Status of beak trimming in EU

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Danish poultry Congress 2016 – Status of beak trimming - Anaëlle Laravoire

**Context**

**Beak trimming**

**Why?** To prevent *feather pecking* (Huonnic et al., 2006)

**How?** Cutting vs Infra-red beak treatment

**Concern?** Ethical critical (LeNeindre et al., 2009)

**European Union**

**Demand:** Food chain request transparency

**Because:** Practices « not friendly for animal welfare »

**Concern:** European ban?
• EU: Minimum standards (Directive 1999/74/CE for laying hens livestock) **allow this practice**
• Some countries have already **anticipated a potential ban**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beak trimming forbidden</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norway (1974)</td>
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<td>Finland (1986)</td>
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<td>Sweden (1988)</td>
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<td>Austria (2000)</td>
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<td>Denmark (2013)</td>
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French study « Beak trimming »

Financed by the ministry of Agriculture and CNPO

Coming from professionals working in this sector

**Goal:** bring to the french laying hens sector items to anticipate a very likely EU ban of beak trimming
Context

Project BT

CNPO
II-Materials and methods

I. Choice of actors
II. Work by interview
III. Elaboration of survey results
Sociological study conducted through interviews

Ban of BT
- Sweden
- Denmark
- Austria

Thinking about a ban
- UK
- Germany
- Netherlands
1 to 5 respondents per country, using an interview guide made in three parts:

- Description of laying hens sector of the country
- Positionning the country / beak trimming
- What is set up / beak trimming

All interviews were recorded to help for the analysis
III - Results

A) Inventory: Status of beak trimming in EU

B) Results analysis: key recommendations mentioned by respondents
1. Ban of BT: by the legislation

Ban by law: Sweden example

**Number of interview:** 2 / Research: Uppsala University

**Presentation of the laying hens sector:**

- Number of laying hens: 7.5 million
- Number of farms: 368
- Enriched cages: 19%
- Barn: 65%
- Free range: 2.8
- Organic: 14%
- Number of white 95% / brown 5%
1. Ban of BT: by the legislation

Ban by law: Sweden example

1988: beak trimming is forbidden in all systems (cage, free range etc.)
Research group « New technique Testing »

→ international project called « Hennovation »
  - allow a more accessible information (technical and economical)
  - Create a network accessible for everybody
  - Involve farmers from different countries:
    Sweden, UK, NL, Sapin etc.
1. Ban of BT: by the legislation

Going to a ban by law: Dutch example

**Number of interview:** 5 / Research: Wageningen University/industry/genetic/hens sector

**Presentation of the laying hens sector:**
Number of laying hens: 35 million
Number of farms: 1 100
Enriched cages: 15%
Barn: 68%
Free range: 12%
Organic: 5%
Number of white 65%/brown 35%
1. Ban of BT: by the legislation

Going to a ban by law: Dutch example

- **1996**: beginning of research about feather pecking to anticipate a ban for 2001;
- **2001**: additional 5 years: establishment of a working group;
- **2006**: final report shows that it is not possible to ban BT, additional 5 years;
- **2011**: no solution, additional 10 years, ban forecast in **2018**
  - **2017**: evaluation of the situation
  - **Data Base**: AVINED (100 farms are followed)
  - **Implication on a project called « Hennovation »**
1. Ban of BT: by the legislation

A commitment of the industry to follow recommendations that avoids a ban of BT: UK example

**Number of interview:** 4 / Research: Bristol University/industry/genetic/hens sector

**Presentation of the laying hens sector:**
Number of laying hens: 34,8 million
Number of farms: 1 600
Enriched cages: 52%
Barn: 2.9%
Free range: 42.8%
Organic: 2.3%
Number of white 1%/brown 99%
1. Ban of BT: by the legislation

A commitment of the industry to follow recommendations that avoids a ban of BT: UK example

**RSPCA pressure** (Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to animals) for a ban.

- **1er January 2011**: Prohibition to use hot blade / obligation to use IR.

