

Humane Slaughter Association



Improving the welfare of food animals around the world

March 2016

The Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (England) Regulations 2015



Credit: Jade Spence

The above legislation (commonly referred to as WATOK), which implements Council Regulation (EC) No.1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing, came into force in England on Thursday 5th November. Similar legislation was already in force in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The main differences between WATOK and the previous legislation are in the requirements for certificates of competence, licences, standard operating procedures and animal welfare officers. This means that some smaller-scale producers are required to have licences for operations, which did not need them under the previous legislation.

Limitations on the number of birds allowed to be slaughtered daily by manual cervical dislocation, and the weights of birds allowed to be slaughtered by mechanical cervical dislocation, led to a surge of enquiries to the HSA office just prior to Christmas.



Guidance on the new requirements to be met by seasonal producers can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/slaughtering-poultry-rabbits-and-hares-on-farms-for-small-scale-suppliers>. ■



CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

Welcome to the new-look Spring Newsletter, which has been refreshed to provide more space for HSA news and updates.

The international reach of HSA features prominently in this issue as a result of our Technical Officer Jade Spence's recent visit to Kenya, which you can read about on page 2. One of the key findings to emerge, and of major concern, is the lack of pre-slaughter stunning in many abattoirs.

New legislation relating to the Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing (WATOK) came into force in England in November and this led to an increase in enquiries to our technical team; education is fundamental to improving welfare standards and guidance on the new requirements can be found on the HSA's website.

From 1st April the HSA will become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with a new registered charity number. Existing members who wish to continue their membership will need to transfer to the new HSA CIO and you can read more about this on page 8. As I hope will be apparent from this newsletter, we need your support more than ever so please continue your membership. All of the work highlighted in this newsletter wouldn't be possible without your ongoing support and commitment to animal welfare, for which we are extremely grateful.

HSA visit to Kenya

A major concern for the welfare of all species farmed in Kenya is the lack of stunning. Although cattle are stunned with captive-bolts in a minority of larger slaughterhouses, in small facilities cattle, sheep, goats and poultry are, at present, typically slaughtered without prior stunning.

In November, Technical Officer Jade Spence visited Kenya to meet with Animal Care Initiatives Network-Humane (ACIN-Humane) to research whether and how the HSA might help improve farm animal welfare during transport, marketing and slaughter in Kenya.

During her visit, Jade gave lectures on farm animal welfare during transport, marketing and slaughter at the University of Nairobi and Egerton University in Nakuru County, reaching some 200 students of veterinary medicine and agriculture. Jade also provided a lecture at Manor House Agricultural Centre in Kitale, where farmers and students learn how to farm biointensively (low input, organic sustainable and ecologically-minded methods for resource-poor farmers, using surrounding natural resources). Other activities included: meetings with the Kenya Society for the Protection and Care of Animals (KSPCA) who have

“HSA is now considering how best it can assist efforts to improve farm animal welfare”

been instrumental in introducing humane stunning to Kenya, and with veterinary officials from the Trans Nzoia county government to discuss farm animal welfare; a visit to a livestock market and three slaughter facilities in Trans Nzoia, one for poultry and two for mammals; and bespoke training in animal welfare at slaughter for approximately 70 slaughterhouse staff, meat inspectors and veterinarians. HSA training materials were donated to the slaughterhouses and government



L-R Peterson Obusuru, Nicodemus Nyongesa Oduri (Director, Manor House Agricultural Centre), Jade Spence (HSA) and Erick Werangai (ACIN-Humane)

staff and to ACIN, to assist their valuable work in promoting farm animal welfare. The HSA also donated a number of its educational publications to each of the educational institutes' libraries.



Matunda Market, Kenya

Credit: HSA

You can help improve the welfare of food animals

Being able to expand our work overseas to countries like Kenya relies on the generosity and support of people like you, our members, donors and supporters. Please help us in these and other endeavours by making a donation. Your support matters – and together we can make a difference. Thank you.

Association of Meat Inspectors (AMI) Seminar

In early September, the HSA's Technical Director, Charlie Mason and Technical Officer Jade Spence were invited to attend the 50th Annual Seminar of the Association of Meat Inspectors (AMI) at Harper Adams University in Shropshire. Jade gave a presentation on new and emerging stunning methods, which generated much interest and several searching questions. Following the conference dinner that evening, Charlie gave a short after-dinner speech and, as a previous recipient in 2013, received the Robin Irish Award on behalf of Robert Huey, the Chief Veterinary Officer of Northern Ireland, who was unable to be present. The HSA has been a regular contributor at AMI Seminars over the years, but was particularly proud to be invited to play a major role on this memorable occasion. ■

HSA WELCOMES NEW STAFF

The work of the charity depends on members' support, which in turn requires effective fundraising and communications. Tracey Woods joined the charity in August to further develop this aspect of the charity's activities, taking over from Brian Pemberton who had been with the charity for 10 years. Tracey has extensive experience in this area, having previously worked with the City of London Police, the Imperial War Museum and a number of animal welfare charities.

