



The Farm Animal Welfare Committee

Annual Review 2012-2013



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In presenting this review I am conscious that it represents work undertaken and set in train by my predecessor as Chairman, Professor Christopher Wathes, and the first months of the deliberations of the Committee under my chairmanship.

Christopher had not only chaired FAWC for eight years but had also presided over its change from Council to Committee, and thereby started the development of a closer working arrangement with the Governments of the UK as an expert advisory committee.

As the new Chairman I have been joined by three other new members, Andy Butterworth, Richard Jennison and Kate Rawles, who have each brought their own particular areas of expertise to assist the Committee in its consideration of farm animal welfare issues.

As a veterinary surgeon in practice for most of my working life, I was pleased to see that the Report on Farm Animal Welfare: Health and Disease (published in November 2012) showed again the importance of the linkage between good welfare practices and good health if production is to be efficient. Such issues will undoubtedly be uppermost in the Committee members' considerations as sustainable intensification becomes the policy demand to meet the increased future food production required to match the appetite of the growing human population.

The Opinion on the welfare implications of breeding and breeding technologies in commercial livestock agriculture, published in November 2012, highlighted the importance of considering the consequences of scientific and technological advances on the quality of life that livestock experience. It is not sufficient only to consider codes of practice for undertaking new technological manipulations and techniques, without also considering the ethical question as to whether they should be undertaken at all.

FAWC has returned to consider a topic first looked at 28 years ago, the welfare of farmed deer, and will have published an Opinion by the time that this review has appeared.

All FAWC's advice is available to view or download on our website www.defra.gov.uk/fawc

This year will see further work on the consideration of the types of evidence used in decision making on animal welfare issues. It will see publications on the welfare of farmed fish production and killing, and will see the start of a major new piece of work on animal welfare in beef production.

There is little doubt that other matters will be brought to the Committee's attention by the various Governments, and practical and informed advice and Opinions will be produced as required after gathering and considering the available evidence or encouraging further research.

So far I have had a busy first year and I have no doubt that this is set to continue.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Jinman', written in a cursive style.

Peter Jinman
Chairman, Farm Animal Welfare Committee
September 2013

The Farm Animal Welfare Committee is an expert committee of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Devolved Administrations in Scotland and Wales. The Committee was established in 2011¹ to provide advice to Defra and the Devolved Administrations in Scotland and Wales on the welfare of farmed animals, including farmed animals on agricultural land, at market, in transit and at the place of killing.

FAWC is recognised worldwide for its independent, critical analysis of contemporary issues relating to farm animal welfare. It has provided the model for similar advisory bodies on animal welfare in other countries.

Animal welfare

The welfare of an animal includes its physical and mental state. FAWC considers that good animal welfare implies both fitness and a sense of wellbeing. Any kept animal must, at least, be protected from unnecessary suffering. Stockmanship, plus the training and supervision necessary to achieve required standards, are key factors in the handling and care of livestock. A management system may be acceptable in principle but without competent, diligent stockmanship, the welfare of animals cannot be safeguarded adequately. FAWC lays great stress on the need for better awareness of animal welfare needs, and for better training and supervision.

The Five Freedoms

FAWC believes that an animal's welfare, whether on farm, in transit, at market or at a place of killing should be considered in terms of the **Five Freedoms**. These freedoms define ideal states rather than standards for acceptable welfare. They form a logical and comprehensive framework for analysis of welfare within any system, together with the factors necessary to safeguard and improve welfare within the proper constraints of an effective livestock industry.

- 1. Freedom from Hunger and Thirst** –
by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour.
- 2. Freedom from Discomfort** –
by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
- 3. Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease** –
by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
- 4. Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour** –
by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind.
- 5. Freedom from Fear and Distress** –
by ensuring conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

A life worth living

The Five Freedoms have been the cornerstone of much legislation and policy in Britain and elsewhere, have been used widely in marketing, and form the basis of welfare assessment, not only in farm animals. However, some argue that their focus is overly negative. In 2009 the Farm Animal Welfare Council (the Farm Animal Welfare Committee's predecessor) proposed that the minimum standard of farm animal welfare should move beyond the Five Freedoms and be set at the test of whether an animal has a life worth living, from its point of view. Further, FAWC believes that an increasing proportion of animals should be enabled to have 'a good life'.

