

Outcome of Commission actions to reduce tail biting and prevent routine tail docking of pigs

Des Maguire
Unit F2, Animals, Directorate F
DG Health and Food Safety
Grange, Ireland
CDG Meeting 14/11/19



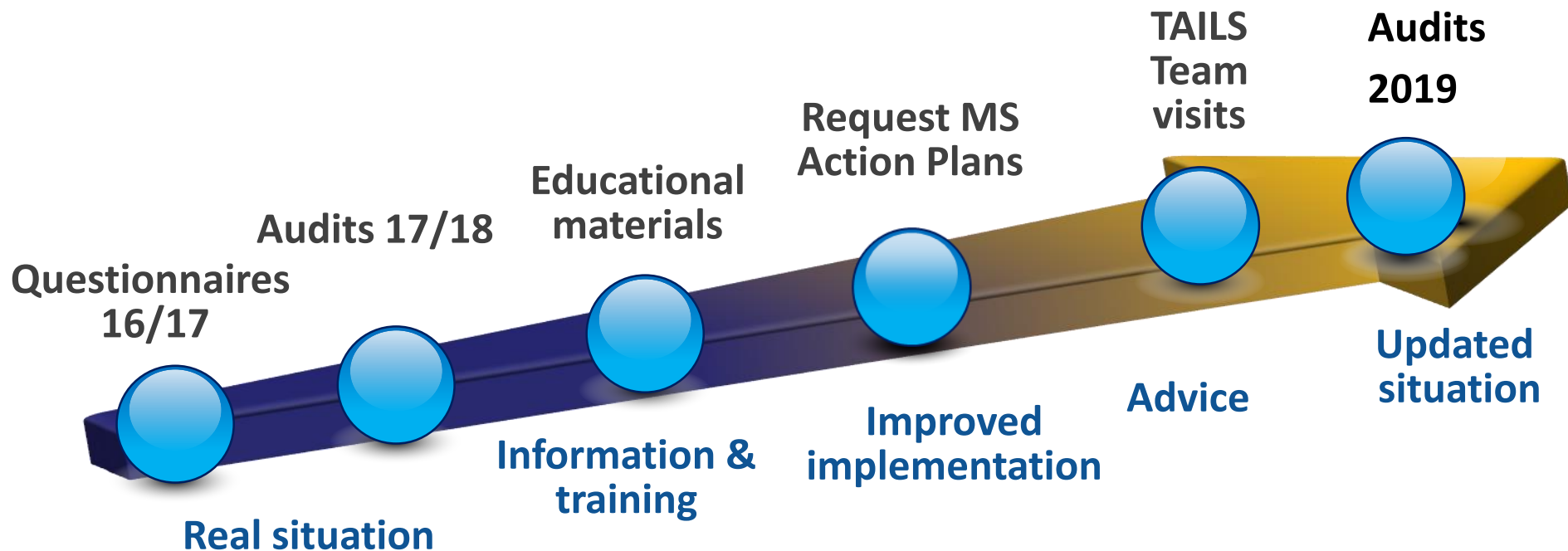
COM Project to reduce tail docking

Reduce animal suffering by improving the application of Council Directives 98/58/EC & 2008/120/EC

Specific focus on the avoidance of routine tail docking and the provision of enrichment material

Three year work programme

WORK PROGRAMME



Audits 2017-2018

5 audits: NL, ES, DK, IT, DE – reports published
Estimates tail-docking 98,5-100% - i.e. routine
Measurable compliance criteria inadequate in most
Official instructions imprecise / not followed in most
Research and trials extensive and expensive to none



No progress / enforcement on avoiding routine tail-docking
Need for National Action Plans 2018

COM requested Action Plans from MS end 2017

Comply with the existing law

**How will compliance with the
Directive be achieved in 2018?**

Clear objectives and timelines

**Nothing new in request (except Risk
assessment)**



Commission Recommendation 2016/336

Best practices aimed at reducing the need for tail-docking and optimised solutions for providing enrichment materials to assist MS in implementation and enforcement of Dir 2008/120 and related EU law



