Abstract for poster presentation at the Animal Welfare Conference, Copenhagen University, 3.-4. October 2017

The conference is organized by the Danish Centre for Animal Welfare (DCAW) and the Nordic Network for Communicating Animal Welfare (NordCAW)

The Danish Animal Ethics Council is set up according to the animal welfare act (§25). The Council produces recommendations regarding the protection of animals based on ethical considerations. The Ministry of Environment and Food can consult the Council when drafting animal welfare legislation or when general issues relating to animal welfare arise. Furthermore, the Council seeks to provide information and stimulate public debate about animal welfare and ethics. The Animal Ethics Council consists of twelve members who are appointed for 3 years by the minister of environment and food. Two members are appointed on the recommendation of animal welfare organizations, two on the recommendation of farmers' organizations and one member on the recommendation of the Consumer Council. The minister seeks to ensure that the members cover expert knowledge on relevant subjects.

The Council has produced several publications relating to consumer-driven animal welfare and animal based welfare indicators. For example, the report from 2012 about consumer-driven animal welfare (Udtalelse om markedsdrevet dyrevelfærd), where the Council considers initiatives to improve farm animal welfare beyond legislation. A number of challenges are presented, including globalization and different perceptions of animal welfare, and the Council points to possible developments regarding supply, demand, transparency and prioritization. Likewise, in 2017 the Council responded to a consultation about the development of a national animal welfare index for cattle and pigs (Høringssvar til høring om slutrapport vedr. udvikling af nationale dyrevelfærdsindekser for kvæg og svin, 8. juni 2017). The Council expressed concern that when using an index, points of good welfare may mask points of bad welfare, and the focus on individual welfare may be reduced.

In addition, the Council has issued numerous reports and consultation responses to many other aspects concerning animals. These cover all kinds of animal use, including research, companion animals and wildlife. Further information: www.detdyreetiskeraad.dk.

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