

# **Pig Business EU Parliament Event Transcript**

## **Introduction by Tracy Worcester:**

Right thank you so much, now I just want to put forward the Pig Business big asks' of the MEPs now when they are looking at the Common Agricultural Policy. First of all I would really like everybody to recognize that the profitability of factory farming depends on externalising its true cost on to the broader community, which is what you saw in the film. Therefore, please can we insure that the agricultural policy post 2013 moves European agriculture away from industrial livestock production to sustainable and humane forms of animal husbandry and please more autonomous farms.

In other words the feed for the pigs, rather than it coming from miles away which is increasing green house effect, and is making the pig farmers depend on a very volatile global market. Which means, as you saw recently, the pig feed price is so huge they are going bankrupt because supermarkets not paying them properly for their produce. So please more local production for the feed as well. So also from this please make more money available and make it mandatory for member states to take up the subsidies to move from intensive livestock production to extensive livestock production.

Now we would also number three like to introduce a ban on the Prophylactic use of antibiotics i.e. the preventative use. Now I don't know why I am asking for yet another law when I am afraid to say that you haven't been very good at enforcing let alone strengthening the existing EU directive on the welfare of pigs. Now I have say I understand why these laws are not being enforced by the states, the member states. Because across the EU, the rules may be the same, but each country varies in its ability and its desire to enforce laws. And that is if cheaper pork is coming into your country and is going to force your farm into bankruptcy unless they disobey your EU directives then they are going to disobey them.

This is transnational competition from companies like Smithfield who can afford to comb the globe for good investment climates. A good investment climate for agri business means cheap currencies, low wages, compliant governments offering favourable tax incentives, lax environmental and animal welfare standards and poor standards of work.

Now Poland was one such country whose neo liberal government originally welcomed Smithfield. And this is proof with a little quote from Larry Pope who was the CEO of Smithfield at the time:

*'We got people in Western Europe who make twenty Euros an Hour, when you got people in Eastern Europe who make one or two Euros an hour, though you got land in Western Europe, land in Eastern Europe they virtually give you. Plants in Western Europe are very expensive, plants in Eastern Europe they would virtually give you for small dollars'.*

So what happened was that local people were horrified by the likes of Smithfield who arrived in their villages and they voted for the law and justice party to try and improve the regulations. So apparently the CEO then said 'Oooh, Poland is not being very nice to us, we are off to Romania' to say they didn't say this I know they take advantage of its weak powers of enforcement so now Romanian pork is going to fly into every single EU country.

Meat producers bankrupt the local farmers. So frankly pig business would like to see food taken out of the global free trade treaties. I want to see our farmers protected from the vagaries of the global economy. Now this view is shared by MEPS and NGOs across Europe not least the "FoodSovCAP" group, which is 350 NGOs across Europe who advocate the fourth option for the Common Agricultural Policy.

Now for number five I am not be that radical, because obviously I want to take you with me. And that is I would like you therefore to just allow government to procure high welfare pork for their public services from the local producers. Don't let that be an infringement on the free trade treaties. Now if you would like the public to take it into their own hands to mend its broken food economy.

I'd like number six to be to introduce mandatory method of production labelling for pork products. Egg laying chickens from batteries are labelled as such, law. People have a right to know if their food has been produced in intensive farm as well as when it has been raised in friendly high welfare farms. Now would be helpful for us if in the back of your programme, it says the six asks' I would really be grateful if you put your names in capitals at the bottom and put comments on that form so that we could work with you in future. So I am really grateful for the three MEPS that are here tonight and I hope you can take it forward thank you.

# **Economic and Social Costs**

**José Bové**

Good afternoon to everybody. I think that the film that we have just seen doesn't require any commentary; I think it gives a very good description of the reality of the industrialisation of agricultural production today. And I think that the example of pig farming is an excellent example of what's happening in all agricultural sectors. So I think this debate is first of all a debate on pig farming in itself, but is also relevant to all of CAP reform and we have to see it in that light.

If we only look at the economic and social aspects of this, the thing that strikes me and has done for many years is that the development of these industrial pig farms has direct consequences in terms of destroying jobs- the jobs of the many farmers in regions who were the ones who traditionally bread pigs, so this industry has been built as a result of the crisis in agriculture- the fact that prices have gone up and back down again. This has meant that it was the farmers that were the most competitive who found it easiest to face up to these difficulties and have remained. The others have been eliminated and their holdings have been bought up by those who have been able to retain their position and expand their production.