¹ The Committee was established in 2011 following a review of public bodies, and replaced the Farm Animal Welfare Council (also known as FAWC).

Terms of reference

FAWC's terms of reference are:

- To provide independent, authoritative, impartial and timely advice, to Defra and the Devolved Administrations in Scotland and Wales:
 - on the welfare of farmed animals, including farmed animals on agricultural land, at market, in transit and at the place of killing; and
 - on any legislative or other changes that might be considered necessary to improve standards of animal welfare
- To provide independent scientific support and advice as required by Article 20 of Council Regulation (EC) No.1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing.

A strategic work plan

FAWC agrees its work plan with Defra and the Devolved Administrations in Scotland and Wales. The plan sets out its strategic direction and the work it will undertake to meet the expectations of its remit. A three-year rolling work plan for 2012-2014 has been published on the FAWC website.

Working methods

FAWC works by:

- writing reports, opinions and letters that offer advice to Governments on specific topics, supplemented by meetings with Ministers and their Senior Responsible Officers, Chief Veterinary Officers and other officials in England, Scotland and Wales;
- responding to *ad hoc* requests for advice from Government(s);
- responding to government consultations; and
- developing strategic relationships with interested parties.

FAWC delivers strategic advice in the form of a report on a broad topic, which is prepared by a Working Group over a period of up to three years. The lifespan of a report is expected to be at least ten years. Only one report study runs at any one time.

FAWC also produces opinions, which offer advice on targeted, contemporary topics relating to farm animal welfare. Each is drafted by a Standing Committee taking up to 18 months.

In addition to these, FAWC produces a number of letters each year, responding to specific requests for advice from Government or arising from a concern of the Committee.

When investigating a topic, FAWC will make use of the extensive experience and collective expertise of its members, but will also consult a wide range of interest groups. We carefully consider both written and oral evidence from those with specific expertise. Wherever possible we use relevant and robust science to aid us. This is carefully balanced with information gained from industry experience, visits to farms and other agricultural businesses and guidance from experts.

All FAWC advice is approved by the full Committee before being submitted to Governments, and is published independently on the website.

Standing Committees

FAWC has four Standing Committees that cover welfare issues within the following broad subject areas:

- Ethics, Economics, Education and Regulation;
- Ruminants; and
- Pigs, Poultry and Fish;
- Welfare at Killing

The Standing Committees horizon scan for new welfare issues, keep under review and press for action on existing welfare issues and carry out studies leading to Opinions. Membership of these Committees is designed to make the best use of FAWC members' specialist knowledge and expertise.

Working Groups

FAWC's current Working Group is investigating and reporting on the role of evidence in farm animal welfare.

The advice published by FAWC during 2012/13 is summarised below.

The full text can be viewed at www.defra.gov.uk/fawc

Report on Farm Animal Welfare: Health and Disease

FAWC published its landmark Report on Farm Animal Welfare: Health and Disease in November 2012. Its aims were to highlight the welfare issues that arise out of animal disease and the opportunities for improved animal health in the major species of farm animals.

By focusing on the direct impact of disease on farm animal welfare and understanding the interactions (positive and negative) between physical and mental health, the Report highlighted the potential to reduce individual animal suffering.

The prevalence of many endemic diseases in farm animals is too high. The Report identified a range of measures that promote positive animal health and prevent diseases affecting farm animals. When disease does occur, early recognition and rapid, appropriate and effective treatment are essential to reduce welfare impact.

The Report also emphasised the importance of the farm animal veterinary surgeon in ensuring that farm animals in Great Britain are treated humanely. In FAWC's view, the veterinarian is pivotal to continual improvements in farm animal health and welfare.

The Report addressed some of the critical issues in farm animal disease and welfare; for example, responsibility and cost sharing; public and private surveillance; resistance to antibiotics and anthelmintics; breeding for disease resistance; and the veterinarian's trilemma of duty to animal, client and his or her own interests. Strong partnership approaches have the opportunity to stimulate substantial improvement in farm animal health with economic, environmental and farm animal welfare benefits.

