



# Status of beak trimming in EU

**AGRICULTURES  
& TERRITOIRES**  
CHAMBRES D'AGRICULTURE  
PAYS DE LA LOIRE

TERRES d'AVENIR



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# Context

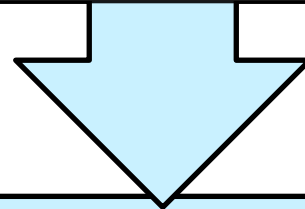


## Beak trimming

**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 ?

# Context



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

Beak trimming  
forbidden

Norway (1974)  
Finland (1986)  
Sweden (1988)  
Austria (2000)  
Denmark (2013)



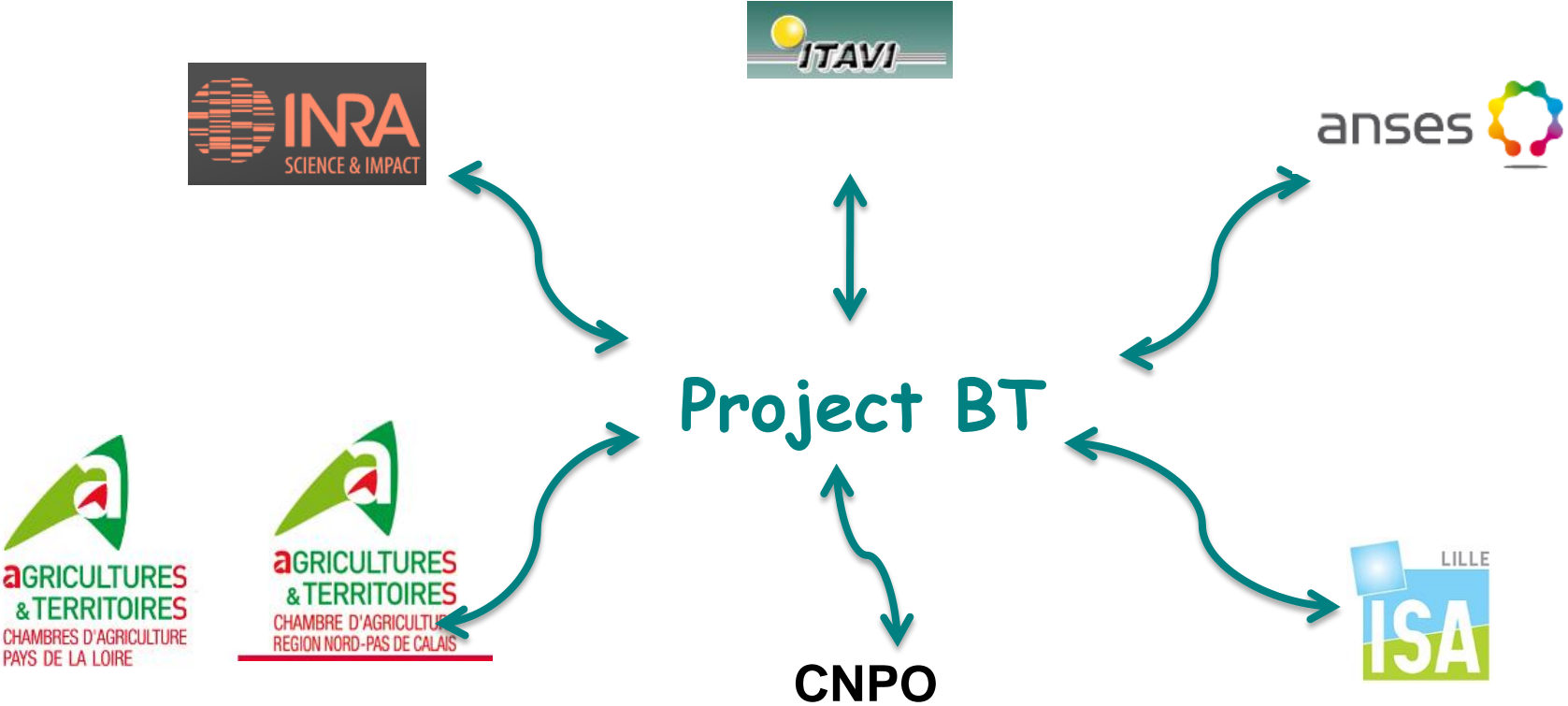
# Context



- 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



## 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



## Thinking about a ban



# 1 to 5 respondents per country, using an interview guide made in three parts:

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- **Description of laying hens sector of the country**
- **Positioning 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 show 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

