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Welfare issues identified by key informants in low-input outdoor and organic pig and poultry production systems

In four countries (Italy, Finland, France, United Kingdom), interviews were carried out with eleven key-informants working within the supply chain of low-input or organic production of poultry meat, eggs and pork meat (farmers, vets, companies producing progeny, feed producers, health inspectors in slaughter houses or egg packing company's experts, NGOs). The objective was to understand the major issues in welfare in such productions according to on-field people.

What are the issues in poultry

The interviews indicated that the main issues in poultry were:

- in 4 countries (orange): feeding issues, issues related to biosecurity, lack of range use and range management
- in 3 countries (green): issues related to feather pecking, coping with weather, regulation, flock size or density and predation
- in 2 countries (grey): bone fractures and lack of animal robustness
- in 1 country: parasitism, pododermatitis, arthrosis, nervousness, water quality, catching and time spent by farmers.

	United Kingdom	Finland	
France	Parasitism Pododermatitis Arthrosis Animal nervousness Water quality Catching Time spent by farmers	Fractures	Feather pecking Coping with weather Animal robustness
Italy		Feeding Biosecurity Lack of range use Range management	Predation
		Regulation Flock size and stocking density	



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What are the issues in pig

The main issues mentioned in pig were:

- in 3 countries (green): feeding issues, cannibalism, mortality, coping with weather, predation, lack of robustness, lack of range use
- in 2 countries (grey): castration, animal aggressiveness and competition, water quality, range management, human welfare, biosecurity issues, flock size or density
- in 1 country: parasitism, insolation burns, joint abnormalities, parturition in freedom and pollution.

	United Kingdom	Finland	
	Pollution	Human welfare Biosecurity	
France	Parasitism Insolation burns Joint abnormalities Parturition in freedom	Aggressiveness Competition Water quality	Feeding Cannibalism Mortality Weather
Italy	Castration	Predation Robustness	
	Range management	Lack of range use	Flock size and stocking density

Use of the results

These issues were discussed further in focus groups with farmers, practitioners and consumers in the four countries and they gave rise to investigations in literature to detect new opportunities to reduce these difficulties. Moreover, some issues were included in PPILOW experimental investigations to find new ways to solve these issues (Phytotherapy against parasitism, involvement of animal personality in range use, rearing of entire pig males, genetic selection for reduced piglet mortality, improved huts for sows and piglets reared on range, etc.) and to calculate solution costs.



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