Susan Richmond joined the HSA staff in October 2015 to take up the position of Technical Officer, following the departure of Nathan Williams. Prior to her appointment, Susan completed her PhD with the University of Edinburgh on the development of an on-farm welfare assessment protocol for extensively managed sheep. ■



Credit: HSA

Meat Inspector Gladys Mabutola and HSA's Jade Spence at a slaughter house

Since returning from Kenya, Jade HSA provided advice on stunning equipment, market design and created a bespoke guidance document on humane handling and slaughter practices for use by ACIN, KSPCA, government vets, veterinary universities, slaughterhouse vets who attended the HSA training in Kitale, and a contact now at the

Intergovernmental Authority on Development whose membership comprises 9 African nations.

Considerable efforts are being made by both the KSPCA and ACIN-Humane to try to improve the welfare of animals at slaughter in Kenya and HSA is now considering how best it can assist those efforts in the future. ■

Veterinarian John Cooper and his wife Margaret, a lawyer, were also recently on one of their regular visits to Kenya. Prior to their trip, they very kindly offered to take with them educational materials for the HSA and its sister charity the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW).

John and Margaret are involved in teaching at various universities as well as being long-standing members of UFAW.

During their trip, they disseminated HSA guidance notes and technical posters as well as Animal Welfare Journals to veterinary schools, students and those teaching the next generation of animal welfare inspectors.



Credit: J & M Cooper

The materials were well received and will provide invaluable information on a number of aspects of animal welfare as well as on stockmanship/handling of animals being transported, in markets and at slaughter.

We are grateful to them both for their support of HSA's work. ■

HSA OFFERS ASSISTANCE TO CHINA

The HSA recently learnt of an initiative in China to introduce minimum animal welfare standards on farms, during transit and at slaughter. Chinese veterinary staff have started drafting the country's first welfare standard for the farming and slaughter of livestock and poultry, according to the Chinese Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA). The standards will not be compulsory, but it will be the first industry welfare standard for livestock in China and will cover pigs, chicken, sheep and cattle. Last year the HSA's online guides were translated into Chinese and we have written to the CVMA, informing them of the existence of this valuable resource and offering the HSA's assistance with this pioneering work.

The HSA has already established links with China – in October 2014 Technical Officer Jade Spence travelled to Qingdao to give a presentation on poultry welfare at slaughter at the 5th Chinese Veterinary Conference (CVC). Members of industry also explained how they would like guidance on how to construct humane slaughter systems, particularly for poultry and pigs.

As a result of her visit, Jade was asked by the editor of the journal China Animal Health Inspection (the lead national core journal of the Ministry of Agriculture of China) to write a paper for Chinese vets on poultry welfare at slaughter. This was published in October 2015 and we hope it will assist China's many tens of thousands of veterinarians in improving poultry welfare at this critical time in birds' lives.

Electrical waterbaths are the most common stunning method used for poultry in China and the HSA is seeking funds to translate into Chinese its Guidance Notes No.7 on Electrical Waterbath Stunning of Poultry. As this is a large, technical document, the cost of translating it runs into several thousand pounds. If you would like to support this initiative, or our spring appeal to translate the new Technical Information Poster on effective neck-cutting of poultry into a number of languages, you can do so by making a donation, either online or by sending a cheque with the enclosed appeal form. Thank you. ■



HSA promote new publications at Veterinary Public Health Association (VPHA) Autumn Conference

In November, the HSA attended the Autumn Conference of the VPHA, and Association of Government Veterinarians, and ran a stand there to promote its recent publications – the Guidance Notes No.7 on 'Electrical Waterbath Stunning of Poultry' and the new Technical Information Poster 'Effective neck-cutting of poultry', both of which assist official veterinarians in protecting animal welfare at slaughter, as per the new EC Regulation 1099/2009. A number of presentations were particularly relevant to HSA's work. Amongst these was one by Angela Ashby of the Fish Vet Group that highlighted that fish don't require veterinary supervision of slaughter, despite Atlantic salmon currently being the UK's biggest farmed food export, and another on the 'one welfare' approach to benefit farmers and farmed animals. ■



