

Recommendations to the formulation of EU regulation 2092/91 on livestock production

Work Package 3 Standard development

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WP Standard development

Objectives:

- To contribute to a harmonization of organic standard development,
- To identify problem areas caused by the diversity in different regions of Europe,
- To collate and formulate recommendations for the development of organic livestock standards,
- To communicate these recommendations to policy makers and certification bodies



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Complexity within the issue of animal health and food safety

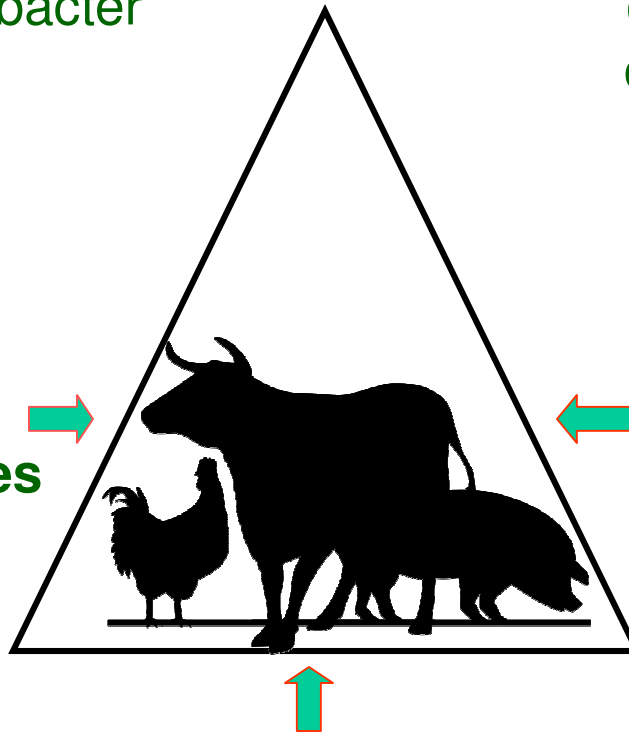
Prevention of contamination of products with pathogens (Salmonella, Campylobacter etc.) and residues

Prevention of diseases in farm animals (respiratory diseases, diarrhoea etc.)

Improving hygiene and control measures

Reducing risk factors

Strengthen the host in its ability to fight against pathogens



Relevant paragraphs in the Annex IB of EU Regulation

5.1. Disease prevention in organic livestock production ...

5.2. Animal-health problems should be controlled ...

5.3. If an animal becomes sick or injured, it must be treated ...

5.4. The use of veterinary medicinal products ...

**4. ... Ensuring quality rather than maximising production,
Availability of feedstuffs in quantity and quality...
adequate formulation of diets ...**

6. ... Husbandry management practise, transport, ...

8. ... Free range areas and appropriate housing conditions...



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Approach

Working groups on standard development at each workshop with topics closely related to the workshops

WS1: Socio-economic aspects of animal health and food safety in organic farming systems (9/03, IT)

WS2: Organic livestock farming: potential and limitations of husbandry practice to secure animal health and welfare and food quality (3/04, DE)

WS3: Enhancing animal health security and food safety in organic livestock production (9/04, PL)

WS4: Systems development: quality and safety of organic livestock products (3/05, CH)



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Outputs

4 reports on standard development including:

- Socio-economic aspects,
- Problems on the farm level,
- Food safety aspects,
- Recommendations to revise various paragraphs in the standards.

1 Questionnaire addressed to all partners and related to the implementation of standards in their country with regard to the issue of animal health and food safety.

A final report, highlighting the recommendations and the future perspectives is in preparation.



