

REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Welfare of bobby calves

The Animal Welfare Advisory Committee of New Zealand was established in 1989 by their Minister of Agriculture to advise him on matters concerning animal welfare. It consists of members from various backgrounds including farming, animal welfare science, consumer interests, animal welfare law, conservation, pest control and the Ministry of Agriculture. The Committee is comparable in some ways to the UK's Farm Animal Welfare Council but, unlike FAWC, its remit extends beyond the welfare of farm livestock. Since its formation, the Committee has produced some 20 'Codes of Recommendations' on the welfare aspects of a wide range of subjects, including farm livestock, circus, rodeo, companion and laboratory animals.

The Committee's most recent publication is a revision of their *Code of Recommendations and Minimum Standards for the Welfare of Bobby Calves*, first published in 1993. This revised code of conduct for the welfare of 'bobby' calves (those at least 4 days-old and which are destined for human consumption) covers all aspects of welfare, 'unique' to them, from birth to slaughter. The document is divided into seven sections, covering: (1) introductory comments; (2) legal responsibilities; (3) general objectives for owners/farmers, transport operators/drivers and processors; (4) owners'/farmers' responsibilities; (5) transport operators'/drivers' responsibilities; (6) processors' responsibilities; and (7) emergency humane destruction. Throughout the booklet, clear distinctions are drawn between the statutory requirements, minimum standards, and recommendations that are listed.

The report will be required reading for those in the cattle industry in New Zealand. However, like the others in this series, it is a valuable short review of welfare issues and it may prove very helpful for those aiming to raise standards elsewhere - particularly in countries which lack a clear framework for farm animal welfare.

Code of Recommendations and Minimum Standards for the Welfare of Bobby Calves. Code of Animal Welfare No 8 (Revised). Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (1997). Ministry of Agriculture: Wellington. 18pp. Paperback. Obtainable from the publishers, PO Box 2526, Wellington, New Zealand. (ISBN 0478073283; ISSN 1171090X).

Practical farm animal research

On 19 May 1997, Cambac JMA Research (Wiltshire, UK) held an open day during which the organization celebrated 15 years of research since its formation in 1982. To mark this event, Cambac published a booklet entitled *Practical Solutions to Practical Problems*. This presents information on the history of the organization and its current research activities in to aspects of farm animal production and welfare. It includes, as a foreword, the text of the topical opening address given at the open day by Mr Grenville Welsh, Chief Executive of the British Pig Association. In this foreword, Mr Welsh contrasts the rising need for research and development of the sort undertaken by Cambac to improve production and transport systems and practices, with the decline of government funding for near-market research.

The bulk of the book comprises short, poster-like and simply illustrated accounts of recent and current projects undertaken by Cambac staff and their collaborators. These short papers (which do not include references) are grouped into sections on pig transport, abattoir handling systems, outdoor pigs, housing systems for sows, cattle transport, objective methods for assessing welfare, and industry-funded work. There are 25 papers in total covering quite a wide range of subjects, as indicated by the following almost-randomly-picked selection of titles: 'A national survey of transport conditions for cattle'; 'Behaviour