

The SCAHAW concluded in their report that 'force-feeding, as currently practised, is detrimental to the welfare of the birds and made a variety of recommendations, as follows. i) No process should be used that results in an increase in liver size such that its function is significantly modified or that it causes increased mortality, pain or distress. ii) No feeding procedure should be used that results in substantial discomfort. iii) All people involved should be properly trained and competent. iv) The use of individual cages should not be permitted. v) All flocks should be officially monitored and welfare indices recorded. vi) A range of research on health, feeding methods, housing and socio-economic aspects should be undertaken.

This report was adopted by the Committee on 16 December 1998. Since Article 3 of the Council of Europe's *Convention on the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes* (which all EU member states have ratified) states that 'animals shall be housed and provided with food, water and care in a manner which...is appropriate to their physiological and ethological needs...', it appears, on the basis of this Report, that some changes will be required.

Welfare Aspects of the Production of Foie Gras in Ducks and Geese (1998). Report of the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare. EU Directorate General XXIV: Brussels. 89pp. Available at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg24/health/sc/scah/outcome-en.html>. Free.

Learning support books for Animal Care NVQs

The Animal Care and Equine Training Organisation (ACETO) produced these workbooks to support students studying for National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). The books provide materials that aim to cover the range of knowledge needed to achieve the NVQs in Animal Care at Levels 2 and 3. (NVQs are UK qualifications which were devised to give those working within an industry the opportunity to gain accreditation for the skills they were using as part of their job. The NVQs are competency- rather than exam-based, and students need to demonstrate a range of practical skills and supporting background knowledge to claim the qualification.)

Animal welfare, and the concept of the Farm Animal Welfare Council's 'five freedoms', have been placed firmly at the heart of the Animal Care NVQs. The range of animal husbandry skills over which competency needs to be demonstrated is broad, especially for NVQ Level 3, and is reflected in the chapter titles of the workbooks – which include coverage of nutrition, maintaining animal health, transportation of animals, handling and restraint, animal accommodation and animal training. In addition, students must demonstrate skills associated with the correct handling of stock and customer care, as well as with the implementation of relevant health and safety legislation. The books attempt to provide this broad range of information, and related self-assessment tests, in fewer than 100 pages. Background knowledge is covered quickly and efficiently but the workbooks allow themselves little space for discussion. Lists of instructions and key measures are given in bullet point form, but justification as to why these are needed is, in the main, omitted. Where possible, overtly technical terms are avoided – but where they have to be used, a clear explanation of their meaning is sometimes lacking.

One weakness of the books is their strong focus on caring for dogs and cats; those seeking a broader perspective on animal care will be disappointed. Another, is their surprising failure to indicate to readers how the information being given relates to NVQ assessment criteria – something which is most apparent in the NVQ 3 workbook. This omission limits the usefulness of the workbooks and means that they are best used in close conjunction with an NVQ assessor. They should not be regarded as 'stand-alone' texts. However, the main weakness of the books arises from weaknesses inherent within the structure of the NVQs in Animal Care. Problems arise, because of the need to instruct and assess practically inclined students over the broad range of knowledge – much of which is technical and specialized – required for the care of animals.

This results in great discrepancies in the technical complexity of the knowledge that students are required to demonstrate between units within each level of the NVQ, and particularly between levels. The skills that need to be demonstrated to achieve the NVQ Level 3, which should roughly be equivalent to an 'A level', are greatly beyond what one might expect from such equivalent qualifications. The workbooks have addressed this problem as far as possible, and gone some way to meeting the still pressing demand for a single textbook which supports those studying for the increasingly popular NVQs in Animal Care.

Caring for Animals. Learning Support Book N/SVQ Level 2. Animal Care and Equine Training Organisation (1998). 86pp. Ring-bound. *Animal Care and Management. Learning Support Book N/SVQ Level 3.* Animal Care and Equine Training Organisation (1998). 88pp. Ring-bound. Both books published by and obtainable from: Animal Care and Equine Training Organisation Ltd, Second Floor, The Burgess Building, The Green, Stafford ST17 4BL, UK. Price £15.00 (members) and £20.00 (non-members).

Transport of pigs

The Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) has produced a useful information and training booklet for drivers involved in the transport of pigs. This is aimed at supporting the Scottish Pig Industry Initiative by providing up-to-date information on transport legislation. The booklet is a spin-off from a training package developed by the SAC and can be used on its own in the training, assessment and certification of competence of professional livestock drivers (as required under the *Welfare of Animals [Transport] Order 1997*).

The booklet starts with a brief outline of the salient aspects of pig behaviour and biology, then provides a series of single-page, information sheet-like layouts on a variety of topics including: loading and unloading, stocking densities, ventilation, hygiene, vehicle construction and maintenance, health and safety, driving times, driving skills, fitness to travel, paperwork, contingency plans, inspections, finance and exports. The booklet is attractively produced and easy to read. Key points are set out as bullet points and each section is illustrated (although with photogenic rather than informative pictures).

This is a valuable, concise, but comprehensive, booklet on the road transport of pigs. It is aimed at providing drivers with the information they need to meet the requirements of the *Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 1997*, but would be useful as part of introductory training for pig transporters anywhere. The SAC is planning similar publications on the transport of cattle and sheep.

Livestock Transport – Pigs: Handle with Care (1998). Scottish Agricultural College: Aberdeen. 24pp. Paperback. Obtainable from the publishers, Animal Biology Division, Craibstone Estate, Bucksburn, Aberdeen AB21 9YA. Price £12.00 (or £8.00 per copy for bulk orders).

Standards for dog breeding establishments (and guidance for licensing UK dog breeding establishments)

In 1996, a Working Group comprising representatives of the British Veterinary Association (BVA), the British Small Animal Veterinary Association, the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Local Government Association, was set up to substantially update guidance on the licensing of dog breeding establishments. The Group's report was published recently and provides a comprehensive and valuable set of guidelines.

The *Breeding of Dogs Acts* (1973 and 1991) are introduced and their key provisions are outlined in the introductory section of the booklet. Following this, there are sections on guidance relevant to domestic breeders and then, to non-domestic breeders; finally, other relevant legislation is briefly outlined. The guidance notes are well laid out with the requirements of the