly. Towards the end of two discussions individuals said that due to this information, they would consider to change future egg-purchasing behaviour.

3.4. Responsibility for animal welfare

Generally accepted was the right of humans to kill animals for food. Here human interests were viewed as more important than the interests of (other) animals. "Slaughter is the natural death of an animal". This is how a woman defended the 'right to kill animals'. She strongly disagreed with 'current' tendencies to protect animals from slaughter and overemphasis on concern about animal welfare, as "there are more pressing problems in this world". Several women used to have contact to farm animals during their childhood. They often explained that they were taught by their family that animals are reared for food and remembered not to have had problem with it as a child. A remark in a different context by one of these woman however seems to cast doubt on that the slaughter she seems to have witnessed as a child, was an easy and natural experience.⁹

Other women whose parents used to keep fewer animals for their own food supply reported that a personal bond between themselves and the animal developed and that they then either persuaded their parents not to slaughter or they were emotionally not able to eat the meat of that animal. Grown up, one of these women concludes about this: "One good point about factory farming is that it provides a certain distance to the animal, which I found necessary for eating meat."

Given the fact that no one disagreed with the primacy of human everyday interests over (other) animals right to live, it is not easy to expect that consumers have ethical or altruistic concerns for animal welfare. This is however what was often expressed, even if not always by those arguing for the legitimacy of slaughter: Animals were seen to have an end in themselves, independent of their function as means for satisfying human needs. Modern methods of food production were criticised for not respecting the genuine interests of animals. Criticism of modern factory farming and food production was often put forth very emotionally. Humans as the most conscious beings were seen to have an

⁹ In a very lively situation of the group discussion she said, as if talking to herself: "It was nice at grandpa's, even if the slaughter" (the sentence was uncompleted in the transcript). As a lay in psychology the author was reminded of a psychological mechanism whereby a child and the later adult would defend inherently cruel actions of a loved person. Both defence of slaughter (defence of an inherently cruel action) and emotional attachment to the slaughterer were apparent in the account this woman.

obligation for the welfare of weaker and more dependent animals. Some women spontaneously admitted to feel bad and have a bad conscience, when they buy meat.¹⁰

Directly asked, whether the participants felt themselves responsible for the welfare of the animals they eat, the impact of consumption behaviour and therefore an indirect responsibility was acknowledged. At the same time, participants explained, why they or other people did not always live up to their perceived responsibility: Price, lack of trustworthy information, repression, lack of imagination¹¹, "other problems in everyday life", "have to care for the men in my family who want meat", a sense of powerlessness ("not everybody does it", "the consequence would be to become vegetarian"), taste of meat, and meat seen as a valuable food.

Some of those who were not prepared or not able to take personal consequences, and others, called upon the role of legislation. Increased prices were proposed and worries about the social implications expressed at the same time. Most often the following personal consequences were demanded to ensure that human responsibility for animals is met: to eat less meat and to be more critical when buying meat, i.e. one should buy meat only where it's origin and production can be trusted.

3.5. Advantages and disadvantages of animal welfare standards

Higher animal welfare was seen to impose restrictions on production methods and therefore increase prices. This was regarded as bad for consumers but certainly good for animals and some believed it would be good for farmers in the sense of securing farm incomes.

Some participants believed a legislative approach towards improving animal welfare would assure farmers incomes and create work. Others feared for loss of German farmers competitiveness due to higher production costs, should Germany unilaterally tighten laws.

¹⁰ In contrast to those views, a man asserted, it made not difference to him whether he bought non-animal products or meat. He however also admitted not to like the look of raw meat. During the pilot focus group a teenage girl said she would not think about animal welfare at all when shopping.

Some women said to already take consequences and buy animal products from selected farmers who they trust. The products were often, but not always, attributed a better taste. The problem of meat shrinkage during preparation was associated with poor production systems, who also provide only poor animal welfare. On the other hand, animal products from systems caring better for the needs of animals were frequently associated with animal products healthier for humans. Worries over salmonella for battery eggs, antibiotics, hormones, narcotics, BSE and swine fever for meat were mentioned. Better welfare was seen to make animals more disease resistant and would therefore demand less animal drugging.

People said to feel better about the products and have a better conscience as one would live up to one's ethical obligation. Negative personal consequences mentioned were higher costs, less flexibility and more planning needed for shopping, as the wanted animal product might not be immediately available.

It was expected generally that consumers would have to eat less animal products, due to a decline in total animal production. This was often seen desirable and considered to have a favourable impact on human health. Others were more sceptical about the expected or needed decline in total production. A woman deplored that one would then have to queue for meat like in Russia. One participant replied, that there is enough idle land waiting to be used in Germany, to assure both better animal welfare and an adequate meat supply. On more aesthetic grounds it was considered a desirable goal to have more outdoor keeping of animals again. The landscape would become nicer then.

One woman expressed concern about putting too much of the world's limited resources into higher animal welfare, while there were more pressing problems for humanity.

3.6. Willingness to pay for improved animal welfare

Price was often mentioned as an important obstacle to purchasing food products from better systems. People who e.g. buy bargain meat at supermarkets asserted that they could not afford to buy higher priced meat from butchers, market stall or organic brands. While

¹¹ "I don't think about the animal when I buy animal products."

they criticised the price of DM 30,- per Kilo for beef marketed as providing for better animal welfare, regular butchery customers were not astonished about the price.

Willingness to pay differed by kind of question posed. Someone e.g. claimed to sometimes buy free-range eggs up to 100% more expensive than ordinary battery eggs. Later asked to state a percentage premium he would be willing to pay for free-range eggs he answered "about 25%". Further probing revealed that the premium depends on the type of product and especially the initial price level. Thus the participant explained, he would certainly not want to pay a 100% premium on beef, as this would strain his budget unduly, whereas 100% on eggs could maybe be accepted. A woman mentioned that according to a newspaper article only DM 50,- additional costs per year and household would arise, should the household buy free-range instead of battery eggs.

Interactions between price and trust were observed: People who trusted, that a product was better were more willing to pay a high price. A low price was sometimes seen as an indication for 'factory farming'; on the other hand, a high price for organic-animal products was sometimes considered as a marketing-trick without any quality benefits. It also needs to be noted that high trust does not always lead to according purchases: One woman with high personal priority for food reported that she wanted to buy a chicken on the market from a farmer certified by 'VgtM' (society against cruel factory farming in Germany). When she was told the price, she changed her decision, as it was too expensive for her and decided not to buy any chicken at all, in spite of her conviction that the chicken had been very well produced.

The priority given to nutrition versus other needs and whether or not an individual considered it important to economise food purchases, were important determinants for people's willingness to pay, also for improved animal welfare. These determinants did not always coincide with household income.

While the priority given to food seems important for people's decision about which quality they prefer and also the general acceptance of higher prices for quality, there is also a tendency towards price-conscious shopping within a given quality segment.

Section IV: Farm animal production systems

A video of alternative production systems for eggs, broilers, pork, beef and veal was shown in the second half of the focus groups. It was intended to facilitate discussion about production systems and animal welfare. After each sequence the video was stopped to allow for more in depth discussion. A description of each system was read out either simultaneously with the video or as part of the succeeding discussion. In this chapter responses to these video clips are summarised as well as issues related to the measurement of animal welfare.

4.1. Eggs

4.1.1. Battery cages

The initial response to the first sequence, images of battery egg production, were slightly mixed, in that people were verbally¹² alarmed but also mentioned to know battery chicken in worse states than those on the video.¹³ Responses to the video description were even more unequivocal to the negative. "This is what I understand to be factory farming", "It is disgusting", "terrifying", "this is what scandals are made from", "one doesn't want to see it", "no daylight"; "non-stop eating and egg laying", "irresponsible", "we should walk out on the street", "who passes these laws, this is cruel, why is it still allowed?", "it is free-range, isn't it? (ironic)" are some of the spontaneous responses to either the video or the description.

It was not always easy to probe reactions. Some participants became upset when they were asked why exactly they regarded battery cages as cruel or when the moderator attempted to invoke positive aspects. Reasons given for dislike of the battery system include: Lack of opportunity to perform natural behaviour, "they can't properly stand on the wire", "the feet get deformed and die away", "they don't live, they only vegetate", "they cannot turn around", "they always stand on the same spot", "aggressions", "the animals are too cramped", "hens have a pecking order and therefore it is wrong that they

¹² As to the non verbal side: people generally appeared interested and concentrated on the images.

¹³ Notably people were surprised that the hens still had their plumage.

cannot escape from each other", "how often do stock-keepers walk in there to take out the dead hens?", "They were scared and nervous, maybe due to the cameras", "If I imagine myself in a tiny little room with many other people, I would possibly be just as intimidated", "they've had it", "they had dirty feathers", "you cannot call it life anymore, what they have there, it is much too cramped, and also their feet, words loose meaning, when I see that", "there is no quality to life anymore, there is nothing, nothing that serves their needs, it is pure cruelty", "machines", "they are being used and that's it", "they've never seen the sun", "no daylight", "don't know, the eggs probably have poor quality, too", "We mustn't buy it anymore, that's the only thing we can do".

Criticism of feather-picking was contended since it was thought to also occur in free-range systems. Also the view that hens have wings they want to use was debated: While not all birds fly, one woman said that her hens did fly and spend the night on a tree.

No positive aspects for the hens themselves were acknowledged. A proposition that cages provide shelter from natural enemies was ridiculed. It was acknowledged that there are certain advantages for 'the people' in that eggs do not need to be gathered by hand and that they are always clean.