Opinion on the welfare implications of breeding and breeding technologies in commercial livestock agriculture

FAWC's Opinion on the welfare implications of breeding and breeding technologies in commercial livestock agriculture was published in November 2012. Its aim was to provide an overview of the animal welfare implications of selective breeding strategies and of breeding technologies.



FAWC welcomed progress made in recent years on breeding goals aimed at improving farm animals' robustness and health and welfare traits. However, it was noted that issues associated with high production levels resulting in poor animal welfare remain.

Planned breeding strategies and breeding technology tools have the potential to improve productivity, health and welfare in farm animals, but also the potential to result in poor welfare. If the balance of selected traits is skewed, then problems such as dystocia, metabolic and skeletal disorders and unwanted behaviours can manifest themselves. FAWC also has concerns about the direct impact of some breeding tools.

FAWC believes that breeding companies should incorporate a broad range of breeding goals into their breeding programmes, including fitness and functionality in tandem with productivity to help improve farm animal welfare.

Opinion on the welfare of farmed and park deer

FAWC published its Opinion on the welfare of farmed and park deer in July 2013. The Opinion considered the welfare of all enclosed deer species that enter the food chain, from birth to slaughter. FAWC last reported on the welfare of deer almost 30 years ago but did not include park deer. It was felt that, in a changing industry, the issue of farmed deer welfare should be revisited and should include that of deer in parks.

FAWC's view is that the majority of enclosed deer in the UK have a life worth living, but a minority potentially face challenges to their welfare due to inadequate stockmanship and husbandry. Many of these challenges can be addressed by the provision and taking up of appropriate training.

Responses to consultations

FAWC responded to:

- The UK Governments' consultations on the implementation of EU Regulation 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing.
- The Department for Education's consultation on reform of the National Curriculum in England.



Ethics, Economics, Education and Regulation Standing Committee

This Standing Committee is shortly to publish advice on aspects of the transport of live animals. The advice will comment on (i) the use of allometric principles for determining space allowances for farm animals during transport, as recommended by the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) 'Scientific Opinion Concerning the Welfare of Animals during Transport'; (ii) headroom allowances for animals during transport; and (iii) other issues concerning the welfare of farm animals during transport.

Pigs, Poultry and Fish Standing Committee

The Committee is engaged in a study of the welfare of farmed fish, in conjunction with the Welfare at Killing Standing Committee's study on the welfare of farmed fish at the time of killing.

