



**Ministry of Food, Agriculture
and Fisheries of Denmark**

Danish Veterinary and
Food Administration

Animal welfare regulations in Denmark in pig and dairy production

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Birte Broberg
Danish Veterinary and Food
Administration

Development of Danish animal welfare legislation

Denmark has a long history of legislation on animal welfare.

The development of this legislation reflects that concept of animal welfare is dynamic – that our understanding of what is good animal welfare changes over time

- ❖ 1857 – an Act, which made severe cruelty, especially to farm animals, incl. horses an offence
- ❖ 1916 – the first Act on animal protection
- ❖ 1950 and 1991 – the second and third Act on animal protection
- ❖ 2021 – the current Act on animal welfare enters into force
 - ✓ *The aim of the Act* is to promote good animal welfare by protecting animals and promoting respect for animals as living sentient beings. The aim of the Act is furthermore to take ethical considerations into account



Development of Danish animal welfare legislation

❖ 2021 – the current Act on animal welfare

The general principles on how animals must be treated

- ✓ Animals are living beings and shall be treated properly and protected against pain, suffering, fear, permanent injury and significant distress in the best possible manner.
- ✓ Any person who keeps animals shall ensure that they are treated with care, including that they are housed, fed, watered and attended to with regard being made to their physiological, behavioural and health-related needs in accordance with established experience and scientific knowledge.

The Act sets the frame for all Danish animal welfare legislation, and it gives the Minister the legal basis to adopt executive orders to fill in the frame given by the Act



Executive Order on minimum animal welfare standards for the keeping of pigs

The order

- Covers the on farm keeping of pigs – some examples of its provisions:
 - ✓ Sows must be kept in groups from the time of weaning to one week before the expected time of farrowing
 - ✓ Crates are still allowed in farrowing pens, but the sow must be able to lay down, rest and get up unimpeded
 - ✓ Dry sows and pregnant sows and gilts must have a sufficient quantity of bulky or high-fibre feed as well as high-energy feed to satisfy their feeling of hunger
 - ✓ When piglets are castrated they must be given analgesia (according to an industry initiative anesthesia must also be given)
 - ✓ When tail docking is carried out or when tail docked pigs are kept, a risk assessment must be carried out in accommodation for weaner and slaughter pigs in order to identify risk factors for tail biting – the aim is to reduce the number of tail docked pigs



Executive Order on minimum animal welfare standards for the keeping of pigs

The order

- Covers the on farm keeping of pigs – some examples of its provisions (continued):
 - ✓ All pigs must have permanent access to a sufficient quantity of straw or other manipulable material that can fulfil their need for investigation and manipulation activities
 - ✓ A misting system, which allows the pigs to regulate their body temperature, must be installed for sows and gilts in groups and for weaner pigs weighing more than 20 kg and for slaughter pigs
 - ✓ A sufficient number of hospital pens must be available. The hospital pen must have a soft laying area, a low stocking density, a heat source and cooling facilities
 - ✓ Pigs must be cared for by a sufficient number of staff with the necessary competence
 - ✓ At least daily inspection of pigs



Executive Order on minimum animal welfare standards for the keeping of cattle

The order

- Covers the on farm keeping of cattle – some examples of its provisions for dairy cattle:
 - ✓ Ban on tethering as a husbandry system for dairy cattle
 - ✓ Provisions on the total area (cubicles or deep litter systems) and comprehensive provisions on the size of cubicles and width of passageways
 - ✓ Calving must take place in a calving box with an exception for dairy cows and heifers on pasture
 - ✓ Cow and calf must be kept together for at least 12 hours
 - ✓ A sufficient number of hospital pens for isolating ill or injured cattle when necessary
 - ✓ Provisions on milking, including a requirement for milking facilities in calving- and hospital pens



Executive Order on minimum animal welfare standards for the keeping of cattle

The order

- Covers the on farm keeping of cattle – some examples of its provisions for dairy cows (continued):
 - ✓ Provisions on the use of anaesthesia when disbudding of calves ((according to an industry initiative analgesia must also be given)

During an animal welfare inspection animal based indicators (body condition, skin damage, lameness and cleanliness) are used as a supporting tool for assessing compliance



The Governmental animal welfare label “Better Animal Welfare”

- ✓ Voluntary label constructed as a staircase-model with three different levels with one, two, or three green hearts
- ✓ Has stricter animal welfare requirements than Danish and EU legislation
- ✓ Covers pig meat, broiler meat, milk and beef





Thank you for your attention