HSA work highlighted on BBC Radio



Credit: Patch Keyes

Throughout December, BBC Radio 4 ran a four-part series exploring the subject of animal sentience and welfare which referenced the HSA. Professor Christine Nicol, Professor of Animal Welfare at the University of Bristol and a previous recipient of the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare (UFAW) Medal for Outstanding Contributions to Animal Welfare Science, interviewed animal welfare scientists, philosophers and wildlife biologists to explore animal sentience and the potential consequences of accepting that animals are conscious, aware creatures. ■



The series, entitled *Would you eat an alien?* Can be found at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b06s2w7b>



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FROM THE ARCHIVES

However well cared for on the farm, animals are extremely vulnerable once they leave – during transport, at markets and up to the point of slaughter in abattoirs.

The HSA has been hard at work in this area for nearly a century, and a significant force in bringing about fundamental and long-lasting improvements in food animal welfare, many of which we now take for granted. We take this opportunity to go back 50 years to 1966 – a year of huge achievement for the HSA.



Credit: HSA

During the 1960s, the HSA concentrated on a major campaign to make the stunning of poultry compulsory in slaughterhouses. It funded research into both electrical stunning and the use of carbon dioxide, which indicated that only electrical stunning offered a practical way of stunning large numbers of birds. The Slaughter of Poultry Act making the humane stunning of broiler chickens and turkeys obligatory was finally passed in 1967, and the HSA was congratulated in the House of Lords for its work in promoting for humane stunning of poultry. Most birds were now stunned electrically and it was the charity which first introduced the equipment to the industry.

The Markets (Protection of Animals) (Amendment) Order came into force on 1st July 1966 and required every market in which calves, dairy cows and pigs were sold to provide covered accommodation for them. A number of inspections of markets by the charity revealed that the Order had been complied with. However, the HSA continued to press for further improvements in markets – for example in the transport and sale of poultry, the licensing of drovers, and improved loading and unloading facilities. ■



If you would like to know more about the history of the HSA, there is a short summary on the website www.hsa.org.uk. Alternatively, *Making a Difference, 100 years of the Humane Slaughter Association* is a fascinating and informative history of the HSA and its work. It was published to mark the HSA Centenary in 2011 and is available to purchase from the website or by calling the HSA office 01582 831919. Priced at £5.00 with all proceeds from sales supporting the HSA's work.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

French government translates HSA guidance

In January 2016 the French Ministry of Agriculture, Agrifood and Forestry kindly translated into French the 2015 HSA publication Guidance Notes No.7 on Electrical Waterbath Stunning of Poultry. The Guidance Notes are aimed at an international audience and provide comprehensive good practice guidance intended to assist animal welfare officers (AWOs), vets, managers and trainers of personnel working with live birds, and gives examples of Standard Operating Procedures and guidance on risk assessment for animal welfare. ■



Credit: HSA

Animal welfare advice

Since July 2015 the HSA has provided advice on the welfare of different species of fish, poultry and mammals to a large number of individuals (eg students, professional academics, smallholders, consumers) and organisations (veterinarians, retailers, NGOs, hatcheries, farms and slaughterhouses) in the UK, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Canada, India, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Australia and New Zealand. ■



Credit: HSA

Training activities and welfare assessments

In recent months, HSA technical staff have carried out a number of training courses and welfare assessments, including:

- Training courses in the use of captive-bolt equipment for the humane killing of livestock for Usk Vale Poultry and the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI), Stormont.
- Animal welfare lectures – two to students at Harper Adams and one to veterinary students and the Royal Veterinary College.
- Eight animal welfare appraisals in the UK and Italy, covering cattle, sheep, pigs, chickens, turkeys, day-old chicks and surplus turkey poults.
- Attended a seminar on animal disease control in Celle, Germany; the FDQ conference in Leeds, the Royal Smithfield Festival at the East of England Showground and the Winterbotham Darby Research Open Day at Bristol University.
- A lecture on fish welfare at slaughter to veterinary medicine students at the University of Liverpool.
- consulted and provided comments on proposed new standards for livestock transport and meat processing for Red Tractor. ■



