

The Application of Animal Welfare Certification System for Farm Animal in South Korea

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Abstract : There is a growing public concern over the standards of farm animal welfare, with higher standards of food safety. In addition, the recent low incidence of Avian Influenza in laying hens among certificated farms is receiving attention. In this study, we introduce animal welfare systems covering the rearing, transport and slaughter of farm animals in South Korea. The concepts of animal welfare farm certification are based on ensuring the five freedoms of animal. The animal welfare is also achieved by observing the condition of environment including shelter and resting area, feeding and water and the care for the animal health. The certification of farm animal welfare is handled by the Animal Protection & Welfare Division of Animal and Plant Quarantine Agency (APQA). Following the full amendment of Animal Protection Law in 2011, animal welfare farm certification program has been implemented since 2012. The certification system has expanded to cover laying hen, swine, broiler, beef cattle and dairy cow, goat and duck farms. Livestock farmers who want to be certified must apply for certification at the APQA. Upon receipt of the application, the APQA notifies the applicant of the detailed schedule of the on-site examination after reviewing the document and conducts the on-site inspection according to the evaluation criteria of the welfare standard. If the on-site audit results meet the certification criteria, APQA issues a certificate. The production process of certified farms is inspected at least once a year for follow-up management. As of 2017, a total of 145 farms have been certified (95 laying hen farms, 12 swine farms, 30 broiler farms and 8 dairy cow farms). In addition, animal welfare transportation vehicles and slaughterhouses have been designated since 2013 and currently 6 slaughterhouses have been certified. Animal Protection Law has been amended so that animal welfare certification marks can be affixed only to livestock products produced by animal welfare farms, transported through animal welfare vehicles and slaughtered at animal welfare slaughterhouses. The whole process including rearing-transportation- slaughtering completes the farm animal welfare system. APQA established its second 5-year animal welfare plan (2014-2019) that includes setting a minimum standard of animal welfare applicable to all livestock farms, transportation vehicles and slaughterhouses. In accordance with this plan, we will promote the farm animal welfare policy in order to truly advance the Korean livestock industry.

Keywords : animal welfare, farm animal, certification system, South Korea

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