4.1.2. Barn systems

Overall the barn system was – a bit - more positively perceived than the cage system. It was appreciated that the hens could move more freely and maybe conduct their natural behaviour as scratchers and that there were different floor layers, perches and also nests for egg-laying.

It was criticised that the hens did still not have enough space, outdoor access, sunlight or fresh air. Upon probing it was argued that light is needed by all living beings. Since we have it as humans, we should also allow other creatures to have it. The system was not seen to assure high animal welfare or be in any way ideal.

In some groups the related video description was read out after the video. Many were shocked by the description, as was apparent from non-verbal behaviour. A participant described conditions as cruel and suspected that antibiotics needed to be deployed due to

poor hygiene as droppings and dirt could not be properly removed. This was seen as a disadvantage compared to the battery system. Another participants expected the birds to have more contact to humans as the barn would have to be cleaned out regularly. He considered human contact as a positive factor for animal welfare. The numbers of "25 birds per m² floor space" and "15 cm perch per bird" were negatively perceived. It was critically asked, who determined these numbers.

"The food is given directly onto the droppings, the chicken therefore also eat their own droppings", is what somebody remembered to have read. Another woman reported that friends of her used to have turkey-hens, which were similarly kept. She said they eat a lot and hardly move and therefore fatten quickly. Once her friends went into the barn and four turkeys died by shock. She supposed, the hens in the video never to see daylight and have an artificial day-rhythm.

4.1.3. Free-range systems

Spontaneous reactions to the free-range system's pictures were generally positive: "This is of course ideal", "it is their natural environment", or even delighted: "How nice, our hens used to run around just the same", "how nice", "oh, yes, how nice it is there", "very good". More detailed reasons given for the assumed high welfare of the hens include: "can scratch on the floor", "can drag out a worm from the soil, if they find one", "can properly pick", "can enjoy the sun", "look healthier", "can breed" and "dust bath".

Some of the spontaneously raised critical points were: "A barn is missing, in which they can hide from the rain."¹⁴ It was often noticed that, normally there is no grass where free-range hens are kept.¹⁵ "The eggs need to be collected.", "One needs a lot of space", "They cost more.", "you might accidentally get eggs that are half breed, if you don't find them in time", "I didn't like the cooks jump around in between the hens, since as a consumer I don't want to eat impregnated eggs".

¹⁴ Somebody else replied that they will of course have it somewhere, but was simply not shown in the video.

¹⁵ At this point several participants suspected deliberate manipulation of the open-air setting for the video production.

As to the video description, some participants did not find it very easy to believe, that free-range chicken should be more vulnerable to diseases like salmonella. "Since salmonella are really dangerous for humans", some woman said, "one should really prefer the previous systems. I'm quite surprised." One woman said that as a consequence, also free-range hens needed to get some sort of medical treatment. Somebody else replied, one should make everything smaller.

In one group salmonella were taken to debate the priorities given to either human or animal welfare. Some people clearly considered each issue to have its own right. One woman accordingly had difficulty to decide what to do in case of conflict – it sounded like she would consider to buy the more healthy eggs, but would not be happy about it. A woman who regularly purchased organic-food said, that like life itself, nutrition was not without risk – she sounded like she would go for the more ethically correct eggs in case of conflict, but she also believed she could evade the problem by only eating fairly fresh eggs. Someone emphasised that the risk of salmonella infection is high only, if eggs are not cooked. A woman, who kept free-range hens herself tried to resolve the conflict in that she personally perceived salmonella to be a minor risk compared to hormones and antibiotics – and added that anyway we also drive cars. Yet another woman emphasised that it is an ethical question and that we as humans have a responsibility to keep animals properly. It was noted that today's food is at least as healthy as that of our ancestors.

A moderators remark that modern free-range egg production was not small scale anymore was commented as follows: "Small-scale free-range systems are not profitable anymore", "yes, free-range today means 20, 30 or 40 hens", "and even more", "but at least they have a certain open-air area for themselves" One man was very much surprised that free-range hens legally have a minimum space of as much as 10m².

Overall, it was clear throughout all focus groups that animal welfare was rated highest in the free-range system. The stated reasons were presented in this section.

4.2. Broilers

4.2.1. Barn

People were shocked when they saw the pictures of the barn production system for broilers. The video showed an artificially lighted barn with innumerable white feathered broilers crammed on the floor. This made a strong impression: "Those are masses!", "It is like in Japan", "No. Life is certainly not that bad in Japan", "Good heavens!" "I'm losing my appetite" .

People saw the system to provide very poor animal welfare: "I wouldn't want to live there as a hen", "and not as a person", "It stinks there, definitely", "It is lame", "manure", "One hen picks out the eyes of the neighbour hen", "They pick out the dead ones every morning and every evening", "They shit on the floor and have to walk in the shit non-stop? Nobody cleans it up, nothing – this is cruel to the broiler hens", "Light and temperature can be controlled? How, how can there be fresh air in that hall with thousands of hens and they shit everywhere, there can't be any air in there. Sorry, but I've never seen it as brutal as that", "It is disgusting and one really wonders, whether one should stop eating meat".

Some people worried, how each broiler hen could get enough food and water, since they perceived the broiler-hens hardly capable of walking and did not see enough free space to allow movements. Even prior to the video description build-up of droppings was seen to pose a problem and threaten animal health. Medical treatment of the animals was seen to have to follow suit.

The video description mentioned several damages that the barn keeping system inflicted on the broiler hens. "But will they live long enough to experience it?" was a sarcastic response of one woman.

The moderator asked a man what he would answer, if somebody thought this keeping system all right for broiler hens. The man replied "It would surprise me just as much as when somebody said it for the battery cages".

4.2.2. Outside Rearing of hens for meat

There were less reactions and discussions on this system, which all in all was nevertheless preferred to the barn system. People seemed however less enthusiastic compared with the pictures of the free-range battery system. One woman said that she did not think these broiler hens to be really happy.

On the issue of the measurement of animal welfare, it was again said that the video-description seemed counter-intuitive: Generally animals kept closely together were believed to be more vulnerable to diseases, like e.g. salmonella. Some participants wanted to know whether the broilers were male or female. They disapproved of keeping more than one cock with many hens on welfare grounds. One participant expected that the broiler hens reared outside unlike the barn broilers do not pick each other.

One woman argued that the meat quality of broiler-hens reared outside was better due to the stronger muscles of the animals.

4.3. Pork

4.3.1. Tethered

Less spontaneous verbal reactions were observed for this system than for the egg productions systems. It needs to be kept in mind that participants had already gone through about 90 minutes of the focus group sessions and that concentration therefore declined.

Probing revealed the following responses: "terrible", "cruelty to pigs", "not nice", "unnatural". One woman got impatient¹⁶ when asked, what were the measures to assess the welfare of these pigs: "It is always the same, they are crammed, inside a building, no outdoor access, no fresh food – hens, pigs and next probably cows, it is the same with them."

¹⁶ Maybe the discussion was getting too long for her, as she was a smoker and a bit later said to urgently need a cigarette.

A moderator's remark that he had recently interviewed¹⁷ somebody who believed that pigs could easily adapt to these conditions, provoked massive protest: "Pigs are highly sensitive", "Especially pigs have a very sensitive circulation", "It is all very well known", "They are very intelligent and sensitive", "Their whole body is very similar to the human body", "They very much suffer from stress, some die on the lorry, they don't stand stress at all", "Yes also, in those Stalls they die from exhaustion", "They stand upright all the time, can't lay down and can't wallow", "They did feel just like those hens in the first pictures", "TETHERED?!", "They can't even move their heads, maybe that's even worse than the battery cages for hens"¹⁸, "absolutely no way to move", "They can't move in their boxes", "They are tethered", "They are pregnant, they need to lay down"¹⁹, "It is a perverted form of antenatal care", "It is dirty in their stall", "Pigs want to wallow".

Some participants were again surprised, that the video description justified what was perceived as bad keeping conditions and poor animal welfare with the argument of lower risk of diseases. This ran contrary to participants intuition, that high animal welfare reduces animal susceptibility to diseases. Other consequences of the system were debated: "Pigs fatten faster, if they don't move", "We don't want to eat fat, but meat", "It is not natural anymore", "Pork shrinks in the frying pan".

A man said, that he considered this to be an example of bad practice, but knew from own experience that there are also good practice farmers.

4.3.2. Stalls

Similar to the previous system, reactions to the video images shown for this system were unambiguously negative. The following spontaneous responses were given: "They look bad", "They can't lay down", "It is even worse", "I don't see the difference to the first system", "Not nice", "The other pictures were nothing compared to these", "Is that a dead one in there?"²⁰, "Good heavens", "Yes, it is bad", "We can't do it.", "They can't even

¹⁷ Which was not the case.

¹⁸ There was debate on this point.

¹⁹ While one woman did initially not believe that there was enough space for the sows to lay down, this point was successfully contended by other women. Nevertheless there was agreement that the system was not good for pregnant sows.

²⁰ This association occurred more than once, but also disagreed with.

move one step back", "The stall is so optimally used. This is pure factory farming", "It reminds me of hospitalism", "Yes, intelligent animals get it too, if they are kept like that". Probing lead to criticism of too little space per pig, which was seen to stress the pigs²¹ It was then added that one could tell the stress in the taste of the meat.