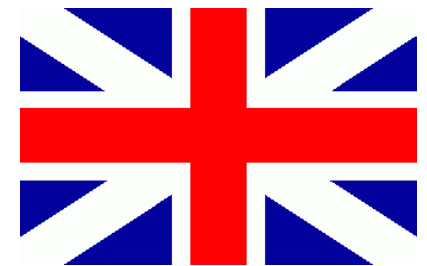
Enriched cages: 52%

Barn: 2,9%

Free range: 42,8%

Organic: 2,3%

Number of white 1%/brown 99%



# 1. Ban of BT: by the legislation



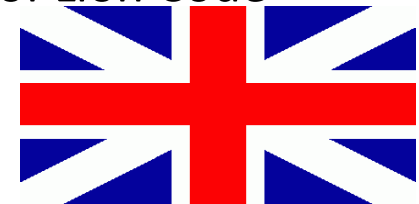
## A commitment of the industry to follow recommendations that avoids a ban of BT: UK example

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

- **1<sup>er</sup> 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.** Commitment 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 **1<sup>st</sup> 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

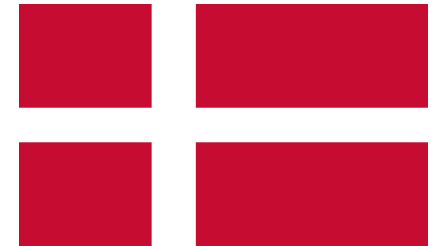
Enriched cages: 50%

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

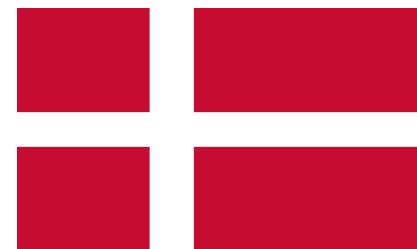
Ban leaded by the egg packaging factory

**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.**



# III -Results

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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....

Sweden  
and  
Netherlands

Hennovation

European project

Shared database and supplied  
with gathering information from  
farmers + research

Making information on  
feather pecking  
accessible via different  
countries network

Netherlands

AVINED

Dutch sector

Created to track food, vet, animal  
movements + 2 new components  
relative to FP: Health and welfare

Data from 100 farms, filled by a  
certified person

Austria

Data Base

Set up by Vienna  
University

Identify livestock practices  
leading to feather pecking  
behaviour

# Shared tools: to identify feather pecking problems and set up recommendations

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## Guide and recommendations.....

**UK**

FeatherWel Website

Guide summarizing the key of management strategies to prevent or reduce feather pecking in alternative systems.

BTAG report 2015

Referring to the FeatherWel.

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**Denmark**

Booklet

Guide (containing many illustrations) available for farmers, they keep it on the farm and refer to it in case of problems with the flock.

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**Germany**

Guide

Recommendations to prevent feather pecking in alternative systems



# IV – Discussion / Conclusion

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- ❖ List of recommendations
- ❖ Based on the statements of the interviewed



# feedback and key recommendations to optimize the breeding of untrimmed birds



**Hens strain**

## Litter/enrichment

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

## Atmosphere

temperature  
humidity  
CO2, ammoniac  
dust

**Farmer:**  
Observation  
capacity and  
Livestock  
management

## Light

Homogeneous  
intensity  
Frequency >2000 Htz  
At least 8h dark

## pullets

Homogeneous flock  
(weight)  
Housing system  
(pullets=laying hens)

## Diet

Digestibility  
Fiber content  
Protein content  
Sodium content  
pellet/ crumb

## Sanitary

Red mite/lice

# IV – Conclusion et perspectives

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



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# Thank you



## Questions ?

