

# Animal welfare for the climate

How we can turn agriculture around  
for animals, people and the climate



VIER POTEN | Skitterphoto



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# FOREWORD

The climate emergency is one of the most urgent problems of our time. The scientific community agrees that if we do not act now, global heating will lead to increased floods, droughts, fires and storms. As sea levels rise there will be less land to feed us humans. The temperature in many cities will become unbearably hot. Hundreds of millions of people will flee to cooler regions, societies will be unstable, water will be scarce, and even more species will become extinct. All this will harm animals, people and the environment.

One of the main causes of the climate crisis is agricultural animal husbandry. It accounts for 14.5 percent of man-made greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>1</sup> In addition, 77 percent of the world's agricultural land is used for animal husbandry.<sup>2</sup> This also includes animal feed production, for which millions of hectares of forest are cut down every year – irreparably destroying sensitive ecosystems and the so-called "lungs of our planet".

In addition, intensive livestock farming causes immense suffering: two thirds of the world's 74 billion farm animals are kept in factories where they cannot even satisfy their most basic needs.<sup>3</sup> Sows are kept in cages for weeks, piglets are usually castrated without anaesthetic and their curly tails are cut off, male chicks are shredded or gassed, cattle are tethered for months. The system does not adapt to the needs of the animals; rather, the animals must fit into the system. And although in the EU animals have been recognised as sentient beings since the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, economic interest still dominates. It is no wonder that supermarkets outbid each other in terms of who offers the cheapest meat, and that the entire EU agriculture and the cheap prices for animal products are only possible through subsidies. The animal production system is corrupt in every sense: at the expense of animals and farmers.

We have to face it: not only is factory farming one of the main causes for global warming. It is also one of the main causes of animal suffering.

FOUR PAWS urges political decision makers to make it their goal to reduce meat consumption, to end factory farming and to switch to sustainable agriculture. All climate plans at national and international level must put the transformation of our food system and agriculture high on the agenda. Without action in this area, we cannot achieve our climate targets. This position paper outlines which concrete political measures are needed from the point of view of FOUR PAWS. It is a collection of ideas and a catalogue of measures whose political implementation can help consumers to make better purchasing decisions, support farmers to diversify and invest in better animal husbandry, and encourage companies to focus on plant-based nutrition.

The vision of FOUR PAWS is a world where people treat animals with respect, empathy and understanding. Now is the time to take the right steps.

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*Linda Exenberger,  
Political Advisor,  
VIER PFOTEN International/  
FOUR PAWS International*



*Dr. Martina Stephany,  
Director Farm Animals and Nutrition,  
VIER PFOTEN International/  
FOUR PAWS International*

<sup>1</sup> FAO (2013)  
<sup>2</sup> Ritchie, Roser (2019)  
<sup>3</sup> Compassion in World Farming (2018)

# FOUR PAWS KEY DEMANDS



## TRANSFORMATION OF THE SUBSIDY POLICY

Only animal- and climate friendly farms receive public funding



## ENSURE TRUE-COST PRICING

Introducing an additional charge on animal products - the revenue will go towards animal welfare



## TRANSPARENCY FOR CONSUMERS

Europe-wide labelling of origin and animal welfare for animal-based products



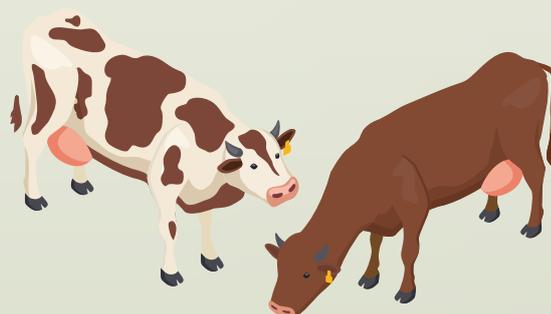
## ANIMAL PROTECTION IS CLIMATE PROTECTION

The number of farm animals depends on the area of the farm (area-based livestock farming) and ban on long-distance transports of live animals



## PUBLIC CANTEENS LEAD THE WAY

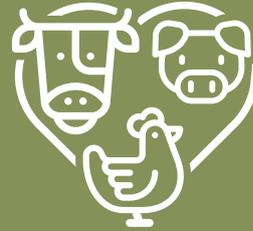
Mandatory animal welfare and sustainability standards for public procurement



# 1

## ANIMAL WELFARE

Protect animals, protect the climate



Breeding defects, long-distance transport and slatted floors not only cause immense suffering for animals but are also a burden on the environment. Slatted floors, on which most pigs must spend their lives, create high levels of ammonia in the air, which is harmful to animals, people and the environment. Improvements and modernisation of the stables are beneficial for the well-being of the animals and the sustainability of livestock farming. However, it is crucial to implement an area-based animal husbandry system. Area-based animal husbandry implies that no more animals may be kept on the farm than can be fed from the farm's own land, and that the farm's soil can absorb the manure produced.