Reactions to the video description were very sceptical: Some believed the pigs had injured backs and were therefore not protected from injury, as claimed in the video description. Others believed the sows were only marked with red paint. On any account, "they won't be very happy". "Personally, I found this to be even worse than the previous system. This is pure factory farming and the video description tried to justify it.", "Pigs won't harm each other, if they have enough space, they are not like people.", "Where do the aggressions originate? Is it not because of the way they are reared or breed?", "Aggression is one form to cope with stress", "It is an insidious argument", "The company that rears them only wants to make a profit, the truth is, that they don't care about the well-being of the pigs."

Some participants were asked to judge the physical health of the pigs. A psychologist said, the mental health was bad. She expected that antibiotics were given and referring to the video supposed, that they might therefore be less ill, but not healthy in a positive sense. She considered the pigs too heavy for their bones and felt that they would stand too long. She also criticised the slatted floor.

More generally it was noted that in contrast to the first video, there was not a stone floor but that it was slatted. One woman said that she knows of a much nicer system whereby very few pigs get a little hut on a pasture. The pigs could choose when to be in their hut or when to leave it. If necessary many huts could be used and could therefore replace the stall.

Finally, one group was asked, what needed to be changed to improve the conditions. A woman, who earlier admitted, to often buy meat gave the following answer: "The stall has to be opened, they should be allowed to run around, to forage in the mud and other things, but there is nothing. They eat, drink, die – in order to be eaten.

²¹ However this was not a spontaneous association since stress was mentioned in the probing question.

4.3.3. Farrowing Crates

Some spontaneous responses: "They can suckle", "Oh dear, so many", "The small ones will be lucky if they don't end up as sucking pigs", "They need to be careful, not to be crushed by the sow"²² "The mother can't turn around" "They can't even get up, if the piglets get too silly", "Aren't they sweet these little piglets?", "Yes, very nice, but I don't think *that* is nice", "Didn't we already see that?", "I mean, people do construct and organise that, that's what terrifies me", "The narrowness terrified me. She couldn't even move properly.", "What sort of environment is that for piglets?", "They are bored", "The metal rods remind me of prison and prison is nothing nice".

One woman positively noted that both piglets and sow looked healthy and fresh. Others admitted, that it was clean. Nevertheless it was believed to be healthier for pigs to wallow in mud. A short discussion embarked on whether pigs still need to wallow when they are kept in a stall, if there are no insects. Somebody emphasised that pigs need to forage and eat roots.

Upon probing one woman remarked that of the pigs seen so far, all looked the same: "Not that one was fat and the other slim, or had either long hair or short hair, they looked all the same, just like marzipan pigs". This prompted the seriously meant question whether the pigs were genetically modified.

Again there was disagreement with the video description.²³ The point that sows naturally seek secluded areas in order to give birth was not accepted as an argument for the farrowing crates. A man doubted that a sow would accidentally lye down on her piglets under natural conditions, but could imagine that this to happen in confined boxes. He concluded: "I think it is somehow perverted to use this argument as a justification for this system". Other participants got cynical and aggressive about the justification given for the farrowing crates, i.e. that it is used to stop the sow accidentally lying down on her piglets and crushing them. When the moderator probed these reactions, it was either tried to play down the problem for the piglets, or to accept it as the lesser evil, or to demand larger boxes so that both the impediment of the sow's movement and the hazard for the piglets

²² One woman replied that this would not occur in the farrowing crate system.

could be solved. Again it was suspected that the video description was influenced by vested interests and utter distaste shown for the neglected interests of the sow.

4.3.4. Loose Housing

Responses to this system were mixed. Initial responses are "Yes, the sow likes it", "That pig laughs", "What a difference", "It even wags its tail", "It still has its curly tail", "These look quite happy", "Maybe they have outdoor access", "How nice, the sun shines through the window", "It can scrub itself properly".

These were followed by remarks like "That one looks like it is going to tumble in a minute"²⁴, "Nevertheless, they don't look very happy – they are lethargic", "They don't have a lot of exercise either", "Yes, of course it is still factory farming. But it is nicer because they can turn around and root in the straw and they can probably leave the box", "One of them was looked up", "It is too cramped, it is also cruel, it is also a factory animal", "It is better, but not ideal", "The slatted floor area is not very nice for them"²⁵, "Maybe this is the best system achievable between the extremes of factory farming and relatively good animal welfare, if we want to eat the same amount of meat in the long term".

The different responses were probably evoked because initially only focus pictures were shown and then the camera went on to show the entire hall. Participants themselves noticed the turnaround in their comments. Initially the pigs seemed happier, because they had some straw, walls to scrub themselves, more space, they were not forced to stand still all the time. Also there were fewer pigs shown on the initial pictures. Then as the picture showed more of the stall, the walls, the slatted floor and the relatively little straw provided were criticised. It was positively noted that the pigs had the opportunity to socialise. Others criticised that the place was still much too confined and no outdoor access.

²³ The video description was not identically introduced in every focus group. In some groups the moderator explained that the description could not be seen as the ultimate truth and invited criticism.

²⁴ This view was contested by other participants.

Prompted by descriptions of earlier shown systems, it was discussed whether or not the litter was a breeding ground for diseases. Different views were held on whether the pigs were sufficiently allowed to express their natural behaviour in this system.

In retrospect there is some doubt, whether all groups sufficiently understood the system. Maybe this was due to the fact that some participants had difficulty concentrating at this point.

Compared to the systems shown earlier loose housing was seen to allow for the highest animal welfare and lowest stress.

4.3.5. Outdoor Systems

The outdoor system was seen to provide the highest welfare of all systems shown. Reactions were very positive: "That makes all the difference, they look much livelier", "She has all her piglets around her", "That's great", "This is how it should be", "Pigs are very curious", "ideal", "This time one could appreciate the piglets", "They were able to wallow in mud, real mud, not shit", "They could play and express their natural behaviour". People also expressed their liking of the system in animal like sounds.

Participants expected a better and leaner meat, as the pigs had more exercise and more muscles. They also expected the meat to be more expensive.²⁶ When the moderator threw in the point that intra-muscular fat content could be higher, a woman answered that the meat was juicier then.²⁷

The moderator some groups whether they would still prefer the free-range system, if it lead to environmental pollution, due to build up of excrements etc. They replied that ordinary farmers also pollute the environment and often apply too much manure or slurry to their land. Similar to the egg declarations 'free-range', 'barn' and 'battery', participants suggested to consider introducing legal definitions for different beef production systems.

²⁵ This statement prompted the response that it is still better, than if they had to walk and wallow in their own excrements.

²⁶ The reason given was that the outdoor systems are more labour intensive. This is generally not correct.

4.3.6. Finishing Indoors

Not a lot of spontaneous responses were given to this system. The slippery and slatted floor was criticised. People listened to the video description. In general there was no time left to probe.

4.4. Beef

4.4.1. Outdoor system

This system was generally preferred over the indoor system. "It is maybe not the optimum but nearer to the optimum." Reasons given were considered similar to those for the other systems: "The animals can move around outside freely, they can get their food from nature."

A man, slightly more critical, added that not all breeds could be kept outdoors all year. Some discussion embarked on this point. Modern breeds were considered to be more prone to diseases than traditional and some imported breeds. The pain inflicted on cattle by de-horning them was not criticised but accepted as a long established common practice. It was said to reduce the likelihood of injury to farmers.

4.4.2. Indoor system

A system in which cattle is continually kept indoors was considered unusual practice, although individual examples were reported and condemned. The free-range system was regarded as superior to the indoor system. The video description was again criticised to put bad practice in a positive light.

²⁷ This woman was more than average concerned about the production of animal food. She bought her meat from a personally known farmer.

4.5. Veal

4.5.1. Typical Veal Crates

Verbalised spontaneous responses related to animal welfare were unambiguously negative: "It looks sad", "tethered", "Oh, what a pity", "The only thing they can do is eat, eat and stand", "And grow quickly", "The name already says it: Veal *production*", "Of course are they vulnerable to diseases under these conditions", "awful", "They don't have any social contact, nothing", "Especially the young animals still need their mothers and don't want to be cooped up and feed with a bucket or artificial udder". People also associated these poor keeping conditions with animal diseases, hormones and antibiotics. It was mentioned that finally humans eat the meat.

The problems mentioned in the video description were considered valid and were further discussed. One woman wondered why the description of the beef system was so positive while that of the veal system so negative. The responsibility of consumers for welfare problems associated with white veal was seen to be high.

4.5.2. Grouped Housing

Grouped housing was preferred over typical veal crates, but neither system was considered optimal. Welcomed was that grouped housing allowed more freedom to move. People asked, whether the calves also have outdoor access.

4.6. Comparative video discussion

It was proposed that bigger animals need more space than smaller animals. Some animals like hens were said to need a refuge, in contrast to others like cows. It should be decided by experts how animal welfare of a specific species is to be assured.

Other people attempted to define the ideal production system for animals in general terms: Animals should be allowed to express their natural behaviour, e.g. pigs want to wallow in mud and hens need to scrape the ground. One woman emphasised she regarded daylight also as important. She was surprised that "in large parts off today's animal

production, animals do not see daylight". "In an ideal production system", one woman said, "the animals themselves can decide, when to go outside and wallow and when to go inside to lay an egg, just as they want – this is what appropriate²⁸ means to me."

Section V: Discussion

This section serves to discuss if and how concern about animal welfare is influenced by factors like focus group method, gender, age, socio-economic status, region (rural or urban), family and contact to animals. It will also look at the impact of animal welfare concerns on food choice.