Ruminants Standing Committee

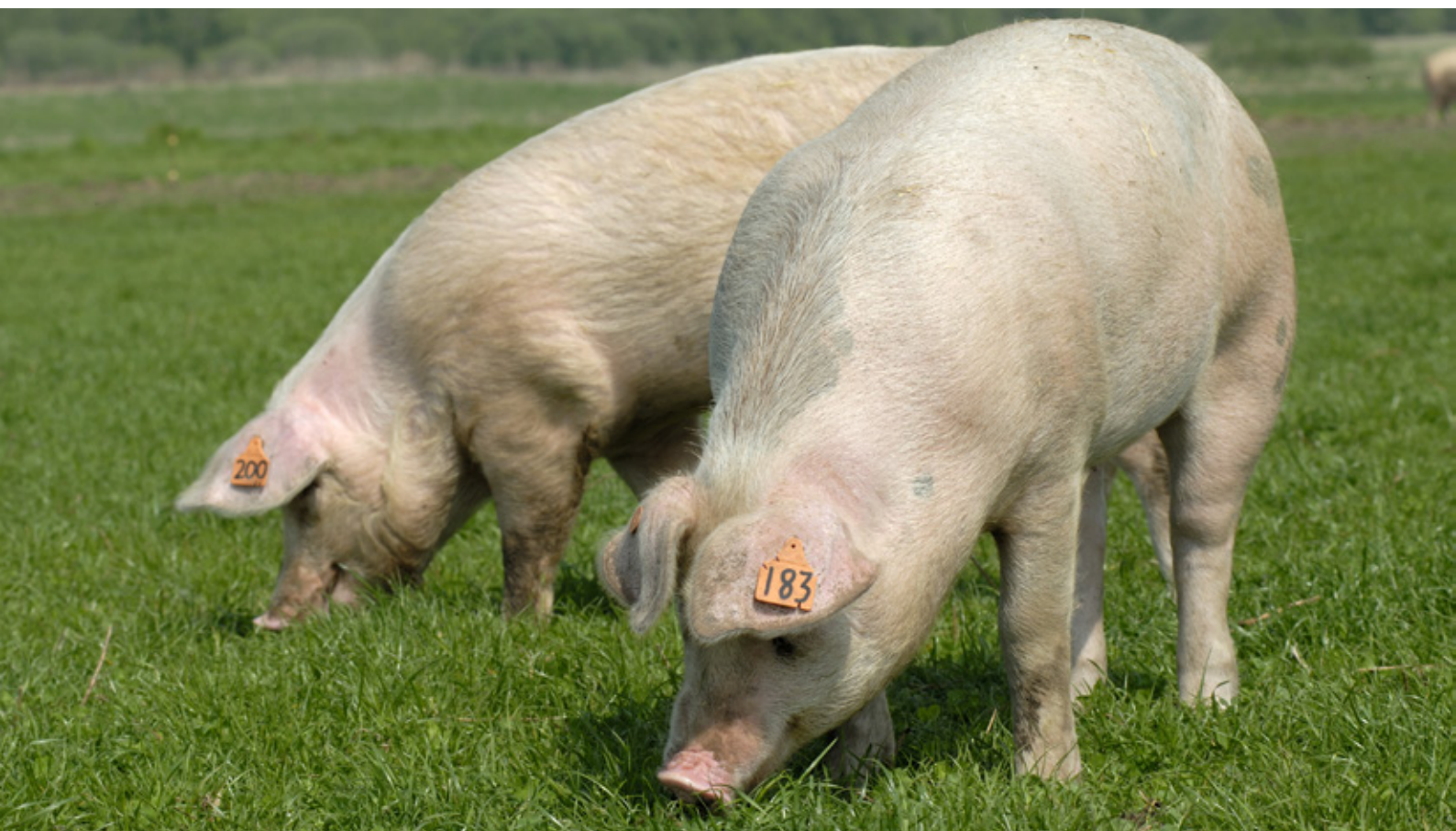
The Committee has begun an 18 month study, leading to an Opinion, on welfare issues relating to animals in the beef industry. The scope will encompass dairy beef calves and veal.

Welfare at Killing Standing Committee

The Welfare at Killing Standing Committee has an ongoing function to provide independent scientific support to Defra and the Devolved Administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales in relation to EU Regulation 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing.

The Committee prepared the response to consultations from UK governments on implementation of EU Regulation 1099/2009 and prepared advice on inversion of cattle for religious slaughter and on the suitability of a novel gas killing system for poultry.

It is currently working on the welfare of farmed fish at killing, stocking density in slaughterhouse lairages and on guidance on the approval process for restraining pens used during the slaughter of cattle by religious methods.



Evidence Working Group

FAWC's current Working Group is investigating and reporting on the role of evidence in farm animal welfare. The Working Group has been charged with the task of producing a Report in three stages with a 'Part' produced each year. The first of these will consider the nature and the construction of evidence used in the field of farm animal welfare. The second will consider how information is used as evidence by national and international bodies and other factors that influence policy and decision-making processes associated with animal welfare. The third will look more specifically at gaps in evidence and what can be done in such situations when decisions still have to be made.

Review of farm assurance schemes' impact on farm animal welfare

FAWC has established an *ad hoc* working group with the objectives of reviewing the impact farm assurance schemes have had on improvements in animal welfare in light of the recommendations made in the 2005 FAWC Report on the Welfare Implications of Farm Assurance Schemes; and proposing a positive way forward for the sector. The results of this review will be published shortly.

Breeding workstream

Following a number of independent recommendations that an advisory body be charged with oversight of the impact of breeding and breeding technology on the welfare of farm animals, the GB governments asked FAWC to undertake this task.