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### 1.1 AREA-BASED LIVESTOCK FARMING AND SUSTAINABLE PASTURE MANAGEMENT

- Ruminants may only be kept in conjunction with grazing – area-based livestock farming with a maximum of 1.5 livestock units (LU) per hectare
- Implementation of mandatory guidelines for sustainable pasture management with regular checks on the use of the entire pasture area and soil quality



In its livestock strategy, Germany commits itself to an area-based livestock production of 2 LU per hectare as a long-term goal. Investment subsidies are to be aligned with this goal.<sup>4</sup>

### 1.2 ADAPTING THE SYSTEM TO THE NEEDS OF THE ANIMALS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- All farm animals must have access to species-appropriate outdoor areas
- Promotion of the use of dual-purpose breeds
- Measures to improve the welfare and life of animals and to prevent diseases
- Legal definition of minimum life span of farm animals. Exceptions are only permitted under certain conditions (serious injury or illness)
- Promotion of mother-bound calf rearing to ensure that calves are reared in a species-appropriate manner and to reduce the import of palm oil for milk replacers
- Restrictions on giving antibiotics as a preventive measure



The German federal state of Hessen commissioned a study from the Agricultural Investigation and Research Institute (LUFÄ) to measure emissions from various pig farms. An open-front barn with different animal-friendly functional areas achieved the best results. A significant factor was the design of the area for faeces and urine. The drier this area is, the lower the ammonia emissions. Daily removal of the faeces reduces odour and methane emissions.<sup>5</sup>



In the Swiss strategy "Agricultural Policy 2022+" an extension of the lifetime of dairy cows is considered. This not only has a positive impact on the climate but is also "economically beneficial". For example, increasing the production time of cows by two lactations would reduce methane emissions by "an estimated 20 percent". In order to achieve this value, the lactations of dairy cows would be increased from the current average of 3,9 lactations to 5,9.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Bundesministerium für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft (2019): 32

<sup>5</sup> LUFÄ Nord-West, Institut für Boden und Umwelt (2019)

<sup>6</sup> Jäger (2020)



### 1.3 SHORTEN LIVE ANIMAL TRANSPORTS

- Obligation to travel to the nearest species-appropriate slaughterhouse
- Ensuring local and regional slaughtering in certified slaughterhouses that have been inspected according to animal welfare criteria
- Promotion of controlled and animal-friendly farm and pasture slaughtering, and mobile slaughterhouses
- Meat transport instead of live animal transport and shifting meat transport from road to rail (refrigerated wagons)
- Ban on long-term transport of live animals to non-EU countries
- Limiting the transport time of live animals to a maximum of eight hours

### 1.4 INNOVATION AS THE KEY TO ANIMAL AND CLIMATE PROTECTION

- Increase in research funds for climate- and animal-friendly agriculture and for the development of plant-based and innovative food products such as cultivated meat
- No additional legal barriers for innovative food products such as cultivated meat
- Innovations and research in the field of animal husbandry must always show benefits for animals and the environment in order to receive public funding
- Support for the implementation of successful research projects that benefit the animals and the environment



In 2017, the Dutch Minister of State Martijn van Dam introduced the "New Food Challenge". Companies were asked to develop innovative new foods based on plant proteins. The best ideas were rewarded with up to €250,000.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Rijksdienst voor Ondernemend Nederland (2017)

# 2

## CONSUMPTION

Every purchase casts a vote



Every purchase influences how products are produced; of course this is also and especially true for animal products. Nevertheless, responsibility for a fair and sustainable food system cannot be placed on consumers alone. In order to guide purchasing decisions in supermarkets and state canteens, politicians should create a framework through achieving true-cost pricing and transparency so that people buy more plant-based products, and animal products preferably from animal-friendly sources. Meat can no longer be a discount product; it needs to be valued and this should also be reflected in the purchase price. To ensure freedom of choice for consumers, we need transparency about the husbandry system and origin of animals or animal products, tax incentives, a wide range of plant-based foods in public institutions, and awareness-raising activities.