Credit: HSA

Meetings for national contact points of EU member states

Article 20 of EC Regulation 1099/2009 requires each European Union member state to ensure that sufficient independent scientific support is available to the national competent authority with responsibility for animal welfare, and to identify a single contact point to enable sharing of technical and scientific information relevant to animal welfare at the time of killing. On 15th July 2015 HSA staff attended the first-ever meeting of representatives from organisations nominated as scientific support and national contact points. The workshop was hosted by Professor Lotta Berg and the Swedish Centre for Animal Welfare and was attended by over 30 representatives (mostly from government bodies) from 17 countries. During four presentations, the delegates discussed how best to work towards meeting the requirements of Article 20, such as approval of slaughterhouses, development of new stunning methods, scientifically reviewing guides to good practice and instructions provided by slaughter equipment manufacturers, and recommendations for inspections and audits. Dr Michael Marahrens of the Friedrich-Loeffler Institute in Germany organised a follow-up seminar on animal welfare and killing methods for disease control in September 2015, which the HSA also attended. ■

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Dr Jessica Martin, the inaugural HSA Centenary Research Training Scholar, graduated with her PhD in humane killing of chickens and is now working as the MSc Taught Programmes Teaching Fellow in Statistics and Study Design at the University of Edinburgh's Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies. Although Jess has completed her PhD, she is currently investigating how to commercially produce the novel mechanical cervical dislocation glove she developed between 2011 and 2015 as part of her HSA-funded PhD.

The 2015 HSA Research Training Scholarship (RTS) winners, Awal Fuseini and Carlos Rebelo, are both well underway with their doctoral research into improving animal welfare at slaughter. Awal aims to develop a humane, safe and Halal-compliant method of pre-cut stunning for cattle and has already undertaken his literature review and initial meetings with industry.

Non-stun slaughter is an on-going concern of many within the meat industry (including vets), as well as the general public and the development of a humane alternative to non-stun Halal slaughter of cattle could significantly improve animal welfare.

Carlos is making contact with industry to find out what turkey, duck and goose farmers require from the small-scale electrical stunning equipment they use, in order to benefit animal welfare, meat quality and health and safety.



HSA's Jade Spence with Awal Fuseini

The HSA has assisted the RTS winners by providing relevant publications, advice on considerations when evaluating poultry welfare during stunning and assistance in procuring contacts within the poultry industry. The HSA International Symposium in Zagreb in July 2015 offered an opportunity to introduce all the RTS winners to one another and they have since maintained contact to discuss their doctoral research.

The HSA gratefully acknowledges support of both RTSs by the Rhug Estate Organic Farm, Wales and of Carlos's RTS by Aviagen Turkeys Ltd. ■



Carlos Rebelo

Jessica Martin



Credit: HSA

WE NEED YOUR HELP

HSA becomes Charitable Incorporated Organisation

At the October General Meeting, the vote was taken for the HSA to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. As has already been explained to members, this gives the HSA some of the benefits of becoming a limited organisation, without changing its governance or management structures, although it does mean that the organisation has a new charity number. Another consequence is that existing HSA members who wish to continue as members of the charity will need to transfer their membership to the new HSA CIO, and a letter has been sent separately to members explaining how to do this.



Please transfer your membership now. If you have any queries, please contact the office, either by calling 01582 831919 or by email info@hsa.org.uk.



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Our fundraising promise to you

HSA is very grateful to all our donors for their generous support. We have welcomed donations, both large and small, since our creation in 1911 and used them to work to achieve the highest worldwide standards in food animal welfare at markets, during transport and at slaughter. We have always valued our supporters and donors and been committed to accountability and transparency so that donors and prospective donors can have full confidence in the Humane Slaughter Association.

When you consider making a donation to us, we undertake that:

- all communications concerning it will be honest, truthful and will comply with the law
- your right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity will be respected and you will not be subjected to any form of undue pressure
- if you wish to cease giving, we will respect your decision and if you tell us that you don't want us to contact you in a particular way we will not do so
- your gift will be applied to the purpose for which it was originally requested
- your gift will be handled responsibly and to the greatest advantage of the beneficiary/ies

- your gift will receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition. We will not disclose the names of individual donors or benefactors unless express permission has been sought
- we adhere to the Institute of Fundraising codes of practice
- we are scrupulous, trustworthy and open in our appeals for public support
- we value hearing from our supporters. We ensure that all questions, concerns or complaints are dealt with respectfully, sensitively and quickly.

PLEASE COME AND SEE US

Over the coming months, the HSA will have a presence at a number of events, if you plan on attending one of the shows below, please come and visit the HSA stand.

The British Pig and Poultry Fair –
10th/11th May, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire

National Sheep Association Sheep Event –
27th July, Malvern Worcestershire

Thank you!

To all our supporters who so kindly donated to our Autumn Appeal in support of our overseas work. At the time of going to press, £2,011 had been donated which will enable us to expand our work abroad. You can read about a recent visit to Kenya on page 2 of this newsletter.



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