The fact that we have let these big industrial groups get to this position is a result of the fact that the EU has been incapable of properly regulating pig farming and regulating pork prices and volumes. I think this is the first thing that needs to be said, the first thing that I have noticed- the fact that deregulation and the fact that the pig meat market has been left open, that was the first cause of the elimination of small producers and that is what has let these big operations in and led to the concentration of production- I think that's a very important phenomenon.

Today we find ourselves in the situation where we see an increasing concentration of production through the firms that have been just mentioned here, but also others such as Tyson Foods and Cargill. These companies are also getting to the position where they dominate and are able to concentrate production. So we're moving away from a system that was controlled by small farmers. I think Robert Kennedy Junior makes his point very well- we are moving from that system to a system which is controlled by large groups- large groups which very often control the whole supply chain, so they are the ones who dominate the market today.

This obviously has major social consequences, the first one is the fact that many farmers are no longer employed in or can work in production. It has also led to a change in the food system itself and peoples' diets- if you have a production method which is distributed more evenly across a territory, it has a very different effect to these very concentrated plants, so we are changing the whole of our farming systems and slowly the social fabric of our regions.

Now I know the sit in France better than the situation in Poland, so I wont go on for very much longer. I think its more interesting at this point to give the floor to people that work in the field, and I think René Louail, who has been a pig farmer for many years, and who is also a member of the regional council in Brittany will be able to give us some examples based on the situation in Brittany.

## **Rene louail**

Thank you José, Good afternoon everyone. First of all may I just say very quickly I was a pig farmer form 1974 up to until 2004. So when I started it at the age of 20 from that point on I saw the different stages of restructuring in pig farming in one of the areas of Europe with the greatest concentration. When I was started up there were as many producers in my *département* as there are in France today and it is true today looking at this excellent film and look at the points that were made in it is quite clear that we farmers are not the ones responsible for this situation. It is the politicians and the European commission we feel who have allowed these agricultural policies, which offer no prospect for the future to develop in the way in which they have.

So the reason why I came here today is because I feel that by taking the initiative by starting a debate on pig farming we are bringing up these questions in the right place at the right time in history because the European parliament has co-decision on agriculture. We have an agriculture commissioner who is a hearing the questions that we are asking and is reacting in a different way than the reactions we had in the past, so as a farmer and as a farmers' representative I would like to work with you to re-establish which has been destroyed.

I won't go back to the job issue, although that is key to the issue, there is one point I will make in the big pig farms in France employers find it difficult to find people who want to work there, because they're not very enjoyable jobs to be stuck in a big barn for 8 or 10 hours a day. But what we see in my region and in other

regions in Europe that there are a lot of young people who would like to settle in the country side they would like to be farmers but they want to have different production methods they want to provide high quality products and products which protect our fragile environments, and a product that will actually meet the consumers' expectations. So I think given this situation we cannot continue to wait and sit back whilst this catastrophe happens.

Back at home in Brittany we have been successful in plans to try and try deal with the deal of problem of water quality over 40 years €3 billion has been spent trying to re-establish high quality and good quality water.

Today we are talking problems in agriculture and when we concentrate agriculture it is impossible to use the techniques which are non aggressive or the environments. So today I would like say there are fundamental questions we need to raise and we cannot wait for an economic actor to raise these issues, they will not do that. We have proposals about how we can achieve high quality and greener production in my region. It represents 6% of the agricultural land in France, but we produce 70% of the produce and we are 20<sup>th</sup> out of 22 regions in terms of value added and that means that the farmers are not the ones who are benefiting from this system.

It is the different actors, the other actors in the system the different stake holders. The reason why, if we continue this system of concentration, it requires a huge amount of capital and this something that young farmers cannot do and cannot get involved in. And so in terms of the region and young farmers, this is really a fundamental question and as you heard earlier there are a number of demands that have been put forward. And the ball is now in the court of the politicians here in Brussels. Decisions need to be taken and they need taken during the debate on the new agricultural policy.

We cannot have the same kind of labelling for a product which comes from small scale agricultural and a product that came from industrial farming and I have never seen any label which has clearly indicated that a product has come from a industrial farm, but I think that we can't allow this to be hidden anymore. Society demands transparency and it is also asking for a form of agriculture which respects human health and the environment. So decisions need to be taken and they need taken quickly.

The second thing that I will say is that we need to have is a democratic instrument at a European level. We produce the

communisation of the markets to properly regulate production because for the last 4 years we have seen overproduction, which has killed off most of the vulnerable operators and one lobby after another is queuing up in Brussels to ask the European commission to accept their cessation plans so that the market will be properly regulated.