### 2.1 ENSURING TRUE-COST PRICING

- Gradual adjustment of the value added tax on food products with the aim of making plant-based products more affordable through lower taxes
- Introduction of an additional charge on animal products. The additional revenue will go towards animal welfare measures
- Phasing out of cheap meat offers in food retail

### 2.2 TRANSPARENCY THROUGH MANDATORY LABELLING

- Mandatory origin and animal welfare labelling of animal-based products and harmonisation throughout Europe (labelling of all fresh, frozen and processed animal products, indicating where the animal was born, where it was kept and where it was slaughtered)
- Clear labelling on the front of products containing animal ingredients
- EU-wide definition of "vegan" and "vegetarian"
- No restrictions on the naming of plant-based products as long as it is clearly recognisable that they are vegetarian or vegan (e.g. "veggie burger", "oat milk")



At the beginning of 2017, France introduced a mandatory origin label for meat in processed products (more than 8 percent meat content). The label must display the country of birth, rearing and slaughter of the animals. Since 2018, this model has also applied to dairy products (more than 50 percent milk content).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Institut nationale de la consommation (2019)

## 2.3 PUBLIC CANTEENS LEAD THE WAY

- Implementation of mandatory animal welfare standards (based on existing animal welfare labels) and sustainability standards for public procurement. At least 80 percent of the main dishes offered in public institutions must be plant-based and from sustainable sources
- Establishment of long-term cooperation and purchase guarantees for farms that comply with sustainability and animal welfare standards
- Governments must publish and update national nutritional guidelines and make their implementation mandatory, especially in public institutions
- Transparent reporting on public procurement (information on costs, origin of products, type of products, quantities of waste)
- Incentives for private institutions, such as company canteens, to implement animal welfare and sustainability standards and offer a wide range of plant-based foods



In 2020, the City of Vienna adopted the food action plan "Wien isst GUT" (Vienna eats well/good). The G stands for "gesund" (healthy), the U for "umweltfreundlich" (environmentally friendly) and the T for "tierfreundlich" (animal-friendly). According to this plan, the share of organic food will be increased and environmental and animal welfare criteria for public procurement will be applied. The action plan was developed in cooperation with animal welfare organisations, and the Austrian animal welfare label "Tierschutz-kontrolliert" (animal welfare controlled) from FOUR PAWS is listed as an accepted standard in all tender criteria.<sup>9</sup>



In 2019, the Canadian government revised its nutritional recommendations. In Canada's food guide, foods are divided into three categories: fruits and vegetables, whole grains and proteins. Based on the latest nutritional research, the recommendations regarding meat and dairy products have been reduced and it is recommended to consume more plant-based proteins.<sup>10</sup>

## 2.4 IMAGE AND AWARENESS RAISING

- Public campaigns for healthy, sustainable and plant-based nutrition
- No EU subsidies for the marketing of meat and dairy products
- Prohibition of consumer deception with images on products or in advertising clips that do not correspond with reality (e.g. when a cow on a pasture is shown on the milk package, although the dairy cows on this farm do not have access to pasture)
- Terms such as "animal welfare", "sustainable" and "animal-friendly" may only be used if they meet defined scientific criteria
- Updating the curricula of agricultural schools and agricultural universities with a focus on animal- and environmentally friendly agriculture
- Teaching animal welfare and nutrition at school as a separate subject or as an integral part of another subject such as biology. This should teach children where food comes from and what animal and climate-friendly nutrition entails



According to the 2016 dietary guidelines of the Chinese Ministry of Health, the Chinese should reduce their meat consumption by half.<sup>11</sup> To achieve this, the government has launched a major media campaign. For example, Arnold Schwarzenegger explains in a video the benefits of low meat consumption for personal health and the environment.<sup>12</sup>

## 2.5 FIGHT AGAINST WASTE OF ANIMAL PRODUCTS

- Documentation of waste quantities of animal products in public institutions
- National strategy for the avoidance of waste of animal products in public institutions
- Supermarkets must give unsold animal-based products to charitable organisations
- Incorporating the "nose to tail" approach (use as many parts of the animal as possible) in the training of cooks



France and Czechia passed laws several years ago that force supermarkets with a sales area of more than 400 square meters to donate unsold food to non-profit organisations. High fines must be paid in case of violation.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> VIER PFOTEN (2020)

<sup>10</sup> Government of Canada (2020)

<sup>11</sup> FAO (2016)

<sup>12</sup> Wild Aid (2016)

<sup>13</sup> Tagesschau (2019)

## 3

## AGRICULTURE

Farmers must be a part of the solution



About 40 percent of the total EU budget is spent on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). There is a lot of money, but only a few people benefit from it – certainly not small-scale animal- and environmentally friendly farms. The forthcoming reform of the CAP must be used to initiate a transformation towards ecological, economic and social sustainability in Europe.

