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13/02/2009 10:47 AM

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Subject Compassion in World Farming: comment on a possible
Australia ROK FTA [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

ODIN Topic: TRADE

TRIM File Ref: 09/766

Attn James Baxter

Korea FTA Task Force
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
RG Casey Building
John McEwen Crescent
Barton ACT 0221

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of Compassion in World Farming, I submit comment on consultation towards a possible **Australia-Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement (FTA)**.

I apologise for the delay in submission. However, this was foreshadowed in conversation with Task Force representation and I would be most grateful for consideration of our views.

Our submission will focus on the impact the proposed Agreement can have on animal welfare, and particularly on farm animals.

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) states that:

"Animal welfare is gaining increased recognition as an important element of commercial livestock operations around the world. This has wide-ranging implications for an industry with complex historical and cultural roots."^[1]

The increasing relevance of animal welfare to international affairs is also evidenced by its prominence in the agenda of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) over recent years and the development of international animal welfare guidelines for the conduct of commercial activities involving animal slaughter and transportation.

In keeping with this international focus, animal welfare is a relevant issue both in Australia and South Korea. Both countries have animal welfare legislation in place (the new Korean animal protection law entered into force in January 2008), and private companies have adopted voluntary schemes that go beyond the minimum legal requirements.

In Australia, development and ongoing implementation of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) acknowledges the country's recognition of the inter-relationship between animal welfare, health and production, its commitment to animal welfare improvements in Australia and input to relevant international goals for animal welfare.^[2]

Although civil society is traditionally more involved in public campaigns to further animal welfare in Australia, animal welfare is by no means an alien concept in Korean society.

As an example of developments along these lines in South Korea, in 2007 the leading Korean food company Pulmuone (\$460,000,000 income in 2006) announced a phase-out of the use of battery eggs. This should be completed in three years.

The development of specific legislation to protect farmed animals and of voluntary schemes on QA (Quality Assurance) and/or/including farm animal welfare adopted both by Australian and Korean companies show that concerns expressed by citizens are already producing practical responses with a positive impact on the conditions in which animals are kept.^[3]

At the political level, in the specific field of FTAs, animal welfare already forms part of the negotiations in the EU-Korea Agreement under discussion, with the prospect of the possible inclusion of references to animal welfare in the SPS chapter of the Agreement. This would aim to increase co-operation among the parties at the bilateral and multilateral level for the implementation of the relevant legislation, development of training and capacity building activities and exploration of areas where improvements can be achieved.

The relevance of the potential impact of the planned Agreement on animal welfare is evident. Lowering or deleting tariff lines in order to facilitate trade can lead to an increase in animal production and to the expansion of intensive production systems such as battery cages for laying hens; the very same systems that some companies (e.g. Pulmuone Company Limited, Korea, see above) are already rejecting.^[4] It would be retrograde to encourage farming systems that are acknowledged to be detrimental to animal welfare and on their way out in developed countries.

The possible intensification of animal farming activities, derived by increased trade in the absence of flanking measures, can have a negative impact on the livelihood of small farmers, as it would upon the animals involved. Confirmation of *risks* in this area is provided by the IFC reports '**Creating Business Opportunity through Improved Animal Welfare**' (April 2006) and '**Good Practice Note Animal Welfare in Livestock Operations**' (November 2006) attached, and by the conclusions and recommendations of the FAO Expert Meeting on '**Capacity building to implement good animal welfare practices**' (Rome, 30 September – 3 October 2008). This event was attended, among others, by Peter Thornber of the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

The IFC and FAO also point out the *benefits* of animal welfare not only to the animals themselves, but also to food security and nutritional benefit of humans, and to business,

ultimately enhancing business efficiency and profitability, satisfying international markets and meeting the expectations of an increasingly demanding consumer.

In this respect, the FTA under discussion can set the conditions to preserve and improve traditional farming activities, with training offered to farmers to better manage their existing extensive systems aiming to ensure better health and welfare to farmed animals, and to open new trade opportunities.

We wish to table some proposals in order to tackle the potential impact on animal welfare of the Agreement under discussion, through its specific integrations:

- We suggest the inclusion of references to animal welfare in the SPS chapter. This can be done either by adopting a text similar to the EU-Chile Association Agreement,^[5] or by discussing a more advanced text. The inclusion of specific animal welfare points in the Australia-Korea Agreement would produce increased cooperation between veterinary authorities for the improvement of animal welfare in both countries and at the multilateral level.
- The definition of differential tariffs and quotas according to the level of animal welfare, in areas where equivalence will be established, would support higher welfare practices already operated by Australian farmers and at the same time help develop further animal welfare in Korea.

We would be happy to advise further on these points upon request.

In the spirit of the AAWS, at international events such as the recent **Conference on Global Trade and Farm Animal Welfare** (Brussels, January 2009), Australian spokespersons Professor Clive Phillips, Director of the Centre of Animal Welfare and Ethics (CAWE), University of Queensland and Dr Allen Bryce, Counsellor (Agriculture) Brussels, have confirmed the intention of our country to work at the international level for the improvement of farm animal welfare. On that same occasion, Chilean professor Soledad Macarena Vidal Ogueta, who was one of the negotiators of the EU-Chile Agreement, spoke clearly of the benefits originated by the inclusion of animal welfare in that FTA, even beyond the directly interested countries.^[6]

We consider it appropriate that Australia shows its commitment to farm animal welfare using the opportunity of the FTA with Korea as a tool to potentially improve the condition of hundred of millions of farm animals.

Please do not hesitate to contact us, should you require additional information. Please note that a hard copy of this submission will be sent to you on Compassion in World Farming letterhead.

^[1] Good Practice Note: Animal Welfare in Livestock Operations, Environment and Social Development Depart, International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group, October 2006.

² <http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/aaws/online>

³ See, as an example:

<http://www.mla.com.au/TopicHierarchy/IndustryPrograms/LivestockQualitySystems/LivestockProductionAssurance/LPA+%28QA%29/default.htm>

4 The conventional battery cage for layer hens is also in the process of being phased-out in the European Union (EU) on animal welfare grounds, and its use will be illegal there from the beginning of 2012.

5 See pp 1043 – 1053 of the attached **Agreement establishing an association between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Chile, of the other part.**

6 See: <http://www.animalwelfareandtrade.com/>

Best regards,



Carole de Fraga

Regional Representative

13 February 2009

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Regional Representative

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^[1] Good Practice Note: Animal Welfare in Livestock Operations, Environment and Social Development Depart, International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group, October 2006.

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^[6] See: <http://www.animalwelfareandtrade.com/>



IFC Report Creating Business Opportunity through Improved Animal Welfare.pdf



IFC report Good Practice Note Animal Welfare in Livestock Operations Nov 2006.pdf



FAO Flyer-1 - 13 1 09.pdf



EU-Chile Agreement - see pagg 1043 + 1053 (2).pdf

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