5.1. Gender

Due to limited resources available for the project, a decision had to be taken as to which groups to target with focus groups. Women were in the literature review identified as on average more concerned about animal welfare than men. Therefore three of the four main focus groups were women groups and only one men.

Recruitment of male participants proved more difficult than recruitment of women. This experience was already made during the pilot group, where a mixed group of people were asked to attend but only women turned up. This effect might be due to male people being generally more hesitant to attend events like focus groups, do voluntary work etc.²⁹ On the other hand male people might simply be less interested in food and in a personal evaluation of food production systems – maybe because they don't need to. While many housewives participated, no male housekeeper was found. Maybe women are also more health conscious than men.³⁰

Some effects like liveliness of discussion and emotional commitment could be attributed to either gender or group size. Both smaller groups and the male group needed more prompting by the moderator. No male person admitted to have a bad conscience when

²⁸ She used the German word "artgerecht".

²⁹ This is a suggestion. The author has no statistics at hand on the topic.

buying meat, whereas some women said so.³¹ There were both a man and some women who regarded the appearance of 'fresh' meat generally or that presented during the focus group as "disgusting". When asked about the reasons for not buying animal products with higher assured animal welfare, both men and women mentioned as the two most important reasons the higher costs and lack of trust in that the production process really is better. Both were concerned about marketing tricks.

Some women reported that their men liked meat more than they did. Most of these women were tolerant of it. One woman, who works in construction as a builder and belonged to the highly concerned women where concern seemed to have an impact on behaviour, said to understand to a certain degree, if somebody (a man) who physically works hard wants to eat meat – sometimes, not often, even she needed it. During the video section the moderator asked a woman, why the video and television programmes on animal husbandry seemed to have an effect on her and on her behaviour and how at the same time her husband could behave so differently. She answered that a) he doesn't watch those TV programmes and b) his attitude is that all food is poisonous and one should mix poison in order to neutralise the effect of each one of them. Another women ridiculed the view that women were all so much more concerned about food and all eat very little meat.

5.2. Age

Two focus groups aimed to cover the age group 25 to 39 and two the age of 40 to 65 years. Compared with what was intended the only age group that proved impossible to recruit were men older than thirty, especially since they should also live in a village and have a higher socio-economic status.

No real differences in concern about animal welfare were revealed across the different age groups. It seemed that young people tend to value convenience aspects of food more than the older people, health concern might have been slightly higher in the older groups too. Some of the younger participants had less money but were educated to a higher degree. The older people seemed to have better contact to farmers from where they could

³⁰ They are supposed to go more easily to medical doctors than men.

³¹ It was not always clear whether "bad conscience" needed to be attributed to health worries or concern about the animals, or both.

get their animal food. While a romantic view of the past was common across all age groups, it was slightly more pronounced in the older age group. Animal husbandry was seen to have been better in former times.

5.3. Socio-economic status

It was aimed to conduct three focus groups with higher socio-economic status as measured by either income or education and one with lower socio-economic status. To measure education people were asked for the number of years they spent in formal education. Formal education was broadly defined to include school, professional training, university, etc. Income was measured as gross household income per month. It was only asked whether income was above or below DM 5000,- which was considered as an average income.

As costs of alternatively produced food products were often mentioned as an argument against buying them, it should be expected that income plays an important role for food choice with regard to animal welfare. The evidence on this point is mixed. There seems a slight tendency that more people with low income buy more often in supermarkets and also look for bargains. But there are counterexamples. These can be explained with an alternative variable, i.e. priority given to food over other needs (also in terms of money). Several highly concerned women had little money were nevertheless willing to spend a lot of money on organically produced food, free-range eggs etc. or they said to buy less of the more expensive but better produced animal food. This is more a question of life style. When it comes to concern about animal welfare as measured either by spontaneous responses or responses to the video there is no apparent relationship with income.

Education could be correlated with the willingness to use and trust certain claims on labels. On the other hand distrust of brands and general marketing claims might also increase with education. Priority given to health and therefore a precautionary motive for concern about animal welfare could depend on education.³²

³² Health consciousness has a strong impact on personal priority given to food. Human health was seen to be influenced both by the amount of animal products eaten and by their quality. Animal welfare was perceived to assure healthy animals and hence healthier animal food products for humans. This link provides for the most important non-altruistic concern about animal welfare – it is more important than the sometimes attributed better taste to animal products produced in better systems.

5.4. Region

The two locations for the focus groups were Kiel and Eckernförde. Kiel is the capital of Schleswig-Holstein, a federal state in the North of Germany of a largely rural character. It has more than 100 thousand inhabitants. Eckernförde is a village with over 10 000 inhabitants half an hour car drive from Kiel. The idea to have the focus groups in two different size locations was that people who live in a village and see animals and animal production systems more often than people in a city might have different attitudes to farming systems and to animal welfare. Thus the question really is, whether direct experience with farm animals and animal production systems influence the level of concern.

With respect to solely the two locations no striking differences of concern about animal welfare were found. Maybe a large city like Hamburg instead of Kiel would have been a better place to discover differences. But there were people in both the village and the city focus groups, who either used to have contact to farm animals or who knew farmers themselves, be it as a customer, a wide friend or a neighbour, or who grew up in the countryside. The tendency to actively defend slaughter and use of animals for human consumption was more widespread with these people, especially if their families used to have farms themselves. Negative stories about farmers who cheat their customers with battery eggs declared as free-range or an organic farmer who cheated, too, were told. People not only from the city with direct contact to farmers where they buy their produce, said that they experienced it as very important to them that they knew, the animals were reared properly and to their best. Participants with closer contact to farm animals were sometimes able to define what animal welfare means more specifically than others. Thus a woman mentioned that her happy hens could flap with their wings.

5.5. Pets

Slightly more countryside participants than those from the city had pets. Again, it seems difficult to discover a clear relationship between concerns about animal welfare and pet keeping. One of the women most concerned about animal welfare, has no pets while another woman with pets believes the meat she buys is from factory farming, but strongly

defends her right to get affordable meat. One relatively concerned woman keeps a cat and is not happy at all about the fact that she has to give the cat meat. The whole range of concern-pet-keeping combinations seems present. One woman defined animal welfare, as farm animals living at least as happily as her dog, until they are killed for food.

There were women who, during their childhood, developed intimate emotional ties to animals which were reared for food by their parents, they reported not to be able to eat the meat. Other women in similar childhood situations but probably with contact to more animals at a time reported not to have had any problems to eat the animal.

5.6. Family

Women repeatedly mentioned young children to positively influence health orientation of a mother. Mothers were said to care more for the health impact of the food they buy. This does however not primarily lead to increased concern about animal welfare as reflected in behaviour. A young mother gave up her earlier vegetarian life style as she became a mother. She was an occasional buyer of organic produce. She was furthermore concerned that her daughter did not understand well enough how food is produced. She said her daughter to be very much influenced by advertising and e.g. believed that cows look like the pink cow of the popular chocolate brand 'Milka'. The segment of young, health conscious mothers who are acquainted with alternatively produced food seem potential buyers of animal products with high assured animal welfare.

Family were said to influence what a woman can buy and cook without meeting protest. Children were said to develop their own taste and men were said to demand meat.

Section VI: Conclusion

6.1. Nature of Consumer Concerns

Most spontaneous concerns about animal welfare were closely related to issues of health, safety, taste and general meat quality. Concern about the impact of poor animal welfare on food and the consumer (i.e. concern about animals as a means for humans) than concern about animals as an end in themselves. As to the latter point, concern about cruelty to animals was expressed and a good conscience was seen to result from buying food from systems with higher animal welfare.

Quite in contrast to the general discussion concern about farm animals themselves gained importance at the cost of concern about the impact of poor animal welfare on humans when participants were confronted with the video. Concern here means that most systems were simply seen to provide poor animal welfare, which was often expressed very emotionally. Since these concerns were less apparent in the general discussion, they generally depend on some sort of activation, like e.g. the video or the video description.

6.2. Level of Concern

The level of concern about animal welfare depended largely on whether they were expressed spontaneously or probed for and whether they occurred in the general discussion or in response to the video. Spontaneous concern about animal welfare as an association to the catchword "food" was rare, but did nevertheless occur. Concern was widespread, if participants were prompted by the moderator or the ongoing discussion. And about everybody showed to be concerned about animal welfare in response to the video sequences. Spontaneous responses were generally but not always of the selfish type, whereas concern as a response to the video was more focused on the animal itself. Implications of animal welfare for humans were hardly an issue then.

Depending on the activating stimulus, reactions range from utter rejection (like for the battery system) to enthusiasm (like for idyllic free-range systems).³³

³³ A video or a verbal description can present a system in different ways. The effect that these different presentations of a system have on people's reactions was not investigated in the focus groups.

6.3. Meanings of animal welfare

Behind the commonly used notion of "Massentierhaltung" (factory farming) a whole set of criticisms of many modern production systems hides that includes, yet extends beyond the aspect of too many animals per m². Put more positively an animal needs to have the opportunity to express natural behaviour, like e.g. dust bathing, moving freely, needs to have access to fresh and natural food, to light. Hygiene needs to be assured, quick fattening avoided. Low stress resistance was a concern as well as behavioural anomalies. Human care for the animals was seen as important as well as that animals are allowed to decide what is best for them.

