Dear 

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: FAWC ADVICE ON THE WELFARE OF FARM ANIMALS AT SLAUGHTER – REFERENCES

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on 12 March 2015, about advice provided by the Farm Animal Welfare Committee, and its predecessor Council (both FAWC), to Defra with regards to Shechita slaughter. As you know, we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). A copy of your request is attached at Annex C.

Our response to each part of your request is as follows (for ease of reference, we have numbered our answers according to the numbers in your request):

1: A list of the references used during the preparation of FAWC’s Report on the Welfare of Farmed Animals at Slaughter or Killing – Part Two: White Meat Animals is attached at Annex D. This shows that Dr Rosen’s Viewpoint Paper in the Veterinary Record – Physiological insights into Shechita (2004) was taken into consideration.

2: The list of references at Annex D shows that FAWC did not include findings from Professor Grandin in its considerations during the preparation of this report. This is because Professor Grandin’s work focusses mainly on large farmed species rather than poultry.

3. Defra does not hold the information requested at 3 of your request. This information is not held by another public authority. FAWC has considered Professor Grandin’s research, in the course of preparing recent advice to the current UK government and Devolved Administrations, on non-stun slaughter processes. However, FAWC has not made Defra or the Chief Veterinary Officer aware specifically of Professor Grandin’s findings on Shechita as delineated in your request.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA and the government’s Transparency Agenda, replies to FOIA requests are releasable to the public. Therefore, this letter may now be published on www.gov.uk together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. Please note that this will not include information that would identify you.
I attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Information Rights Team
InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk
Annex A

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra’s complaints procedure are on our website.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra’s own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner’s Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Annex C

Dear FAWC,

1. Paragraph 200 of the FAWC's Report On the Welfare of Farmed Animals at Slaughter or Killing (Part 2: White Meat Animals-May 2009) states; "On the basis of available evidence, veterinarians, scientists, and enforcement and animal protection groups worldwide consider that animals should be stunned before slaughter". Paragraph 9 of the above mentioned FAWC Publication States-"In making its recommendations, FAWC aims to consider all relevent views".

In making the above statement, I ask the FAWC to provide me with documented proof/evidence/ written FAWC publications that the FAWC took into account the findings of Dr Stuart Rosen of Imperial College London in his Paper- The Physiological Aspects of Shechita-2004. The Scientific findings in the above mentioned Study concluded that the "Shechita Cut" performed at slaughter was at least as effective a stun as any other form of stunning.

2. The Scientific Findings and conclusions of Professor Dr Temple Grandin, Professor of Animal Science at Colorado State University on this subject are identical to those concluded by Dr Rosen above. Professor Grandin is now Chief Animal Welfare Adviser to The American Meat Institute.

In making the above quoted FAWC statement, please provide me with documented proof/evidence/ written FAWC publications that the FAWC took into account the Scientific findings of Professor Grandin who concluded that the "Shechita Cut" performed at slaughter was at least as effective a stun as any other form of stunning, and that the Shechita method was and is as humane as any other form of animal slaughter.

3. Please provide me with documented proof/evidence/ written FAWC publications that demonstrate that FAWC is presently or has at any time made DEFRA and The Chief Veterinary Officer aware of Professor Grandins Scientific Findings with regards to the Shechita method as delineated above.

The above requests for information are made to the FAWC under The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and The EIR 2004.

Thank you

Bsc (Zoology), Msc(Environmental Studies)
Annex D

FARM ANIMAL WELFARE COUNCIL – REPORT ON THE WELFARE OF FARME
ANIMALS AT SLAUGHTER OR KILLING – PART TWO: WHITE MEAT ANIMALS

The Council’s advice to the Government is based on a wealth of scientifi
c knowledge and practical experience, not only of its members but also of many within the poultry and its allied industries, scientists, veterinarians and others concerned about poultry welfare.

Whilst the relevant published scientific evidence is always considered in preparing our reports, members of the Slaughter Working Group also witnessed slaughter of poultry by a range of methods, both in this country and overseas, and have received and fully considered extensive written and oral evidence.

LIST OF REFERENCES


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Ben Bradshaw MP; Letter of 28 June 2006 to FAWC Chairman requesting advice on ventilation shutdown for killing poultry in extreme disease control situations.


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Defra consultation on amending the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing ) Regulations 1995 to permit the use of gas outside of a slaughterhouse, 8 June 2006.

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FAWC; Advice to Ministers on the Handling and Transport of Poultry – 1990

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27 Sept 2006

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HSA Guide - Broilers and Hens in Processing Plants

HSA Guide - Electrical Water-baths

HSA Guide - Gas Killing of Chickens and Turkeys

HSA Guide - Gas Killings of Chicks in Hatcheries

HSA Guide - Instantaneous Mechanical Destruction

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McKeegan DEF et al ; Abstract of research on Physiological monitoring of laying hens during whole house killing with carbon dioxide. UFAW conference summer 2008.

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World Health Organisation (OIE) amended guidelines for the slaughter of animal for human consumption – November 2005


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**Responses to written consultation**

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Animal Welfare Training, University of Bristol
Assured Chicken Production
British Poultry Council
British Veterinary Association
Campaign for the Protection of Shechita
Dr Mohan Raj, University of Bristol
Halal Food Authority
Humane Slaughter Association
Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS)
Meat Trades Christian Fellowship
National Proficiency Tests Council (NPTC)
Peter Vingerling, Transition and Society, consultant to Stork PMT
Roslin Research Institute.
Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Silsoe Research Institute
VEGA Research