

and the Economic and Social Committee are also being consulted. Barring hold-ups or snags, the intention is for the Directive to proceed – requiring all member states to put all necessary laws and provisions for compliance in place by 1st January 1999.

Proposal for an EU Directive Laying Down Minimum Standards for the Protection of Laying Hens Kept in Various Systems of Rearing. Commission of the European Communities (1998). Office for Official Publications of the European Communities: Luxembourg. 12pp. Loose-leaf. Available from Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, L-2985, Luxembourg (Catalogue No. CB-CO-98-166-EN-C; ISBN 92-78-32088-9). Free.

Revision of the *Sheep Welfare Code*

The original *Sheep Welfare Code* was published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) in 1983. In response to a number of recommendations in the Farm Animal Welfare Council's 1994 report on the welfare of sheep, MAFF, the Scottish Office Agriculture, Environment and Fisheries Department and the Welsh Office Agriculture Department have now drafted a revised edition and are consulting on this. As well as seeking to make the report more user-friendly, the authors have placed clearer emphasis on the need for written health and welfare programmes and the importance of good stockmanship; they have also provided detailed advice on some key welfare aspects, such as dealing with lameness and the value of condition scoring in good husbandry.

The Code sets out key points relevant to the husbandry and welfare of sheep under the following headings: stockmanship, feed and water, health, management, breeding techniques, pregnancy and lambing, artificial rearing, housing, hazards, and milk sheep. The largest sections are those on health and management. The range of topics covered seems well-judged and, although the document adheres to a formal Code format, enough background and detail is presented to help justify and explain the provisions where necessary.

Among the points included in the section on stockmanship, is that specific stockmanship skills are required by those caring for sheep. These skills may be developed on-farm by working with an experienced person, or through a suitable training course. However, the draft document states that the training should be of a type which leads to formal recognition of competence. A list of training organizations is to be included as an appendix. The draft Code states that a written health and welfare programme, covering the yearly production cycle, should be prepared for each flock. It should, at least, cover vaccination, parasite control, and foot care regimes; be developed with appropriate veterinary and technical advice; and be updated each year.

Following the consultation period, the Code will be subject to Parliamentary approval and adoption under the *Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968*.

Draft Sheep Welfare Code. Draft for Consultation. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (1998). Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food: London. 39pp. Paperback. Available from MAFF, Government Buildings, Hook Rise South, Tolworth KT6 7NF, UK. Free.

Significance of countryside sports

This report, an update of one published in 1992, reviews diverse aspects of the countryside sports industry. It provides data on the number of people in the UK involved in various forms of hunting, shooting and fishing, on the economic value of these activities, and on their relevance to wildlife conservation. It is based on some original survey work but draws heavily on reports

and special studies by other organizations such as the Game Conservancy Trust, the British Association for Shooting and Conservation, and the Centre for Rural Studies. There is a wealth of information about the current status of the field sports industry in Great Britain. In 1996, it is estimated that: 3.3 million people went fishing; 0.7 million people shot game and wildfowl; 0.21 million people hunted with or followed hounds; 14 500 people stalked deer; and 12 500 people participated in falconry. The annual direct expenditure on these activities was estimated at over £3.8 billion and there was a further £2.4 billion of indirect expenditure. The report provides estimates of a total of 90 000 people being employed directly or indirectly by the industry, and of it generating a revenue of £655 million for the government through taxes.

The impact of this industry on rural communities is examined, and the report concludes: 'It is clear...that there are strong opposing forces in operation to the contribution to rural communities'. There are social and economic benefits but there also strong anti-field sports feelings in some quarters. While no solutions are offered here, the report suggests that, 'the reconciliation of conflict should be achieved through reasoned and objective debate, together with the provision of information'. It contributes to this debate by providing information on the economic, social and conservation aspects of countryside sports. However, no attempt is made to address the animal welfare aspects of these sports. Undoubtedly this is a difficult subject to factor in, but to give the matter no consideration in this report seems an odd omission, since the country sports debate is not really about conservation but about animal welfare.

Countryside Sports, their Economic, Social and Conservation Significance. Review and survey by the Cobham Resource Consultants (1997). The Standing Conference on Countryside Sports: Berkshire. 118pp (plus 26pp of appendices). Paperback. Obtainable from, The Standing Conference on Countryside Sports, The College of Estate Management, Whiteknights, Reading, Berkshire RG6 2AW, UK (ISBN 1899769668). Price £15.00.

Additional EU standards for livestock transport

On 1 July 1999, new European Union (EU) regulations which provide additional welfare protection for cattle, sheep, goats and pigs transported by road on journeys of greater than 8h will come into force. The European Council's new Regulation, which expands provisions under Directive 91/628/EEC, sets out further standards for road vehicles used for long-distance livestock transport. These cover aspects of bedding, feed, access, ventilation, partitions and water supply. The Regulation requires vehicles to be fitted with partitions to enable compartmentalization of space, and that they are equipped to enable direct access to the animals at all times for inspection, care, feeding and watering. There must also be ventilation systems which adequately meet the physiological needs of the animals in the weather conditions under which they are transported – and these must maintain suitable conditions whether the vehicle is moving or stationary. To this end, operators must ensure that temperature is monitored, and provide either a forced ventilation system (details of which are to be set later) or a ventilation system which ensures that a range of temperatures from 5 to 30°C can be maintained. Other points address the provision of feed and water.

The Regulation has a built-in review system: by 3 October 2003, the Commission is required to submit a report to the Council on the implementation of the legislation and especially on the ventilation system requirements.

Council Regulation (EC) No 411/98 of 16 February 1998. On additional animal protection standards applicable to road vehicles used for the carriage of livestock on journeys exceeding eight hours. Council of Europe (1998). *Official Journal of the European Communities L52*: 8-11.