- **2011**: Government founded the **BTAG** (Beak Trimming Action Group) made of different stakeholders of the sector

- **December 2015**: the BTAG report is unfavorable for a ban. **The ministry accept all the recommendations and cancels the request of a ban for 2016.** Comitment for BEIC to respect there recommandations (changes of Lion Code of Practice to reduce pecking).
1. Ban of BT: by the legislation

A commitment of the industry to follow recommendations that avoids a ban of BT: German example

Number of interview: 1 / Research: Hohenheim University (Stuttgart)

Presentation of the laying hens sector:
Number of laying hens: 35 million
Number of farms: 1,498
Enriched cages: 11.3%
Barn: 62.7%
Free range: 17.5%
Organic: 8.5%
Number of white 40% / brown 60%
1. Ban of BT: by the legislation

A commitment of the industry to follow recommendations that avoids a ban of BT: German example

- Niedersachsen (Hannover): asked a ban in 2015
- Nordrhein-Wesrfalen (Düsseldorf): asked a ban in 2015
→ The KAT certification want to implement this ban in their requirement
  • the 16 agriculture ministers have agreed to a ban in 2016

From the 1st of August 2016, hatcheries will not practice BT anymore, thus, from 1st January 2017 all laying hens will be untrimmed.
2. Ban lead by the sector itself

**Austria example : penalty model**

**Number of interview:** 2 / Research: Viena University and Industry

**Presentation of the laying hens sector:**

Number of laying hens: 5 million
Number of farms: 1 800
Enriched cages: 2%
Barn: 66 %
Free range: 22 %
Organic: 10 %
Number of white 8% /brown 92%
2. Ban lead by the sector itself

Austria example: penalty model

No governmental ban: more flexible in case of necessity.
KAN certification request laying hens with untrimmed beak.

- **2000**: penalties for farmers which prefer to BT (0,20euros/hens)
  Monitoring of the Austrian hens flocks (create data base)

- **2015**: 100% of laying hens are not BT and almost rid of cannibalism

→ Establishment of a database
→ High protein level in the diet:
  beginning: 17% and
  >30 weeks 17,5% to 18,5%
2. Ban lead by the sector itself

Denmark Example: an industry demand

Number of interview: 2 / Research: Industry
Presentation of the laying hens sector:
Number of laying hens: 3,2 million
Number of farms: 154
Enriched cages: 50%
Barn: 22%
Free range: 8%
Organic: 20%
Number of white 70%/brown 30%
2. Ban lead by the sector itself

Denmark Example: an industry demand

Ban leaded by the egg packaging factory

**2013**: BT banned for the enriched cage system;
**2014**: BT banned for aviary and free range systems;

- BT ban will probably be added in the legislation.

→ The laying hens sector wrote a guide to help farmers in case of feather pecking.
A) Inventory: Status of beak trimming in EU

B) Results analysis: key recommendations mentioned by respondents
### Shared tools: to identify feather pecking problems and set up recommendations

#### Data base....

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| Sweden and Netherlands | Hennovation | European project
Shared database and supplied with gathering information from farmers + research |
| Netherlands    | AVINED           | Dutch sector
Created to track food, vet, animal movements + 2 new components relative to FP: Health and welfare |
| Austria        | Data Base        | Identify livestock practices leading to feather pecking behaviour Set up by Vienna University |

Making information on feather pecking accessible via different countries network

Data from 100 farms, filled by a certified person

Austria

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**Guide and recommendations**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Country</th>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UK</strong></td>
<td>FeatherWel Website</td>
<td>Guide summarizing the key of management strategies to prevent or reduce feather pecking in alternative systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BTAG report 2015</td>
<td>Referring to the FeatherWel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denmark</strong></td>
<td>Booklet</td>
<td>Guide (containing many illustrations) available for farmers, they keep it on the farm and refer to it in case of problems with the flock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Germany</strong></td>
<td>Guide</td>
<td>Recommendations to prevent feather pecking in alternative systems</td>
</tr>
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IV – Discussion / Conclusion

- List of recommendations
- Based on the statements of the interviewed
feedback and key recommendations to optimize the breeding of untrimmed birds

**Litter/enrichment**
- Handable substrat: alfalfa ball, cereal grains, pecking stone, straw, hay, sand box
- Attractive range (trees: salix caprea)
- Winter garden

**Light**
- Homogeneous intensity
- Frequency >2000 Hz
- At least 8h dark

**Atmosphere**
- Temperature
- Humidity
- CO2, ammoniac dust

**Diet**
- Digestibility
- Fiber content
- Protein content
- Sodium content
- Pellet/crumb

**Farmer:**
- Observation capacity and livestock management

**Sanitary**
- Red mite/lice

**Pullets**
- Homogeneous flock (weight)
- Housing system (pullets=laying hens)
IV – Conclusion et perspectives

- Need to gather and to share information on the scale of the whole sector;
- Observation of the flock.
- France: epidemiological study and communication


Combessie, La méthode en sociologie, Paris, La Découverte, "Repère", 2001, 123.


Thank you

Questions ?