6.4. Focus group method

The potential of focus groups as a flexible market research tool was exploited. The concern and agreement on issues around animal welfare depended on the type of questions posed and whether or not concerns were prompted by the video. In order to explain the impact of consumer concerns about animal welfare on food choice compatible measures for concerns and behaviour should, where possible, be used in the succeeding project stages.

6.5. Implications for semi-structured interviews³⁴

It probably was a strength of these focus groups, to show up a wide range of issues and opinions around the topic of animal welfare, be it on general or even quite specific questions. The area is well marked now and a rough picture is painted. The points arising out of the focus groups should be taken into account in the individual in-depth-interviews. Focus groups rarely give the opportunity to enquire into behavioural patterns and concerns in as much detail as can be done with individual in-depth interviews. The individual person should be looked at closer now. The detailed insight to be gained is likely to reveal important aspects about both concerns and their impact on food choice.

³⁴ The following sentences are adjusted from Melchers (1994, p. 36).

Section VII: Problems and Limitations

7.1. Translation issues

The moderator of the focus group discussions did not use a literal translations of animal welfare, e.g. "Tierwohl" during the focus group sessions, as the term is not commonly employed in German. Also the German equivalent for "animal protection" was avoided, since it carries with it connotations applicable to issues of animal welfare other than farm animals.

The terms mostly used by the moderator were "Artgerechtigkeit" and "artgerechte Haltung", which are near equivalents to "animal welfare" but carry with it the implication of "serving the specific needs of a species". "Artgerechtigkeit" and "Tiergerechtheit" are also used on German language product labels for products produced up to high animal welfare standards.

Participants did spontaneously address the issue of animal welfare either in terms of cruelty or feeling pity for the animals or with the term "Massentierhaltung"³⁵ (factory farming). "Massentierhaltung" however seems to be a catchall phrase, not specifically tailored to address concerns about animal welfare but also all other worries about modern animal husbandry practices. Finally, participants also employed the popular phrases about "happy hens" (glückliche Hühner) and "happy cows".

7.2. Focus group method

Focus group recruitment was not at random and self-selection bias probably occurred. A person needs to be well motivated to attend a focus group. The more motivated people should be expected to be e.g. more interested in food, (animal) food production and health issues, more open minded, dynamic, more critical, have (subjectively) more time to attend a focus group or simply need the financial incentive. Self-selection specifically with

³⁵ "Massentierhaltung", probably in contrast to the English "factory farming" carries with it the meaning of keeping animals in excessively large flocks.

respect to concerns about animal welfare is not unlikely because participants were told in advance the subjects of the discussion (i.e. food and food production, but animal welfare was not mentioned during recruitment) and the video (i.e. production systems for animal food).

But by their very nature focus groups cannot be expected to yield representative results. Indeed, the research goal was rather to better understand concerns about animal welfare and therefore interview people having most to say about it.³⁶ If there was a self-selection effect, then it most likely worked to select just these people.

Focus group size had some effect on how lively and spontaneous the discussion was. The moderator had to prompt participants more in the smaller groups, i.e. the male group with only four participants and the pilot focus group with five women. The moderator's impression that the male group was less emotional about animal welfare and maybe spontaneously less interested, might not have anything to do with gender but could just as easily be attributed to group size (as the pilot focus group was similar in many respects). In the larger groups it proved to be more difficult for the moderator to ensure a fair share of voice for everybody.

Focus groups are a flexible research tool which can be employed in different ways. The two main focus group methods employed in the present context were a semi-structured general discussion and a discussion of video sequences. A strength of the first method was that it allowed to see how much weight consumers spontaneously gave to animal welfare in the context of food and food production. Issues related to animal welfare could be addressed uninfluenced by pictures (see section III). The video had the advantage to evoke many responses to how people measure animal welfare and what they like or dislike about modern farming systems. It also proved useful to direct attention towards questions about animal welfare that still needed to be addressed - as in the young women's group at Kiel.

The most obvious difference between the two parts of the focus groups was that participants disagreed with each other much more during the general discussion than

during the video discussion. Near unanimous views were held on whether or not to condemn or approve of a certain production system in the video on grounds of animal welfare. Concern about animal welfare hardly varied when concern was measured as an overall judgement to video images – if variations occurred then these were about minor points, different highlighted aspects or reasons given. The video images seem to activate clear judgements about what is good or bad – these were presented in section IV.³⁷ Therefore probing why people regard a system like battery cages as bad sometimes lead to irritations – just like the question "How good do you think is a bad thing?" might be irritating. Often emotional commitment to statements and spontaneity suggested that authentic opinions were articulated. Social answering can however not be completely ruled out – some answers seemed less committed and more automatic than others.³⁸

While about all participants appeared to be concerned about animal welfare when confronted with systems on the video, much less people were *spontaneously* concerned about animal welfare in the discussion preceding the video. The number of concerned people again increased, when the moderator *prompted* participants or when the discussion centred around animal welfare.

Is the focus group method important for the measured impact of concern about animal welfare on food choice? As already said, the extend of concern varies, depending on how it is measured. Hence with differently measured concerns one also gets different impacts of concern on food choice. Concern as measured by responses to the video does not seem to be a good predictor for food choice due to lack of variation and therefore expected poor

³⁶). Therefore especially women and people with higher formal education or income were recruited. These were in the literature review identified to have higher than average concern about animal welfare.

³⁷ Mixed spontaneous reactions were observed for the pictures of battery hens. By the very first impressions (and talking without being asked) some people were alarmed, others stated to know even worse pictures, which implies that the pictures shown were not seen as too bad. The ambiguity of spontaneous reactions did not carry over to the discussion. This could be an indication for social answering or for disregarding dissonant information. It needs to be kept in mind that the video sequences were very short. They therefore probably rather activated existing attitudes rather than formed them – at least for the more common systems like battery cages or free-range egg production.

³⁸ A different reason for varying commitment might be that people's was strained in course of the two hours focus group session. Thus a focus group assistant noted that concentration declined sharply towards the end. Analysis of neither emotional commitment nor concentration can be properly done from the transcripts.

correlation with choices:³⁹ The segment of consumers for which concern about animal welfare has no impact on food choice is fairly large in this case.⁴⁰

This reminds of the simple lesson to be learned from the compatibility principle⁴¹, according to which the correlation between attitude and behaviour measures is the higher, the more compatible these measures are. One aspect of the principle is that "we should not expect high correlation between attitudes to objects and actions towards those objects".⁴² ⁴³ For some of the people who were concerned about the video images, concern seemed nevertheless to have an impact on (self-reported) food choice. The impact was either on the *level* of animal food consumption or on the *kind* of animal food consumed, i.e. from which production system the food was demanded.⁴⁴ In these cases concern regularly reflected itself in a concordant attitude towards buying animal products with higher animal welfare or buying less animal products. These attitudes towards behaviour should therefore be used as predictors of food choice⁴⁵ and should be a central focal point for the following stages of the research project. As a consequence the number of concerned people as defined by an attitude to a behaviour will be smaller than the number of generally concerned people and therefore the impact of this concern will show up more clearly.

³⁹ Variation of consumption seemed more pronounced, especially with respect to consumption intensity and source of purchase (i.e. fresh or pre-packed in the supermarket, direct selling, organic produce, market or butchery).

⁴⁰ A different explanation would be that the video increased concern about animal welfare and might have invoked different behaviour and behavioural intentions – behaviour, which was reported before the video started would then not pose a good measure for the impact of concern on behaviour. Indeed it was observed that the video images left many participants impressed. Some stated, to consider reducing consumption in the near future or buy different products (especially free-range eggs - here the information given by the moderator to some groups that declarations for the systems 'free range', 'barn' and 'battery' were legally defined, was at least as important as the video and the combination of the two made for slightly adjusted behavioural intentions for a few people). Others were worried, since they knew from experience that effects on behaviour lasted only a certain time. But a high proportion of participants did not deviate from arguments and statements about behaviour given before the video started. When the moderator asked some participants in a final round after the video to talk again about their personal behaviour and possible implications for the future, the positions were largely the same as before the video.

⁴¹ See e. g. East (1997, pp. 124 – 128).

⁴² East (1997, p. 125). East (1997, p. 127) also refers to Ajzen and Fishbein (1977) for a summary of the compatibility principle under "five headings: Target, Action, Context and the personal nature of some action".

⁴³ This in mind the moderator did repeatedly draw people's attention towards how they behave or feel they ought to behave and inquired about reasons for behaviour.

⁴⁴ On the other hand, some explanations given by people as to why they did not always live up to their perceived responsibility and concerns are stated in the chapter on 'Responsibility for animal welfare': Price, lack of trustworthy information, repression, lack of imagination, different priorities in everyday life, respect of family members, meat preference, perceived lack of impact of behaviour.

⁴⁵ They should also meet the other criteria mentioned in the compatibility principle.