Agricultural subsidies should be used in a targeted manner to give farmers financial incentives and security: for conversion towards less animal husbandry, diversification and animal-friendly farming.

### 3.1 SUSTAINABLE SUBSIDY POLICY

Abolish direct payments, which are directly linked to the size of the agricultural surface area, as they have no environment-related or animal welfare-related incentive effect. Instead, tax money should be used exclusively for sustainable agriculture, from which society and the environment benefit ("public money for public goods").

This transformation of the CAP can be done gradually:

- Melting down the money in the first pillar towards the second pillar
- Creating funding opportunities for animal welfare systems in the first pillar of the CAP
- In the national implementation of the second pillar (EAFRD Regulation), animal welfare measures must be supported on a mandatory basis (national strategy plans)
- No funding for the construction or maintenance of intensive livestock farming systems that have a negative impact on both animals and the environment
- Investment subsidies for new buildings only if these systems are animal-friendly and designed in a species-appropriate manner
- Inclusion of all animal welfare legislation (national and EU) in the follow-up regulation of cross compliance (= conditionality)
- Expanding the possibilities for supporting the sustainable production of plant-based foods, in particular protein crops, both for human consumption and for animal feed
- The EU programme for fruit, vegetables and milk must focus on plant-based food
- Investment grants for the reorientation and adaptation of farms engaged in animal husbandry that is harmful to animals and the climate



In November 2019, the Dutch government launched the "warm reconstruction" programme, for which a total of €180 million is provided. Agricultural farms in livestock-intensive regions that do not comply with the nitrate guidelines will be compensated financially through the purchase of production rights and through compensation payments for pig farmers willing to leave the sector.<sup>14</sup>

### 3.2 DIVERSIFICATION INSTEAD OF MONOCULTURES AND INDUSTRIAL LIVESTOCK FARMING

- Action plans of national governments and the EU on farm diversification
- No permission to increase livestock numbers in livestock-intensive regions
- No increase in livestock numbers for farms that do not operate in an environmentally and animal-friendly manner (definition: for example, in Germany, types 1 and 2 according to voluntary animal welfare labelling and compliance with the Nitrate Guidelines)
- Strengthen agricultural practices that promote biodiversity (for example circular agriculture, organic farming and permaculture)
- Strengthen local production and distribution of agricultural products e.g. create regional marketing opportunities for agricultural products and strengthening solidarity-based agriculture or community-based agriculture (decentralisation)



In 2019 UNISECO, an agro-ecological knowledge hub, started a case study to diversify animal production units towards more crops for direct human consumption in Sweden. Key actors of this case study are food retailers, farm associations, NGOs and government authorities. The aim is to identify possibilities for the diversification of livestock farms in Sweden and also to develop different approaches for the various stakeholders.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Theile (2020)

<sup>15</sup> UNISECO (2020)

# 4

## GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

Climate knows no borders



Today, it is more necessary than ever to work across national borders to implement animal and environmental protection. The importing of animal feed, which causes the destruction of rainforests, is just one of many examples of how our actions lead to devastating effects on the climate, environment and biodiversity. Trade agreements like Mercusor lead to cheap meat exports from South America to the EU. This harms our domestic agriculture and the incentive of local farmers to invest in animal welfare, pollutes the climate, and is associated with great animal suffering. This is why it is necessary to promote domestic animal feed and to establish high environmental and animal welfare standards in trade agreements.