But we don't have too many farmers in Europe we simply have over production in certain sectors, it's a different problem. So it is high time that we had a debate and high time for change and it is important that we should be able to establish a different system which will allow healthy food production systems.

Bringing this back to farmers is a real challenge and what we are seeing in Europe and elsewhere in the world is that food crises are a result of this kind of supply system in the livestock sector. We have a lot of examples at the moment just one of those is the dioxin crisis and I would like to ask the European commission to really look at what is happening with the products imported from elsewhere, because I think there are different things that have to be addressed together. I'll leave it at that for the moment, but I would like to say, as a farmer, I really wanted to come and speak to you here in this debate because we want politicians to shoulder their responsibility for once and I have confidence in you today that you will do that.

## **Gerard Choplin**

I'm speaking on behalf of the European Movement for Food Sovereignty and the different CAP. FoodSovCAP in short. This movement was started in 2009, about two years ago and it includes many civil society organisations at a European and national level. We include farmer's organisations, environment organisations, development organisations, animal welfare and public health organisations.

Our main priority is to suggest a new form of the CAP and food sovereignty. Last year we made the European Food Statement which you can still sign online, it's a declaration about European food and with researchers and economists we published a proposal for a different CAP, you can find that at the entrance to the room.

Why do we support the Pig Business initiative? Well our movement is made up of citizens and tax payers and for us the externalised cost of factory farming is too high. It is what I would call the negative multi-functionality of factory farming and as the film has

shown, whether it is socially or whether it is in terms of human health and animal health or in terms of the environment, or whether it is a monoculture of soy in South America, or whether it is in terms of quality of meat or animal welfare, it is wrong.

So the citizens must challenge this factory farming, we want it to be abandoned gradually. Millions of tonnes of soy are imported and are made into pork and manure in Europe and then we then export the pork but not manure and this is not only entirely nonsensical for the environment but it also makes pig farming very dependent on exports and imports. It depends on speculation and the rate of the dollar, this is where we see the cost of cereals and soy going up and this is where we see this dioxin scandal again in Germany and it is consumers, taxpayers who pay for this.

Yesterday on the 8 February there was the first meeting of an advisory group of pig farmers from 27 member states in Europe that was hosted by the European Commission but unfortunately throughout the day the European Commission listened to COPA and the industry. All three of them don't have a solution, there is a crisis but all they can think of is more subsidies for pig farming which will go to the same people that want to restructure production, which means less farmers, more pork but it doesn't help the small farmers and it will cost tax payers as well because they have to pay for what the farmers get from the market

I believe it is up to the European Parliament to stop this, there has been too much regulation of the market, we haven't really tackled the causes of the crisis in pig farming, there aren't too many farmers in Europe, there are too many pigs and we should produce pork in a different way, many farms are already doing this they are mostly compulsorily link between the animal and the land. Their pigs must be fed using locally produced or European vegetable proteins and we must promote different breeds of pig and it must be diverse breeds of pig and we have to try and stop structural surpluses or shortages, this is absolutely necessary if the farmers are going to get a fair and stable price which represents the cost of this sustainable production.

We must also, fairly and transparently share out the added value right down the production chain. That's a real problem now because the big distributors don't want to pay more, where productions cost going up and up. Added value at the moment goes into the pockets of the big industries and big distributors and the farmers don't benefit.

In conclusion let's limit the number of pigs per farms for society it is better 100 family farms that are sustainable rather than one big factory farm. There aren't too many farmers but there are too many pigs in these big or huge factory farms.

## **Socio economic questions**

### **Question, Linda McAvan:**

Hi thank you, I am Linda McAvan British member of the European parliament also the coordinator for the socialist democrat group on environment, food safety and public health. I want to thank the people who organised today's meeting, Tracy for bringing her film here.

I think some of the points you made you made are very important, but I just want to make one point because I have got your list of big asks here I think they are all fine. You don't have to wait for the common agriculture policy reform for some of them. Because they are not part of the CAP reform. One of them, on mandatory food labelling, will come back to this parliament for a second reading very soon. It's not linked to CAP and the problem was last time we actually had the parliament putting amendments to have obligatory of country of origin labelling on meat products. And that was defeated in this parliament, so we have to get a campaign going.

I think a lot of people that voted didn't understand what they were actually voting on because they followed their group line and they didn't quite see. And we have to link these things better so that people understand that when they talk, they think because it's lobbied by big companies, supermarkets and all kind of people, that this is about the same issue. That will be back within the next four months so it's not part of it. So don't wait for the big debate on common agriculture policy reform.