The number of people who *spontaneously* mentioned animal welfare or closely related issues as an association to the catchword food, was smaller than the number of concerned video watchers. People spontaneously concerned included women who bought their meat and eggs from farmers they knew, who said to eat only very little meat, but to be prepared paying a higher price if they trusted the way it was produced and those who buy organic. But cruel factory farming was also mentioned by a women, who strongly argued against some others that she was really not that concerned about productions systems and that one shouldn't worry too much about it (since one can easily get crazy then). She used the argument that there are more important issues to humanity than animal welfare to advocate a low profile political approach. Yet she also reported that in response to an earlier seen television show about some "disgusting" production methods she once stopped eating certain animal products altogether – at least for some time. There were also some people who later in the discussion were concerned about animal welfare and who reported some impact of that concern on behaviour, who did not spontaneously mention it as an issue during the first round of the focus group session. Like a woman who later reported her early childhood experiences of the battery cage systems which left a deep impression on her and who bought organically produced or free-range eggs. Or the woman who later showed to be so proud about her own "happy hens" who "can still sleep on a tree". All in all spontaneous responses seem, to the author of these lines, a better predictor for animal welfare related food choice than more general comments about how animals fare in the individual production systems. But they also seem to be less precise than attitudes towards questions like 'What do you think about buying free-range eggs or meat from happy cows in the future'.

A final note on the video section: The video images were useful to evoke emotions and activate people.⁴⁶ Images have an important role for advertising in an age of information overload and are commonly used in food marketing and the media. From this point of view it was useful to research into and demonstrate the powerful effect that pictures can have in the context of animal welfare. The video part of the focus group therefore contributed some understanding to a question of central importance, i.e. how to communicate product attributes related to production systems.

7.3. NUD*IST analysis

The focus group were tape recorded and then transcribed. Transcription was first done by a commercial company and then names filled in and amendments made by the moderator of the discussions. Transcription was a time consuming process, even after the company had done the draft transcripts. The more difficult parts of the discussions, where participants engaged in lively discussions were often left out by the company and had to be added afterwards. The transcription technique allows to discover where discussions were particularly lively. Some notes by focus group participants on non-verbal aspects are included and also occasionally on intonation. But the transcription process, no matter how neat it is, nevertheless constitutes a loss of information. It is good for an analysis that concentrates primarily on the cognitive aspects.

NUD*IST is a useful but also time consuming program for analysing e.g. transcripts of verbal data. The advantage lies in that coding and analysis can be conducted thoroughly and more open to criticism. A thorough coding process is however extremely time consuming, especially for the amount of data collected by five focus groups. It is so time consuming that not all the potential benefits of the NUD*IST analysis could yet be used for this report. The coding unit used was the line. The coding system developed was rather rough should really be refined. This however was not yet possible due to the limited time available.

⁴⁶ These emotions could however be only incompletely analysed with NUD*IST, as the transcripts of the words spoken lost most of the information about intonation and emotional commitment of the speakers.

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Section VIII: Appendices

8.1. Focus group discussion guide⁴⁷

8.1.1. German discussion guide

Grobgliederung:

- persönlich wichtige Themen (bzw. Assoziation)
- persönliche Sorgen
- Konsum/Kaufverhalten
- Bedeutung von Tierwohl/Artgerechte Haltung
- Information(-quellen), Vertrauen, Gütesiegel
- Verantwortung
- Kosten/Nutzen
- Zahlungsbereitschaft
- Video

Feingliederung:

Einführung: Die TeilnehmerInnen sollten sich vorstellen und ein bißchen über sich sagen (was sie machen, ihre Familie, Kinder, Haustiere, etc.; Fragen, die den Status offenlegen vermeiden)

1. Was fällt Ihnen zum Stichwort *Lebensmittelproduktion* ein (*wichtige Themen*)? Worüber machen Sie sich Gedanken? (positive und kritische Bereiche) Wo haben Sie Bedenken/ bzw. machen Sie sich Sorgen?

Einige Punkte sollen *aufgeschrieben* werden und dann in die Runde eingebracht werden. Einige Produkte mit/ohne Tiergerechtheits-Siegel sollen auf dem Tisch liegen. Sage den TeilnehmerInnen, daß sie darauf jederzeit Bezug nehmen können. Schließlich sollen die Produkte näher in Augenschein genommen werden. Gibt es Punkte, die sich auf diese Produkte beziehen?

2. Was fällt Ihnen zur *Produktion tierischer Lebensmittel* ein (*wichtige Themen*)? Worüber machen Sie sich Gedanken, was beschäftigt Sie? Wo haben Sie Bedenken / bzw. machen Sie sich Sorgen?

- Gibt es Bedenken / Punkte, die Ihnen negativ erscheinen?
- Art der Bedenken/Aspekte? - was sind die wichtigen Aspekte? Warum? Gründlich nachfragen.
- Ausmaß der Bedenken? - Wie ausgeprägt? Warum? Gründlich nachfragen
- Änderungen über die Zeit - Warum? Gründlich nachfragen

3. *Kaufen Sie artgerecht erzeugte tierische Lebensmittel?* (Spielt der Gedanke daran, wie es den Tieren erging (Tierwohl) eine Rolle für den Kauf tierischer Lebensmittel?)

Beziehe die Produkte auf dem Tisch mit ein - frage, ob sie davon irgendetwas kaufen.

- Welche Produkte? Warum?
- Falls Sie keine kaufen: *Warum nicht?* (will nicht nachdenken, Wahlmöglichkeiten/Verfügbarkeit, Preis, keine starken Bedenken, andere Dinge sind wichtiger)
- Bezüglich welcher Produkte spielen Gedanken daran, wie die Tiere behandelt wurden eine *größere/geringere Rolle?* Warum? (Eier, Hühner, Schweinefleisch, Rindfleisch, Schafsfleisch, Milch)

4. Der Ausdruck "Artgerechtigkeit" wird häufig im Zusammenhang mit der Produktion tierischer Lebensmittel benutzt.

⁴⁷ The discussion served to semi-structure the focus groups and was therefore not always strictly adhered to. The first question about issues and concerns about *food production* was replaced by the more general question about issues and concerns about *food* in every focus group.

Was verstehen Sie unter 'Artgerechtigkeit'? (Wie würden Sie die 'Tiergerechtigkeit' einer Produktionsmethode beurteilen? Frage im Video stellen)

Stichwörter zur Hilfe:

- keine Tierquälerei/kein Leiden
- natürliches, normales Verhalten
- gesund, keine Krankheiten
- gute Betreuung
- anderes

5. Wie gut fühlen Sie sich über Produktionsmethoden für tierische Lebensmittel informiert? (Wie schätzen Sie das allgemeine Informationsniveau ein?)

- Welche Informationsquellen?
- Für wie vertrauenswürdig halten Sie die Informationsquellen? Warum?
- Welchen Informationsquellen trauen Sie nicht? Warum?
- Was halten Sie von Prüfsiegeln?

6. Wieviel Verantwortung haben wir (als Menschen bzw. Individuen) eine artgerechte Produktion (die das Wohlergehen der Tiere gewährleistet) sicherzustellen?

Wie sind allgemein menschliche und tierische Interessen im Konfliktfall (z.B. mit Preis, Armut, Gesundheit, Kultur) zu gewichten? Für wie verallgemeinerungsfähig halten Sie Ihre Wertung?

Mit welchen Mitteln sollte versucht werden, dieser Verantwortung gerecht zu werden? (Gesetze, Verbote, Anreize, Marketing) Warum

7. Welche Konsequenzen (bzw. Vorteile und Nachteile) hat eine artgerechte Produktion tierischer Lebensmittel für sie als Verbraucher? Was, warum?

Hilfestellungen:

- Landwirte, Produzenten
- Lebensmittelhandel
- Umwelt
- Preis
- Qualität
- Sicherheit
- Geschmack
- gutes Gewissen
- Soziale Anerkennung/Prestige

8. Sind sie bereit für artgerecht erzeugte Nahrungsmittel einen höheren Preis zu bezahlen?

- Wenn nicht, warum? (Was, wenn diese Punkte ausgeschaltet wären (Z.B. Mißtrauen?)
- Für bestimmte Produkte?

9. Ich werde Ihnen jetzt einen Videofilm über verschiedene Tierhaltungssysteme zeigen. Ich werde jedes System beschreiben. Ich möchte Sie bitten, mir nach jeder Sequenz zu sagen, wie Sie das jeweilige Haltungssystem in Hinblick auf die Artgerechtigkeit beurteilen. Was gefällt Ihnen diesbezüglich und was nicht?

Show each video clip in turn and after each discuss:

9a. Welches der dargestellten Systeme würden Sie bevorzugen? Warum?

9.b. Wonach beurteilen Sie, ob eine bestimmte Produktionsmethode mehr oder weniger artgerecht als eine andere Produktionsmethode ist?

Hilfestellungen:

- Gesundheit der Tiere
- Keine Anzeichen von Streß
- Scheinen glücklich zu sein
- Anderes

9.c. Können Sie mir bitte sagen, wie ihre *ideale Produktionsmethode* für jedes Produkt aussehen würde? Hilfestellungen?

- Eier
- Hühner
- Schweine
- Rindfleisch
- Schafsfleisch
- Milch

9.d. Würden sie eher Nahrungsmittel aus ihrem idealen Produktionssystem *kaufen*, selbst wenn sie mehr kosten?

10. Fragen, Ergänzungen, Kritik

Herzlichen Dank. Ende.

8.1.2. English discussion guide

Start by getting each person to introduce themselves and say a little about what they do, their family, children, pets, etc.