COM's expectations of Member States' Action Plans

1. Draw up compliance criteria

→ Set clear compliance criteria for legal requirements of 2008/120/EC and 98/58/EC that are related to environmental and management factors for tail-biting (enrichment, cleanliness, thermal comfort & air quality, health, competition for food & space, diet)

COM's expectations of Member States' Action Plans

2. Ensure that farm risk assessments are carried out

- Farmer has primary responsibility in implementing the legal requirements “to take all reasonable steps to ensure the welfare of animals under their care”
- RA is a logical intermediate step to take meaningful improvement measures with regard to tail-biting risks
- If there is a problem you should find the root cause(s) to be able to rectify it/make improvements

COM's expectations of Member States' Action Plans

3. Assess evidence of tail and ear lesions and changes to environmental conditions and management systems including stocking density

→ What is sufficient evidence of tail and ear lesions?

→ What are sufficient and adequate improvement measures by farmers to change inadequate environmental conditions or management systems?

COM's expectations of Member States' Action Plans

4. Review veterinary statements on the need to tail-dock

- Control of compliance with legislation is the responsibility of the Competent Authority
- Competent Authority must verify if appropriate measures on the farm instead of relying solely on veterinary statements
- Audits reported poor results in this area

Action Plan Assessment 2019

| | |
|--|---|
| | Member State authority provide clear criteria for controls |
| | Criteria defined but not fully adequate |
| | Criteria lacking |