The other thing to say is unfortunately the decision on CAP reform will not be taken here in this house, of course, we will have a say for the first time I think, our second speaker, our Breton farmer said this, for the first time we will have the first time ever the parliament will have co decision rights over common agriculture policy reform, but of course we need agreement with 27 ministers as well. And the European commission put a good proposal on the table so it is a triangular system of decision making and a lot of people are involved and there is a lot a lot of work has to be done

if we are going to change our approach of the Common Agricultural Policy.

One of the problems in the debate of the common agricultural policy reform in the past is that there has been a sort of north south split, with the French coming into the South in this debate in the sense of how much money we put into it versus defending farmers. But the problem is, we always defend farmers in general and we've got to start looking at what farmers get what money from the common agriculture policy.

I mean that colleague at the end there, Mr Choplin, mentioned export subsidies for Smithfield and companies like that. Many people who defend farmers have often defended export subsidies without realising that they are going to these big industrial farmers and I don't think they know that these industrial farmers put your farmers out of business. They put farmers in West Africa out of business because they can't compete either with this kind of cheap meat dumped on their market. So I hope the MEPS that we will have a more sophisticated debate in parliament in the common agriculture policy about which farmers get what subsidies because too much of this CAP at the moment goes to these big industrial farmers, not pig farmers but they got their money the other way.

I was interested to see how that they got their money through the European Bank for Rural Development (EBRD). Now we should be looking at that because it made me think what control we have as elected politicians in who gets what money from the EBRD.

Now I was speaking to Catherine here who sits on regional policy committee and this is probably a policy cohesion area so there are a lot of different committees that need to be involved in this to actually get a grip on all these different things that are happening, which are pushing European farming down this totally unsustainable, totally unfair model which effects farmers, it effects environment and I know that Dan is going to speak about environmental impacts, but the things we can do in the next six months is about food labelling and I hope colleagues here will look very hard when it comes back in six months and make sure you look hard at this the country of origin labelling and don't follow a group line which has been pushed by big business.

**Question, Alain Cadec:**

I am Alain Cadec I'm an EPP French MEP but I also come from Côtes-du-Nord, and that's also in Brittany like the speaker at the top table. And I share a committee on water and on green algae because we have a significant problem with green algae in Brittany as you probably know. So I feel as that I know a bit of what has been talked about here and I think we should all publicise these things more.

The Côtes-du-Nord is the top pork producing region in France as well and this implies that there are lot of Breton people working in the meat processing industry and in the agro food more general. So the question will be from me is: what specific proposals are you making to try to keep jobs? Because that is what we are concerned about, we need to think about people who work in farming and the agro food industry and at the same time, reduce this type of production as you said René.

I would also say that through the local committee on water we are making proposals on an area about sulphur reduction protecting our wetlands such as Luisiane as José has been advocating and I put those proposals to our local water committee.

So the challenge then we face in the next few years is enormous and we need to meet this challenge together. My question is still there though, how are we going to do this? We are all assured we need to do something but we need to make sure that we don't damage the farmers and we don't damage jobs in the region either. Thank you.

**Answer, Janusz Wojciechowski:**

I am very happy that we have Mr Bové here with us because he is the Deputy Chairman of the Agriculture Committee and he can say how the members of the agriculture committee think. Because the majority of them say things that are in line with what we are saying here, maybe not in such a decisive manner, but they are going in that direction and that is a very important piece of information for us.

Because at a certain point there are certain decisions and our stands are defeated by the general approach, because we talk about a certain lack of means in the European Union. We always point out to CP that we have insufficient agriculture but let us see the achievements of CP, but I have a more specific question. The problem is in the scale of production and in its indecisiveness because this influence is the profitability and this results from the

certain conditions for that have been set and if we did not impose these conditions on imported goods and on these companies that produce in such a way that they destroy environment and it will all come down to the fact that their goods are cheaper.

So there are distortions, our competition is distorted and that is why the European model of agriculture is losing out and will continue to do so. The average income of farmers is at 60% of the average general income including 50% from European funds. The problem is in subsidies in through payment through direct payments you want to influence competitiveness and then we want every hectare to be competitive irrespective if it's a 10<sup>th</sup> of a hectare and another problem other living conditions in rural areas in infrastructure access to services, education why do people leave rural areas? This is one of the questions we should answer as well. There are certain challenges that we have to face as providing food for Europeans in Europe there are 80 million people that live below the level of poverty in this rich Europe.

But we know what the situation is in broader context in the world by the year 2050 and I'd like to say a few words on certain problems concerning this huge concentration, but it requires high quality of technologies.