1. Are there any issues to do with the way in which food is produced nowadays that concern you at all?
*Ask to write down on paper provided and then ask participants by name to report back.
Have some products with/without animal welfare labels etc. on table. Tell participants can refer to at any time. Get to look at products now and ask if there are any issues related to these products?*
2. Are there any issues to do with the way in which animals are produced for food?
 - *Nature of concern – what are the issues? Why? Probe fully.*
 - *Level of concern – how much? Why? Probe fully.*
 - *Changes over time – why? Probe fully.*
3. Do you buy any products specifically because of the way in which animals have been reared in their production?
Use products on the table – ask if they would buy any of them.
 - *Which products? Why?*
 - *If wouldn't buy, ask why not?*
 - *Which products are more/less concerned about? Why?*
4. People often talk about 'animal welfare' in the context of the way in which animals are produced for food. What do you personally understand by the term 'animal welfare'?
Prompts:
 - *No cruelty/free of suffering*
 - *Natural/normal behaviour*
 - *Healthy/free of disease*
 - *'Cared for'*
 - *Other*
5. How well informed do you consider you are about the ways in which animals are produced for food?
 - *Sources of information?*
 - *Which do you consider to be the most reliable? Why?*
 - *Are there any sources of information you do not trust? Why? How much responsibility do you consider we have for ensuring high levels of animal welfare in the production of food?*
6. Do you think there are any advantages or disadvantages to you as a consumer if animals are treated well in production for food?
 - *What are they? Why?*

Prompts:

- *Farmers/producers?*
- *Retailers?*
- *Environment?*
- *Price*
- *Quality*
- *Safety*
- *Taste*

7. Are you willing to pay a higher price for products produced using methods in which you consider animals are treated better?

- *If not, why?*
- *For any particular products?*

8. I am now going to show you some video film of different ways in which animals can be produced for food. I shall describe each system to you. After each one I would like to tell what you/do not like about each method in terms of the well-being of the animal.

Show each video clip in turn and after each discuss:

9a. Which of these systems do you prefer? Why?

9b. How did you measure whether a particular method of production was better for animal welfare than another method, for the welfare of the animals?

Prompts:

- *Health of animal*
- *No signs of distress*
- *Appears happy*
- *Other*

9c. Can you please tell me what your ideal method of production for each type of product would be:

Prompts:

- *Eggs*
- *Chicken*
- *Pork*
- *Beef*
- *Lamb*
- *Milk*

9d. Are you more likely to buy products produced with your most preferred system even if they cost more?

10. Do you have any further comments to make? *Thank and close.*

8.2. Video description⁴⁸

8.2.1. German video description

I. Eierproduktion

1. Käfighaltung

Ein Batteriekäfig besteht aus dünnen Drahtrosten und einem abgeschrägten Boden. Der Draht ist so geformt, daß die drei Klauen jedes Fußes unterstützt werden. Dennoch kann ständiges Stehen auf dem Draht die Füße verletzen. In der kommerziellen Produktion werden i.d.R. 3 und manchmal bis zu 6 Käfiglagen übereinander in großen Ställen aufgestellt, in denen 10.000 bis 60.000 Legehennen gehalten werden können. Die Größe eines Käfigs kann mit der Anzahl der darin gehaltenen Hennen variieren. Mindestens werden vier Hennen in einem Käfig gehalten. Dabei wird jeder Hennen nach gegenwärtigen Gesetzen 450 cm² Platz zugestanden, was ungefähr der Größe eines DIN A4 Blattes entspricht.

Hennen in Legebatterien erhalten Futter und Wasser. Licht und Temperatur werden geregelt. Arteigenes Verhalten können sie jedoch nicht ausführen. Sie können nicht angemessen stehen, mit den Flügeln schlagen oder diese ausbreiten. Nur unter Schwierigkeiten können sie sich drehen. Diese Bedingungen schwächen die Knochen. Im Käfig sind keine Sitzstangen vorhanden und keine Streu oder anderes geeignetes Material, in dem die Hennen Sandbaden können. Zur Eiablage können sich die Tiere nicht zurückziehen.

2. Bodenhaltung

Die Hennen werden in großer Zahl in Scheunen mit Sitzstangen oder Plattformen in verschiedener Höhe gehalten. Futter, Wasser, Belichtung und Temperatur werden so eingestellt, daß ein möglichst optimales Legeverhalten resultiert. Nistplätze oder Nistkästen und Einstreu werden zur Verfügung gestellt. Die maximale Haltungsdichte beträgt 25 Vögel pro Quadratmeter. Mindestens 15cm Sitzstange müssen jeder Henne zur Verfügung stehen. Normalerweise gibt es wenig oder gar keinen Auslauf ins Freie.

3. Freilandhaltung

Das herkömmliche Bild von freilaufenden Hühnern, die in einem kleinen Hennenhaus im offenen Feld Leben ist in Wirklichkeit auf sehr wenige Fälle beschränkt. Gegenwärtig übliche Produktion findet in großem Stil statt, was so aussieht, daß hunderte Hennen in Scheunen leben und tagsüber häufig Auslaufzeiten an freier Luft haben. Der Boden, zu dem die Hennen Zugang haben ist normalerweise bewachsen. Gemäß der EU-Eiermarktverordnung beträgt die maximale Haltungsdichte "eine Henne pro 10 m² Auslauf". Demnach hat ein Freilandhuhn ungefähr 200 mal mehr Bewegungsraum als ein Käfighuhn. In dieser Umgebung können Hennen sich besser bewegen und ihr natürliches Verhalten ausleben, wie z.B. Sandbaden und Nestbauverhalten.

Jedoch sind sie auch anfälliger gegenüber Krankheiten, wie Salmonellen und Raubtieren. Weil mehr Land benötigt wird, ist dieses Haltungssystem teurer als die anderen.

Forward over last hen scene starting from hens coming out of barn.

II. Fleischhühner / (Brat-)Hühnchen (Broilers)

4. Bodenhaltung

Mit Fleischhühner wird Hähnchenfleisch produziert. Sie werden in Scheunen gehalten, in denen Futter, Wasser, Licht und Temperatur geregelt sind. Häufig sind sie stark zusammengedrängt, so daß artgerechtes Verhalten behindert wird und Langeweile und Aggressionen auftreten können. Mit dem Wachstum der Küken wird es immer enger. Das erzwungene Wachstum kann zu Bein- und Skelett-Abnormalitäten führen. Arthritis und vereiterte Füße sind verbreitet. In Streu minderer Qualität kann sich Ammoniak aufbauen, was zu Blasen am Brustkorb und Verbrennungen an den Hachsen führt.

⁴⁸ Note, that the video descriptions were slightly amended after the initial main focus groups. The description of a system was not always read out at the same time with the video images. Often initial responses were waited for first. The German version was used.

5. Freilandhaltung von Fleischhühnern

In der Freilandhaltung haben Fleischhühner Zugang zum offenen Feld, wo sie umherspazieren und ihr natürliches Verhalten ausüben können. Jedoch sind sie auch natürlichen Feinden und Krankheiten von Wildtieren, wie Salmonellen ausgesetzt. Wiederum wird mehr Land benötigt, so daß die Produktionskosten höher sind.

III. Schweine

6. Anbindehaltung

Trächtige Sauen werden für den größten Teil der etwa viermonatigen Trächtigkeit in einem Stand festgehalten oder durch ein Halteseil. Artgemäße Bewegung und Nestbau werden dadurch verhindert. Material für bequemes Liegen oder Nestbau gibt es nicht, da dies höhere Kosten und/oder Krankheitsrisiken mit sich bringen würde. Auskundschaftendes und soziales Verhalten wird verhindert. Das führt zu gestörten und wiederholenden Verhaltensmustern.

7. Boxenhaltung

Sowohl Boxen als auch anbindeähnliche Haltung ermöglichen es, daß das Schwein beobachtet und individuell behandelt werden kann. Jedes Schwein ist vor den Angriffen und Verletzungen anderer Schweine geschützt. Im Gegensatz zur Boxenhaltung wird die Anbindehaltung in Europa derzeit abgeschafft.

8. Abferkelbuchten

Im Stall gehaltene Sauen werden kurz vor dem Abferkeln in die Abferkel-Bucht gebracht. Die Abferkel-Bucht ist enger als die eine normale Box. Dadurch kann es für die Sau schwierig sein, aufzustehen, oder sich hinzulegen. Sauen können sich in der Abferkel-Bucht nicht drehen. Die Abferkel-Bucht wird benutzt, um zu verhindern, daß eine Sau sich unglücklich auf ihre Ferkeln legt und sie so erdrückt.

9. Freie Stallhaltung

Hier werden Sauen innerhalb einfacher Behausungen gehalten. Die mit Stroh eingestreuten Schlafplätze sind von den mit Spaltenböden ausgelegten Kotplätzen getrennt. Das Stroh wird regelmäßig ersetzt. Es gibt außerdem einen getrennten Futterplatz. Die Sauen können dabei entweder einzeln oder in der Gruppe gefüttert werden. Die Sauen können herumstöbern und ihr natürliches Verhalten ausleben.

10. Freilandhaltungssysteme

Angemessener Untergrund und Klima sind wichtige Bedingungen für den Erfolg dieses Systems. Eine individuelle Fütterung ist in Freilandhaltungssystemen nicht möglich. Aber sie sind wenig arbeitsaufwendig. Hier können Schweine ihrem natürlichen Wühl- und Suhlverhalten nachgehen.

11. Finishing Indoors

Die Schweine werden in einer hohen Haltungsdichte drinnen gehalten. Liegeplätze oder Liegematerial können vorhanden sein. Sie werden in der Gruppe gefüttert und ihnen werden häufig Dinge zum Spielen gegeben. Der Vollspaltenboden ist häufig sehr glitschig und kann zu Verletzungen am Fuß und den Beinen führen.