Having completed its first assessment of welfare impact resulting in the Opinion published in November 2012, the breeding workstream will continue with its standing remit of:

- Developing and maintaining relationships with major breeding companies operating in the UK or supplying the UK market;
- Liaison between the Farm Animal Genetic Resources Committee and FAWC;
- Providing short opinions on emerging technologies in animal breeding; and
- Keeping abreast of latest developments in animal breeding that may potentially have major impacts on livestock welfare, including attending relevant conferences and industry meetings, and reporting back to FAWC.

The workstream is providing advice to Defra by assessing how, and how quickly, breeding might assist in reducing injurious pecking in laying hens, and continues to respond to specific welfare queries as they arise relating to the development of EU policy on cloning.



The full Committee, usually 18 members, meets three times a year. Summaries of these meetings are available on the website. Members are drawn from a wide range of disciplines and occupations and serve in a personal capacity, not as representatives of any organisation or interest group. The membership includes those with extensive knowledge and experience of animal welfare science, livestock farming, veterinary medicine and consumer affairs.

Current members – September 2013

Chairman

Peter Jinman, qualified as a veterinary surgeon from the Royal Veterinary College, London, and was in a mixed general practice in Herefordshire until taking up the position of President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in 2010. He was previously President of the British Veterinary Association in 2002/03. He lives on a smallholding in Herefordshire and is a member of VCS Ltd, a veterinary consultancy of five veterinary surgeons working nationally and in Europe. He is a Trustee of the Addington Fund and non-executive director of Assured Food Standards.

Members

Professor Michael Appleby, chief scientific adviser for the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA). Formerly senior lecturer in Applied Animal Behaviour, University of Edinburgh. Visiting Professor, University of Plymouth and Scottish Agricultural College; Honorary Fellow, University of Edinburgh.

Professor Richard Bennett, an agricultural economist in the Department of Agricultural and Food Economics at the University of Reading. He is Chair of the BVA's Veterinary Development Council and a Trustee of the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, the Humane Slaughter Association and the Farm Animal Welfare Trust.

Professor Henry Buller, Chair of Rural Geography and Director of the BA Human Geography programme at the University of Exeter. Editor of the international rural science journal *Sociologia Ruralis*.

Dr Andy Butterworth, senior lecturer at Bristol University Veterinary School, with particular research interests in animal health and welfare assessment. Previously a member of the Advisory Committee on Organic Standards, the Poultry Working Group of the England Implementation Group for the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy and a member of the Poultry Welfare Forum. Involved in international animal welfare assessment, training and outreach programmes.

Dr Joanne Conington, Livestock geneticist in the Sustainable Livestock Systems group of the Scottish Agricultural College. A former sheep specialist with the Meat and Livestock Commission, currently vice-chairperson for the Sheep and Goat Commission of the European Association of Animal Production (EAAP), founder member of the European Association for Organic Animal Breeding, EAAP representative for the British Society of Animal Science and member of the sheep and goat expert panel for the Sustainable Farm Animal Breeding and Reproduction Platform.

Huw Davies, a sheep farmer from Carmarthenshire. He is a member of the Steering Committee for the Implementation of the Animal Health and Welfare Strategy for Wales, a Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Societies and a Nuffield Scholar.

Mike Elliott, a former pig farmer and wholesale butcher. A Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, he is a consultant to the meat trade in abattoir design and valuation. His interests include the treatment and handling of livestock during transport and lairage.

Dr John Fletcher, a veterinary surgeon. After studying wild red deer on the Isle of Rum, Scotland, for a PhD, he started his own deer farm in 1973. He has worked with deer ever since, has written several books about them, and was active in drafting the Welfare Code for Farmed Deer. He was founder President of the Veterinary Deer Society and has chaired the British Deer Farmers' Association and the Federation of European Deer Farmers' Associations.

Professor Laura Green, personal Chair in the School of Life Sciences at the University of Warwick, leading a research group on farm animal veterinary epidemiology and welfare. Member of the Society for Veterinary Epidemiology and Preventative Medicine; member of the REF subpanel 6A.

Richard Jennison, a practising veterinary surgeon in the poultry department of a large mixed veterinary practice. He is currently on the committee of the Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law Veterinary Association and is a member of the British Veterinary Poultry Association and the RSPCA Freedom Foods Working Groups for Laying Hens and for Pullets.