When you have high concentration, technology has to be very sophisticated and the examples that were given here, it was the example of first stage after the free market economy was introduced in Poland, this big capital wanted to make a lot of money trying to use the all the legal loop holes and so on and so forth.

We started after the transitional period, we started building small slaughter houses we then have to close because external experts said they didn't meet the standards of the European Union. So these problems are really complex and I have repeated very often that these instruments that you talk about have to be written into the final principles of the CAP.

Some people say that is not good to have small herds and some people it's bad to have big herds. We have to set certain limits; if the herd is too big, then if the herd is too small there is not enough manure to fertilize the land.

Well we know what the British conservatives think about CAP. Maybe we should try to convince other parties to that approach. Some people say that there are certain bans in Europe but then there is no ban on soya feed. That is a question of profitability then, you are going to kill off our farmers if they can't use soya feed and

that is question of choice and we should try to maintain the organic character of our farms so that we maintain a proper relation with animal and plant production and these are very difficult questions but well the parliament needs farmers that are more active.

**Answer, José Bové:**

I think the three of us will try to deal with those questions just one first thing I say about debate about the CAP. I think that we do indeed have a major problem with the legitimacy of the Common Agricultural Policy if we want the European citizens to finance the CAP then the policy has to have legitimacy. Legitimacy gained through responding to the citizens needs because it's with European tax payers money that the CAP is financed and if the CAP is promoting agriculture which destroys the environment, produces bad quality industrial products, I can see why can't the European citizens want to finance that so I think that is important that the parliament we need to make it very clear to all of our colleges that we are not the ones that decide it is the European citizens that decide and we are their representatives then the second as regards to support for industrial agriculture and factory farming, one thing that strikes me today is the CAP and the first pillar and the second pillar.

The first pillar in direct aid those are very unevenly distributed the moment 75% of the aid goes to 25% of agricultural holdings and that's unacceptable. So we have a very unjust situation between farmers themselves and between Western Europe and Eastern Europe and we need to address the balance and have a greater justice among farmers in Europe because things cannot continue as they stand at the moment.

And then you have the second pillar I think the second pillar needs to be completely revamped. The point of the second pillar, what the second pillar does at the moment is provide aid for restructuring a part, a very small part of the pillar is for restructuring the organic agricultural sector etc. But most of the second pillar in most countries is used to continue support for industrial agriculture, whether that be in the pigs sector or in other sectors.

A few days ago I visited a project in Northern Germany where a slaughterhouse for poultry was being built which could kill 27000 birds an hour and that was financed by the European Union. Is this the kind of farming that we want? And we know that this kind of slaughter house requires 500 industrial poultry production units to supply it, so the second pillar of the CAP which is financed by European tax payers should it be used support this kind of production?

I say no it should be used to promote local markets and local processing, because that is in the interest of 500 million European consumers. The small success in pig production at the moment is being used to justify subsidies in the first and second pillar and that is completely wrong. It's completely the wrong way round, so I think we really need to use the 2013 reform to recalibrate the system to make sure that it does serve the farmers interest and here I agree with Alain Cadec- the CAP is not intended to oppose farmer's interest, but today it is actually leading to the loss of farmers jobs.

So clearly we need a different agriculture model because the CAP is destroying farming jobs. At the moment it has destructive and damaging effects on the environment and it is also a problem in terms of the quality of the food produce that it produces with the talk about the dioxin crisis and we could also talk about antibiotics and that is something we will be talking about later on the use of antibiotics in factory farming that is something that has a catastrophic effect for farmers and for those who work in these production units and also for consumers in general.

**Question, Marek Kryda:**

I agree with my neighbour MEP, Jose Bove, who started an interesting debate about protecting jobs, but if you look at the trend, and this I think applies to all areas where there is intensive farming in Europe, restructuring is taking place at the cost of jobs. There is a massive loss of jobs.

The whole agro food industry does this. We in Brittany lose 2500 jobs every year in production and 1500 in the agro food industry. I am sure that true in other regions in Europe so it's a combat we must all be involved in and must adopt a rational approach to this and see what we can do and in the future. We should learn what is good and what is bad.

Secondly, there are other regions in Europe which are very productive some of you come from Denmark- and I am not sure that this country now that has best income anymore, but if you look at the figures from our different regions, I am not sure that concentration leads to the competitiveness that some people claim.

Another thing that I think is very important is that the crisis in pig farming is very different from other crises. The crisis is mainly because the product supply comes from elsewhere. If you look at the increases in cereal prices in my region over one year, about the first half of the first pillar CAP has come to cereals, you see how

vulnerable we are. We become dependent on them and if we become dependent on a supply like that it means that the big farms have a monopoly.