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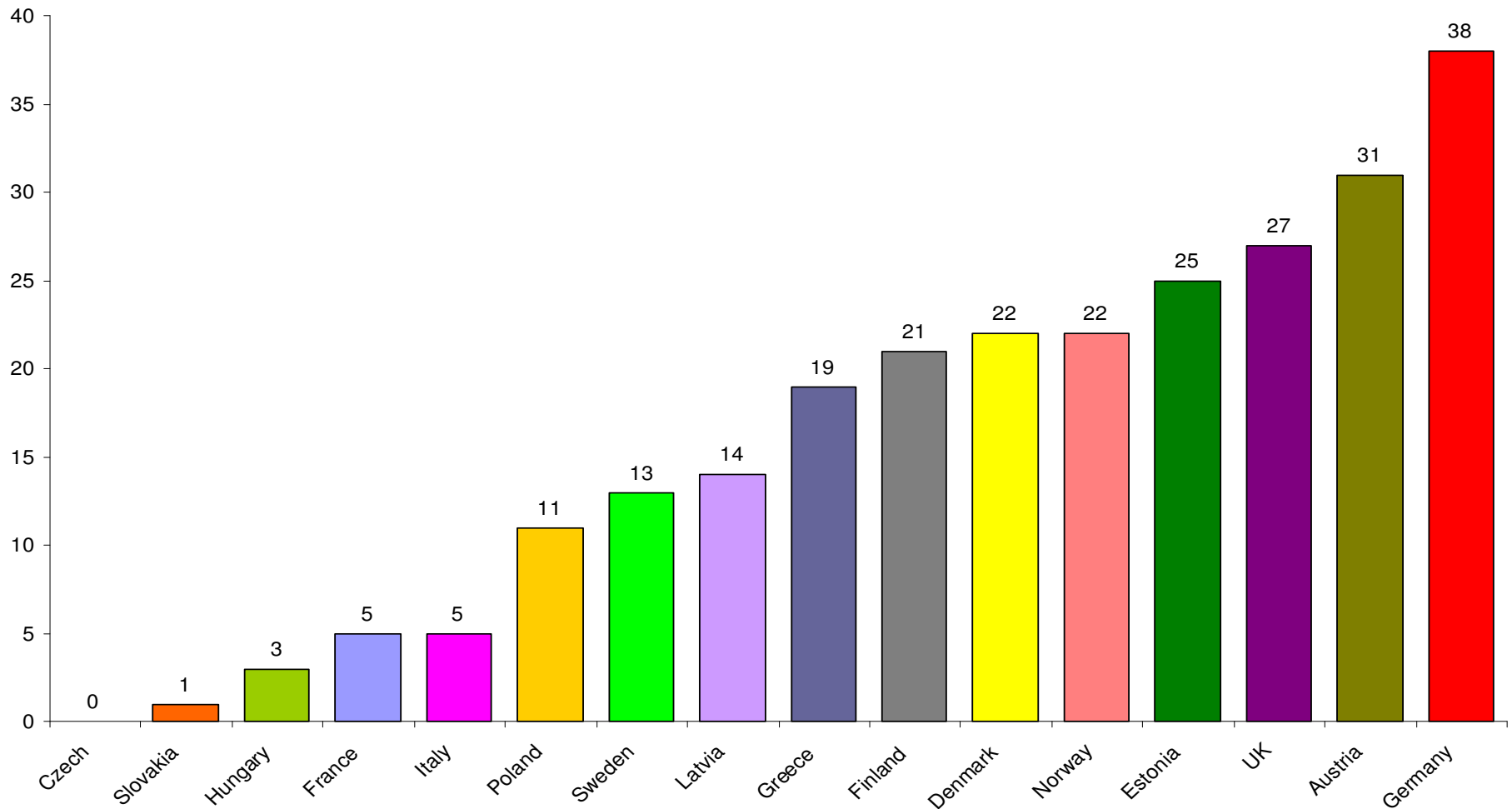
WP Standard development

General challenges in organic livestock production:

- Huge diversity in the availability of resources (feedstuffs, litter, outdoor area etc.) between regions of Europe
- Huge variability with regard to the perception of problems and the expertise to deal with them

Is there a problem at the farm level with the implementation of specific paragraphs in your country with regard to health related paragraphs?

"YES" Answers



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WP Standard development

General challenges in organic livestock production:

- Huge diversity in the availability of resources (feedstuffs, litter, outdoor area etc.) between regions of Europe
- Huge variability with regard to the perception of problems and to the expertise to deal with these problems
- Organic livestock production is not as well developed as crop production both in relation to the farm practice and research
- Prevalence of diseases varies considerably between organic farms, and is in general not different from conventional production



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Problems and challenges arising from the questionnaire:

- i. practices at the farm level
- ii. diversity between countries and regions
- iii. need for clearer definitions and detailed guidelines and specifications in the regulation

Challenges related to farming practices

- Training and education of farmers during conversion on preventive health management
- Training for veterinarians, consultants and inspectors on preventive health management and organic principles
- Conversion plans should cover organic livestock enterprises
- Animal health plans should be developed by all farmers keeping farm animals
- Breeding programmes for all farm animal species should be encouraged and supported on national and EU level.

Problems and challenges associated with the diversity of regional and local conditions

- Outdoor access in difficult climatic conditions
- Lack of straw
- Lack of organic feed
- Lack of home market
- Unsuitable livestock housing
- Smallholders, etc.

A solution must be found when climatic conditions and local resources constrain the fulfilment of organic rules



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General conclusions

- Standards per se do not assure a high level of animal health and food safety in organic livestock production
- The most important source of variation in relation to animal health is farm management
- Farmers are faced with conflicting aims and therefore animal health does not always have the highest priority



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Recommendations

- Strong principle of animal health should be included in the EU Regulation
- There is a need to focus on health output in organic livestock production
- The standards should prescribe that each organic livestock farm has to develop an animal health plan, which identifies risk factors and strategies to improve or maintain a good health status



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Recommendations (II)

- Details should be worked out by the national authorities which are familiar with the specific situations on the different levels
- A regular monitoring system should be established by the certification bodies that includes animal health data
- In the longer term producers failing to meet certain health standards should face consequences (e.g. improvements scheme, loss of product certification, etc.)



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**Thank you very much for
your attention**