Gwyn Jones, a dairy farmer from West Sussex. Past Vice President of NFU, member of COPA Animal Health. Past NFU Dairy Board Chairman, past Vice-Chairman COPA Milk, and past Council Member of the Milk Development Council.

Professor Richard Moody, food scientist with 30 years' experience in food safety and quality who specialises in consumer aspects of food policy. Previously an independent Commissioner with the Meat and Livestock Commission and Chairman of its Consumers' Committee. Adviser on food additives research to the Food Standards Agency and was a member of its inaugural research committee; Fellow of the Institute for Food Science and Technology; and an external expert on the European Food Safety Authority's External Review Working Group.

Dr Kate Rawles, a lecturer in Outdoor Studies at the University of Cumbria, where she teaches environmental issues. She also works as a freelance lecturer, writer and campaigner. Her background is ethics and environmental ethics with a particular interest in the relationship between environmental issues, sustainability and animal welfare. She is a council member of the Food Ethics Council and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

Dr Philip Scott, Reader in Farm Animal Studies at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies and lead veterinarian in the School's Farm Animal Teaching Hospital. RCVS and European specialist in sheep health and production and European specialist in bovine health management.

Mark White, a practising veterinary surgeon with 30 years' practical experience. He is an RCVS recognised specialist in pig medicine and a former President of the Pig Veterinary Society, remaining an active member.

Steve Wotton, Senior Lecturer in Farm Animal Science at the University of Bristol's School of Veterinary Sciences. Major interests include the electrophysiological study of animal welfare issues particularly during stunning and slaughter. Specialism is the conception, design and co-ordination of research projects and technology transfer to both the veterinary profession and the meat industry. Originator of the Animal Welfare Officer (AWO) and Poultry Welfare Officer (PWO) training courses, which has led to the adoption of AWOs as a requirement in slaughterhouses across Europe (EC Regulation 1099/2009).

The following FAWC members retired during 2012/13:

Professor Christopher Wathes retired after eight years as Chairman. Professor Sandra Edwards, Neil Manchester, Reverend Professor Michael Reiss and Meryl Ward retired as members. We would like to thank them all for their many contributions to the work of FAWC.

Appointments

Appointments to the Committee are subject to open and transparent recruitment in line with the Code of Practice of the Office for the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Appointments are made on the basis of the expertise required to undertake the advisory work that FAWC is, and will be, engaged in and reflect the priorities contained in the strategic work plan. Criteria for membership therefore vary from time to time and there is no permanent balance.

Guidance to members

On appointment, members receive guidance about matters such as working procedures, guiding principles, representing the Committee, networking and fees and expenses. Incorporated in the guidance is a Code of Practice for Members, which is written with full regard to the seven principles of public life, identified by the Nolan Committee in its Report on Standards in Public Life and the recommendations made by the Phillips Inquiry Report relevant to advisory bodies.

Register of members' interests

The Committee's work covers a wide range of issues connected with the agricultural industry, animal welfare organisations, research bodies and the veterinary profession. In order to avoid any concern that members' interests might adversely affect the advice given by the Committee, information about significant and relevant interests of the membership is kept on a register, copies of which are available from the Secretariat. This register is updated annually. In addition to information on commercial interests, a record is kept of relevant non-commercial interests, such as membership of organisations whose work may overlap with the Committee's areas of interest.

Activity

During 2012/2013, FAWC (including its sub-groups) held 39 meetings and went on ten days of visits to agricultural premises. In addition, FAWC members and the Secretariat represented the Committee at more than 15 meetings, conferences and workshops on farm animal welfare.

Costs

FAWC's work is financed by Defra, which also provides the Secretariat. During the financial year 2012/2013, total public expenditure on the Committee was £284,000. This sum comprised £88,000 for members' fees, travel and related costs; £173,000 to provide a Secretariat; £20,000 for Defra advisers; and £3,000 for printing and publicity.

Secretariat

The FAWC Secretariat is staffed by Defra officials.
In 2012/2013 these were Richard Aram, Louise Mulcahy and Brenda Rawson.

Communications

FAWC's main avenue of communication is its website www.defra.gov.uk/fawc.

The website of FAWC's predecessor Council
is available at The National Archive

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120420211157/>

<http://www.fawc.org.uk/>

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