So what can we do? You started and you debated with a very good question, I think we must see what we can do to promote high added value production on the land locally. We don't want just to produce one standard product we want to produce a diversity of quality products. We shouldn't give up and allow economics to drive agriculture; it is up to you MEPS and us local elected representatives to try to work out a solution together. I came here to try with you, to try and build something which we farmers can't achieve on our own.

**Answer, Gerard Choplin:**

Thanks Marek, well we haven't got much time, so I'll be quick. On the CAP though, I do want to point out that the current debate on the CAP is much too focused on the distribution of aid, but a policy like that isn't just about distributing public funding. That's an important part of it, but it is also a package of instruments, part of which is expenditure. Also there is income and there other neutral things like quotas- they don't cost the authorities anything.

I think we need to go beyond the current nature of the debate- direct aid- in FoodSovCAP we are contesting the current context where the prices are very low and that is made up for by direct aid. So that does deviate from the debate. Producers want to have a form of social recognition, they want younger people to come in and take over from them and so they have to have prices that are regulated by the market first of all. So I think it's important not just focus on direct payments and as regards to the environmental side we going to debate that now.

But on everything said about competitiveness, it is amazing what you hear about competitiveness in the agriculture committee, or here- it doesn't make any sense economically. You have to talk to economists about it, you can't talk about competitiveness and include public aid, and you can't say 'yes I am competitive' if part of what I get is public aid or state aid. If you get state aid it means you are not competitive and if you have a product below competitive prices then you can't say you are competitive either.

What is more, industrial farms don't pay for the cost of all this waste, so they externalise their costs as such as water or green algae, or whatever. It's what I call a negative multifunctionality I could obviously talk at length about that, but in Denmark for instance they get subsidies for producing bio-gas in their waste and

the competitiveness has to be without public aid and producers having to take on the costs of the waste themselves. This industrial farming isn't at all competitive. It just doesn't stand up economically.

Lastly because it is important, we have heard about health and safety standards, hygiene standards in small scale processing. Very often a national law goes much further and is tougher than European law. There are exceptions which allow small slaughterhouses to be exempted. A German company was set up recently processing meat locally and its very interesting- there is a lot of experience there about regulation in small scale industries and Commissioner Ciolos recently said that next winter there will be a conference on future regulations and standards that wouldn't just work on the basis of exemptions, but would be specific rules- small rules for small scale processing. But for that to happen the European parliament will also have to be involved in that process.

**Question, Jaroslaw Kalinowski**

Thank you very much. I would like to thank you very much for organising the event and for this discussion which is very valuable. I am convinced that it will leave some trace in our discussions and our internal discussion in the European parliament on the future of the CAP.

I would like to start by saying, not only as an MEP but also as a farmer, I am part of the European society that is against factory farming in agriculture in general and in particular in pig farming or in animal farming. I have my own farm of 40 hectares and we also raise pigs but we only have 20 sows in the closed cycle and this is pretty much the average in Poland. We have 30,000 pig farmers in Poland, there are 30,000 farms that raise pigs and there are 150 factory farms as we call them.

In Poland when we called a place a farm it includes in excess 2,000 fatteners what Mr Wojciechowski said we had this problem with the influx of very aggressive American capital to Poland and back then we had very loose regulations and we couldn't cope with the situation but now the situation is different- Smithfield is in the process of changing its strategy in Poland because it limits the fattening farms and produces piglets and cooperates with about 1,000 polish farmers, but these are minor details.

I as a pig farmer should say that we lose out in Poland, not the kind of production that we saw the film, but we lose out to our neighbours- to Germans or to Danes. We used to have 18 to 20 million pigs but now we only have 13 million. So our production is

defeated by more competitive goods that reach our country through supermarket chains from Germany or from Denmark.

There are many reasons for that- there is a lot of integration, vertical and horizontal in Denmark. The Danes are co-owners of processing plants- they are interested in the financial results of the company and not the price in the places they supply their products to. German colleagues, there is a lot of horizontal and in France, horizontal integration, once you establish a reference price for producers and in Poland we are pretty scattered and we lose out and that is the future of the CAP- I am happy that we agree today.

Mr Bové has once again said that the inequalities between the old and new Europe, in terms of subsidies cannot be maintained. But Mr Bové is unfortunately a member of a very small group of members of this parliament from the old member states. Then we are going to talk in European government about these issues. We are going to vote- it will turn out that there are no political differences, no differences between the conservatives and the democrats and the left- the divisions are going to be as follows: the old 15 member states and the new 12 member states and the vote will be who is in favour of maintaining huge support for the old 15 member states and then they will vote in favour. The members from the 15 old member states will be the in the minority.