### 4.1 ANIMAL WELFARE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION IN TRADE AGREEMENTS

- Trade agreements only in compliance with mandatory animal welfare and environmental protection standards
- Clear labelling of origin and husbandry systems for animal products from non-EU countries
- Climate tax on imported goods, especially on animal products
- Animal welfare minimum standards must be subject to the jurisdiction of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and subsidising animal welfare must not be considered a barrier to trade

### 4.2 PROMOTION OF DOMESTIC FEED PRODUCTION

- Promotion of the domestic production of animal feed
- Research and development of domestic feed with a low ecological footprint



The government in Bavaria launched the Bavarian Protein Initiative and invested over €7.4 million between 2011 and 2018 to promote domestic animal feed cultivation. Between 2011 and 2017, the area under legumes doubled and the area under soy tripled. As a result, about 300,000 tons of soy meal could be saved in the feeding of cattle and pigs during this period, and the soybean was established as an important crop in Bavaria.<sup>16</sup>



Pexels | David Riaño Cortés

### 4.3 STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Measures in the field of agriculture and food systems must be specified in the National Determined Contributions to reach the targets of the Paris Agreement
- Animal welfare must be an integral part of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations and be taken into account in the Voluntary National Reports (VNR)
- Implementation of national and EU-wide animal welfare monitoring and know-how transfer with third countries
- Strengthening of the World Bank's Safeguard Policies for investments and project financing in the area of animal and environmental protection
- Launch of a process for a United Nations Universal Declaration on Animal Welfare

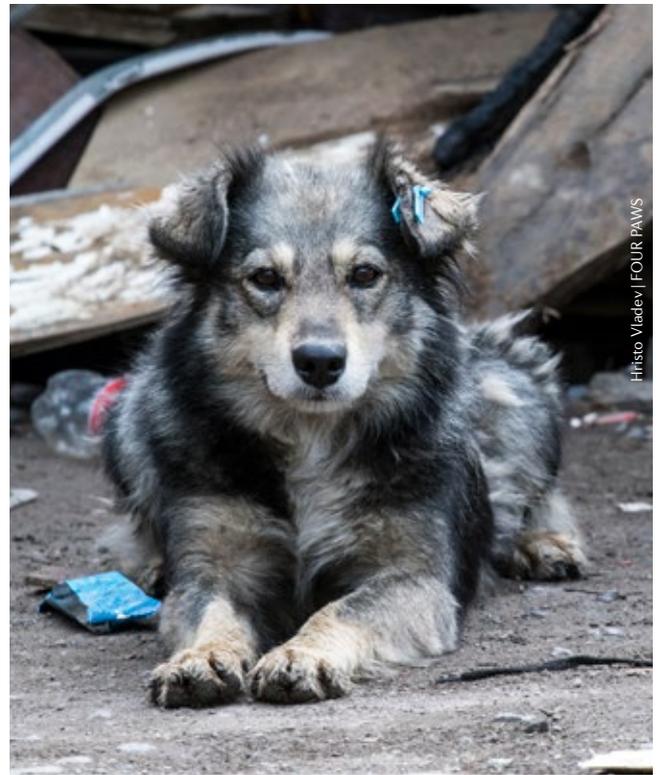
<sup>16</sup> Eder et al. (2019)

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# ABOUT FOUR PAWS

FOUR PAWS is the global animal welfare organisation for animals under direct human influence, which reveals suffering, rescues animals in need and protects them. Founded in 1988 in Vienna by Heli Dungler, the organisation advocates for a world where humans treat animals with respect, empathy and understanding. FOUR PAWS' sustainable campaigns and projects focus on farm animals, companion animals and wild animals – such as bears, big cats, orangutans and elephants – kept in inappropriate conditions, as well as in disaster and conflict zones. With offices in Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Kosovo, the Netherlands, Switzerland, South Africa, Thailand, Ukraine, Hungary, the UK, the USA and Vietnam, as well as sanctuaries for rescued animals in twelve countries, FOUR PAWS provides rapid help and long-term solutions. The work of FOUR PAWS is based on substantiated research and scientific expertise, as well as intensive national and international lobbying. The goal of FOUR PAWS' campaigns, projects and educational work is to inform the general public about animal suffering and to bring about long-term improvements – enshrined in legislation.



Hristo Vladev | FOUR PAWS



FOUR PAWS | Monika Girardi



FOUR PAWS

## VIER PFOTEN International

FOUR PAWS International

Linke Wienzeile 236, 1150 Vienna, Austria

T: +43 1 545 50 20 0, F: +43 1 54550 20 99

E-Mail: [office@four-paws.org](mailto:office@four-paws.org)

[four-paws.org](http://four-paws.org) [facebook.com/fourpaws.org](https://www.facebook.com/fourpaws.org)

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