Forward last pig segment

IV. Rinder/Kühe/Kälber (Beef)

12. Freilandhaltung

Extensive Fleischrinderproduktion beinhaltet normalerweise, daß die Rinder 7 bis 8 Monate im Jahr draußen auf der Weide sind. Die Rinder fressen Gras und ihnen wird Wasser gegeben.

13. Stallhaltung

Durch die Stallhaltung wird eine effektive Abwasser- und Güllekontrolle ermöglicht. Außerdem bietet ein Stall Schutz vor rauhem Winterklima und erleichtert Füttern und Tränken. Normalerweise werden die

Rinder auf Betonboden gehalten. Es können zu viele Rinder in einem Stall sein, so daß sie sich nicht ausreichend bewegen können.

V. Kalbfleisch

14. Typische Kälberboxen

Junge Kälber, die zwischen 1 und 3 Wochen alt sind werden in engen Einzelboxen untergebracht oder angebunden. Sie bleiben in der Einzelbox bis sie geschlachtet werden, was normalerweise um den 6. Lebensmonat erfolgt.

Die Kälberboxen engen den Bewegungsraum des Kalbes stark ein. Es ist nicht in der Lage sich umzudrehen, die Glieder zu strecken, eine natürliche Ruheposition einzunehmen oder sich angemessen zu pflegen. In der Box wird das Kalb von jedem Sozialkontakt abgehalten. Es ist keine Einstreu vorhanden. Der Spaltenboden führt zu Verletzungen an Knien und anderen Problemen des Bewegungsapparates und der Knochen.

Die Kälberboxen dieses alten Stils werden in Europa derzeit abgeschafft und durch größere Boxen ersetzt, in denen Kälber sich besser bewegen und pflegen können und besseren Kontakt zu anderen Kälbern haben.

Um "weißes" Kalbfleisch herzustellen, werden die Tiere mit einer Milchdiät gefüttert, die zu wenig grob strukturiert ist und zu wenig Eisen enthält. Zungenrollen, beißen, übermäßiges Lecken und Kauen führen dann zu Magenproblemen.

15. Gruppenställe

Kälber werden hier in Gruppen in einem Stall mit Spaltenboden gehalten. Sie werden nicht angebunden. Dennoch erhalten sie möglicherweise immer noch zu fein strukturiertes Futter und zu wenig Eisen.

8.2.2. English video description

I. EGG PRODUCTION

1. Battery cages

A battery cage is made of thin wire mesh with a sloping floor. The mesh is designed to support the three claws on each foot, but continuous standing on wire can also damage the feet. The cages which are used for large commercial production are placed in rows or tiers, usually 3 to sometimes 6 cages high in a huge shed. These sheds may contain about 10,000 to 60,000 laying hens. The size of a cage can depend on the number of hens kept in it, with a minimum of 4 per cage. Under present legislation each hen gets 450 cm², equivalent to the size of an A4 paper.

Hens in battery cages are provided with food, water, and controlled levels of light and temperature. However, hens can not perform their natural behaviours. They also can not properly stand, stretch or flap their wings and will experience difficulty in turning around, causing bone weakness. The battery cage does not provide the hens with a perch, litter or other suitable material for them to dust bathe or find a quiet nesting box or area to lay their eggs.

2. Barn systems (perchery and aviary)

Hens are kept in large numbers in barns with perches and/or platforms at different levels. The food, water, level of light and temperature are controlled for optimum reproduction. Nesting areas or boxes and litter are provided. The maximum stocking density is 25 birds per m² and at least 15cm of perch per bird. There is usually little or no outdoor access.

3. Free range systems

The traditional image of free-range hens living in small hen houses in open fields is in reality confined to only a few free-range systems. Modern large-scale production has resulted in hundreds of hens living in barns with continuous daytime access to open-air runs. The ground to which hens have access is mainly covered with vegetation. The maximum stocking density is one hen per 10 m². This means that a free-range hen has access to about 200 times more space than a battery hen. In this environment, hens have greater ability to move around and express natural behaviour, such as dust bathing and nesting. However, they

may also be more vulnerable to disease, such as salmonella, and predators. Because there is more land required, this system is more expensive than the others.

FORWARD OVER LAST HEN SCENE STARTING FROM HENS COMING OUT OF BARN.

II. BROILERS

4. Barn

Broiler hens are reared for meat. They are kept in barns where food, water, light and temperature can be controlled. These are often overcrowded conditions where normal behaviour is restricted and boredom and aggression can occur. As the chickens grow in size there is less and less space per bird. The forced growth rate can lead to leg and skeletal abnormalities. Arthritis and ulcerated feet are common. Ammonia can build up in the litter leading to breast blisters and hock burns.

5. Outside rearing of hens for meat

In free-range systems, broilers have access to the outside where they can roam and express their natural behaviour. However, they may also be susceptible to predators and disease, such as salmonella, from wild animals. Again, more land is required so production costs are increased.

III. PORK

6. Tethered

Pregnant sows are kept in a stall and/or by a tether for most of the four-month pregnancy. Normal exercise and nest building are impossible and no bedding or nesting material is provided, because of the potential disease and/or costs associated with straw. The floor is slatted to get rid of excrement. Exploratory and social behaviour is denied and this leads to abnormal and repetitive behaviour patterns.

7. Stalls

However, both stall and tether types of housing allow for the sow to be monitored and treated as an individual, protected from bullying and injury, accurately. Tethers, but not stalls, are being phased out in Europe.

8. Farrowing Crates

Indoor sows are moved to a farrowing crate just before they are due to give birth. The farrowing crate is narrower than the sow stall and it may be difficult for the sow to stand up or lie down. Turning around is impossible in the farrowing crate. The farrowing crate is used to stop the sow accidentally lying down on her piglets and crushing them.

9. Loose Housing

Here, sows are kept inside in simple housing. There are separate sleeping areas with straw bedding, and dunging area with a slatted floor. Straw is regularly replaced. There is also a separate feeding area. Sows may be fed individually or as a group. Sows can forage and express other natural behaviours.

10. Outdoor Systems

Suitable soil and climate are important pre-requisites for the success of this system. Outdoor systems do not allow for individual feeding, but they are easy to manage. Here, sows express natural rooting and foraging behaviour.

11. Finishing Indoors

The pigs are kept indoors, with high stocking density. Bedding may be provided. The pigs are group fed and often given play things. The fully slatted floor is often slippery and this may give rise to foot and leg injuries.

FORWARD LAST PIG SEGMENT

IV. BEEF

12. Outdoor system

Extensive beef cattle production normally involves cattle being outdoors at pasture for 7 to 8 months each year. The cattle eat grass and are provided with water.

13. Indoor system

Cattle are required to be de-horned when they are calves. Housing of cattle ensures effective effluent and slurry control. It also provides shelter from winter climatic conditions and facilitates the provision of an adequate supply of feed and water. They are usually kept on concrete floors. Cattle may be overstocked and not given enough exercise.

V. VEAL

14. Typical Veal Crates

Young calves between the age of 1 and 3 weeks are housed in narrow individual crates and/or tethered. They will remain in the crate until the time of slaughter, usually around 6 months. The veal crate imposes severe restraints on the calf. It is unable to turn around, stretch its limbs, adopt a normal resting position or groom itself properly. In the crate the calves are deprived of social contact. Calves in crates have no bedding, instead the floor is slatted which may lead to bruised knees and other musculo-skeletal problems. The old-style veal crates with tethers are being phased out in Europe and replaced with larger crates and by group-housing systems where calves can move around, groom themselves and see other calves. In order to produce "white" veal the animals are fed a milk diet, which contains insufficient roughage and iron. Tongue rolling, biting, excessive licking and chewing result in the ingestion of hair and the formation of hairballs in the stomach.

15. Grouped Housing

Calves are kept indoors in groups on slatted floors. They are not tethered but they may still be fed a diet with inadequate levels of roughage and iron.

8.3. Recruitment Questionnaire

Rekrutierungs-Fragebogen für Diskussion über Nahrungsmittel

Alle Angaben werden streng vertraulich behandelt. Sie werden nicht an Dritte weitergegeben und ausschließlich im Zusammenhang mit der Gruppendiskussion verwendet. Der anzugebende Name, sowie Adresse und Telefonnummer dienen ausschließlich zur Rekrutierung und soweit gewünscht, zur Übermittlung der Forschungsergebnisse.

1. Name, Adresse, Telefonnummer

2. Beruf/Beschäftigung

3. Geschlecht (m, w)

4. Alter

5. Ethnische Gruppenzugehörigkeit/Nationalität

6. Bildungsjahre bzw. Abschluß

7. Bruttoeinkommen des Haushaltes über oder unter DM 5000,-?

8. Kinder? Anzahl, gesamt
 Anzahl der noch im Haushalt lebenden
 Alter

9. Anzahl der Personen im Haushalt

10. Arbeiten Sie, Familienmitglieder oder enge Freunde in
 - Marketing, Werbewirtschaft
 - Marktforschung
 - Fleischverarbeitende Industrie
 - Landwirtschaft
 - Ernährungswirtschaft

11. Sind Sie Vegetarier?
 Essen Sie A) Fleisch?, B) Geflügel und Eier

12. Essen Sie aus Glaubensgründen bestimmte Fleischsorten nicht?

13. Haben Sie schon einmal an einer Marktforschungs-Diskussionsgruppe teilgenommen?
 Wie lange ist das her?
 Worüber war die Diskussion?