This is a major question about the future of agriculture and the question the question is what kind of European agriculture we are going to have, but now we are going decide on the equal playing field in the common European market and I hope that we can still can count on Mr Bové's vote.

## **Environmental Costs**

### **Dan Jorgenson**

Before I start my speech I want to just say a few words to the last speaker, because it was for me it was both a little bit funny and tragic to hear you say the Polish farmers loose out to the Danish farmers, because earlier today I was in discussion with the Danish minister for the environment. She wants now to apply to the EU that Denmark should get an extension on the environmental goals setup in the framework directive. Why? What is the reason? Because we cannot compete with the Polish.

I come back to the point I want to make it is just...

Denmark is just a small country we have just 5 million people, we produce 25 million pigs. Twenty years ago, I know that I am probably not offending any of my colleagues by saying that I know some of you were members of the Parliament twenty years ago, well twenty years ago I was just a boy and I had a paper round, I was driving my bicycle and I grew up in the country side just like Tracy so most of the papers I had to deliver were for farms, and on my route there were about forty farms, now when I go visit my parents today and I go the same route there are five farms.

Why is this? Well it because we've had a change in which we go away from the small farms to the big farms and I fear very much that that will also happen also in Poland. Because what happens now is that we see a situation in which partly because of some success from the EU in strengthening the EU legislation some of the farmers from Denmark are moving their production to Poland. They exact same style we saw with Smithfield. You probably also saw that the Director's name was Morten Jensen that is a Danish name, it is not a coincide they know how to do things; they don't want small farms they want big farms, they are multinational corporations and the only thing that matters to them is how to make money.

Now, in Denmark the threat from the farmers, especially the pig farmers are by far the biggest threat we have to our environment. Some of the threats were already explained quite well in the movie but let me just mention some others. What happens when you put manure in the field is that some of it is washed out into the streams and the lakes and the coastlines, here it means that the algae will grow, when the algae then dies it leads to a lack of oxygen. This is really the main problem so we have a situation which our lakes and streams and coasts are dying. I talked to a diver who told me what it was like to dive in a lake or in a coastline where there is no oxygen. He say it is like if you imagine driving through countryside and the grass is yellow, the trees have fallen down the, cows are lying on their back s with their legs up. Everything is dead, if there is no oxygen there is no life. This is what happens, and that is not even the worst problem.

The worst problem is that some of this manure evaporates in the air and is carried by the wind and it then over fertilises some of the most vulnerable nature sites that we have, with the highest biodiversity and this is also one of the reasons why in Denmark even though we have the strictest legislation protecting the environment in Europe. We were the first country in the world to

have an environment minister, even though we have that our biodiversity is very, very low. Why? Because of the farmers, especially the pig farmers.

So, what do we do about this? Well even though I am a very, very big fan of the film we just saw and of Tracy I have to say there is one point that I really disagree with and that is when she is standing in front of the EU Parliament saying "unfortunately this is where they make our legislation" I can tell you if we didn't have the EU if we didn't have EU legislation to support our environment the situation in Denmark would be much worse.

Right now, the only thing that is stopping the farmers expanding even more is EU legislation. EU legislation: the habitat directive, bird protection directive, the water framework directive and with the water framework directive, when that's implemented directly, if we implement it correctly this will be the biggest tool that we have, the best tool that we have. Now, we can do more, we can strengthen the legislation we should defiantly do more to make sure it is implemented.

But the CAP reform would of course be, probably, our most powerful tool. Unfortunately I am not sure I am very optimistic. I very much share the analysis that not much is going to happen, I don't share analysis that is going to be the old countries versus the new countries because we do actually have some of the old countries, Denmark which is a bit weird because we make money on it. But still the political situation in Denmark is that we want to get rid of the subsidies, same in the UK and in Sweden so that some of the old countries are actually working for this. But I know very well that this is not going to happen.

Really when you look at it it's incredible that we have a situation where we pay more than 40% of the EU's budget- that is an enormous amount of money to one sector. I mean there are so many other things we could spend this money on so it really is much more than we can afford. Do we then get cheaper food? Well probably not, because if the markets were free or regulated in a different way, a lot of economists tell us we would get cheaper food. Do we do it because we have a shortage in food? No, no we did that when we started with the CAP but that was many years ago.

So to sum up you could say that we produce more than we need, we spend more than we can afford to, produce more than we need, we pay more for the goods than they are worth and we hurt our

environment and torture our animals. Maybe we should change that...?