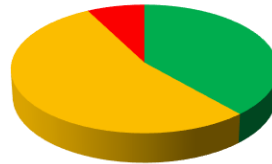
European
Commission

Compliance Criteria

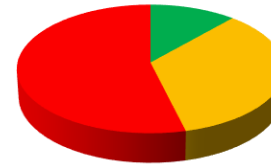
Compliance Criteria



Enrichment



Cleanliness



Thermal comfort



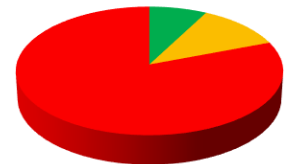
Health status



Competition



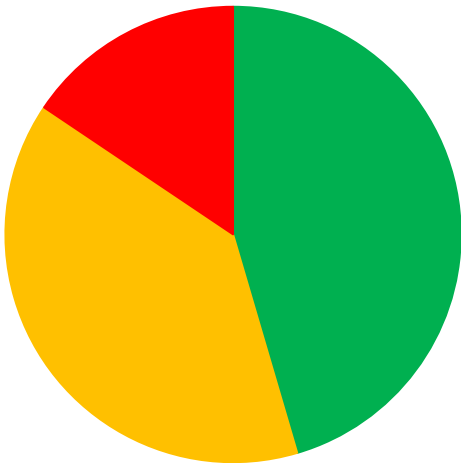
Diet



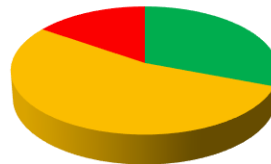


European
Commission

Assessment risk factors



**SOP
updated**



**industry
informed**



**Actions
implemented**



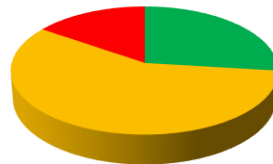


European
Commission

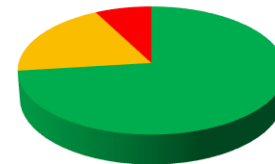
Evidence of injuries



**SOP
updated**



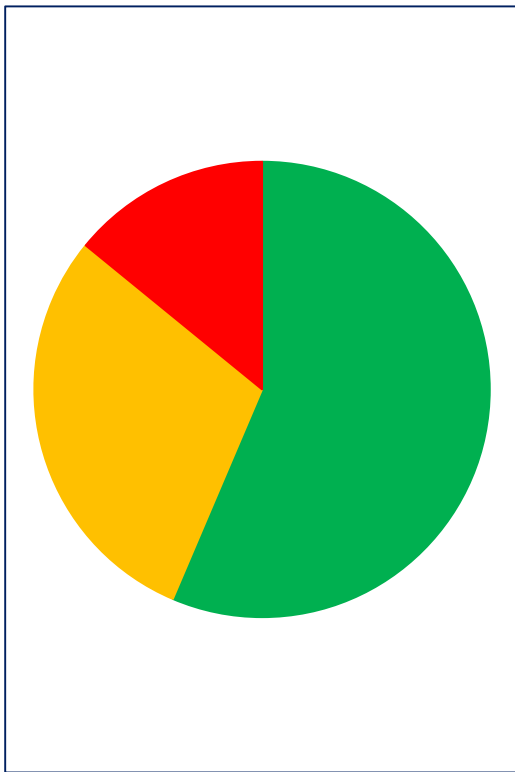
**industry
informed**



**Actions
implemented**



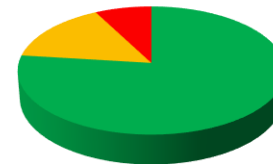
Change environment or management



**SOP
updated**



**industry
informed**



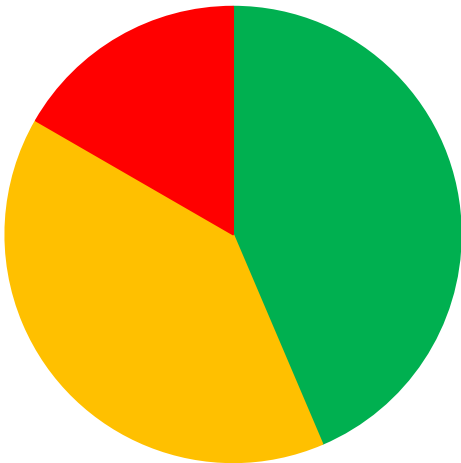
**Actions
implemented**





European
Commission

Enforcement guidance on evidence of injuries



**SOP
updated**



**industry
informed**



**Actions
implemented**



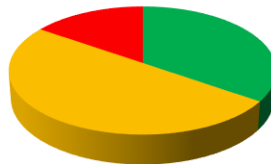


European
Commission

Enforcement guidance on improvement measures



**SOP
updated**



**industry
informed**



**Actions
implemented**





European
Commission

Reviewing the provision of veterinary statements and quality standard requirements justifying the need to tail-docking



Audits 2019

4 audits: HU, AT, PT, FR – reports not yet published

No change in tail-docking 98,5-100% - i.e. still routine

2/4 countries taking structured action to improve enforcement and following Action Plan but - progress still too slow and sector still non-compliant despite activities

Cross compliance controls (SMR 12 based upon 2008/120).

Updated procedures for Action Plans need to be applied for cross compliance assessments.

Conclusions

Variable efforts by MS and sector to improve compliance

-BUT-

Further efforts / refinement are needed

Action Plans should be published to share good practice & prevent duplication of effort

Compliance criteria in actions plans must be mandatory

Action plans must be implemented effectively-not just "Paper Tigers"

Conclusions

Some MS may have implemented requirements regarding compliance criteria, evidence of tail docking, and improvement measures, but if tail docking continues to be routine the farmer is not compliant with 2008/120/EC and the improvement measures have not been sufficient → additional measures must be taken!

As long as tails are being docked, farmers must engage in a continuous cycle of improvement measures to improve on farm conditions

These measures have to go beyond the otherwise minimum requirements if this is necessary to reduce tail docking

Improvement measures going beyond minimum standards will have to be taken to get to the point where tail docking is no longer routine.

State of Play

Next stage of Implementation measures needed



- Actions needed for weaners sold docked to fattening farms
- Thresholds for when to move to intact tails and to maintain rearing pigs with intact tails- Animal Welfare Platform subgroup proposals
- Work of the EU Reference Centre for Animal Welfare EURCAW on "iceberg" indicators to assist official controls
- Widespread "best practice" trials rearing pigs with intact tails

State of Play

DG SANTE writing to MS CA

1. Action Plan assessment end 2019
2. Liaison with DG AGRI on Xcompliance/RDP



Commissioner Andriukaitis has written to MS Ministers:

1. Those that have proposed suitable action plans but have not yet made much progress in rearing pigs with intact tails
2. Those that have not proposed suitable action plans

Proposals for enforcement await the new Commissioner DG SANTE's decision

Thank you



Happy to reply to Questions