The point I am trying to make is that we do have the possibilities here but we need to turn opinions of so many members of this house and we need to make it a question primarily of what kind of an agriculture sector do we want in the future and unfortunately it does not look like we will have much luck with that so that brings us back to the regulation and what can we do there. Well, apart from strengthening the environment legislation we can also strengthen other kinds of legislation: animal welfare legislation, we can strengthen the legislation we have now on animal transport because a lot of these pigs are being transported over large distances. That is why we have these massive slaughterhouses that José talked about.

The EU Commission promised us more than two years ago that we would see a new proposal for rules for animal transport before the end of their term, we know it has been made, we just haven't seen it yet. I want to make just a small commercial then I'll stop. We have some of the members of the EU parliament which have been kind enough to support a campaign that I've made that is called 8hours.eu and dot lots of other things as we have it in a lot of different languages where you can sign a petition where we shouldn't allow animals to be transported more than 8 hours we already have nearly 200,000 signatures and it will be a very good signal to send to the commission.

I really would ask all of you members and NGOs to put pressure on the Commission because we really need a new transport legislation as soon as possible.

### **Antje Koelling:**

Thank you Tracy for this really good film. There's also one thing I do not disagree with you, that you were talking about- extensify European animal farming. I think rather we have to go for an ecological and human intensification because good farming is very work intensive. It requires many farmers, employees and also consumers that pay attention and that feel responsible and that take care of land and animals. Producing cheap food in high quantities has been the paradigm of EU farming policy for years.

It we have seen devastating effects on the environment and also on rural societies and in the long run this farm policy also threatens

the resources we actually need to produce our food. Already today close to 40% is affected by soil erosion caused by unsustainable land use practices. The UK paid in 2000 about £60 mil to clean the drinking water of nitrate and phosphates, these are also environmental costs and even we have seen big prices appearing or a lot of bees dying at the moment, the estimated price of bee pollination is £228 million per year in UK.

It is hard to quantify all the costs that are caused by unsustainable farming systems, but there are clear indications that the real costs of food prod are borne by society indirectly and involve costs to individuals and communities who are not making the decisions about these agricultural production methods. The high costs for water treatment, the costs for loss of biodiversity and fertile soils will rather concern the next generations.

The market distortion that results from these systems, that externalise their costs, towards other farm systems with higher animal welfare and environmental standards such as organic farming, puts these more sustainable systems in an unjust market position. This must be resolved by better regulation, by environmental tax and pricing systems but it can also be addressed in the next cap reform.

We believe that the CAP is a great tool to shape farming towards more sustainability and in the cap it's really high time to move towards more sustainable farming and a greener cap. We should be careful not to do just green washing, but to put real incentives towards greener farming systems. Organic farming is a systematic approach towards sustainability and gathering many animal welfare and sustainability aspects under one certification system. It is a cost efficient measure to meet the EU objectives of sustainability and rural development. It needs to be handled as a priority of the new CAP.

Farmers that maintain areas managed with high natural value also require special attention, but also in the so called first axis of the 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar, investment support, we must make sure all investments are benefiting animal welfare and the environment. We shouldn't support any more measures that are not beneficial for employment for environment. Innovation is a another point that has been raised in the CAP communication of the commission last year, we believe innovation should keep farmers and societies needs in sight and address the needs for holistic ecologic economics and animal friendly farming systems, rather than focusing on simplistic techs.

Of course, cross compliance must be implemented and we believe the bureaucratic burden for farmers, especially small farmers should be small, but should not go against the expense of human health and environment and animals. We believe that the burden can rather be diminished by better coordination within member states

## **Mute Schimpf**

Friends of the Earth Europe is the biggest grass roots movement for the environment in Europe and what could be a slight difference between us and other environmental groups is that we are convinced that there is a joint interest between small scale farmers in Europe, farmers in developing countries and the environmental movement. We think we have a joint interest to develop food and agricultural and environmental policy in another direction than it is currently seen.

I know that in several member states and between several stakeholders there are concerns that we as environmentalist with our ambitious demands could threaten food security in Europe.

Also in the communications from the Commission and from Commissioner Ciolos there is a distinction between maintaining the natural resources and food security.

We think it is necessary to change this perspective because farmers in Europe depend on fertile soils, they depend on water, they need biodiversity on their fields, they need biodiversity in breeding and the European consumers need biodiversity in their food culture.

This means that we can't allow a handful of companies to control the seed or the feed or the breeding sector. The way we consume in Europe and especially how we produce meat, how we produce dairy products, how we use our grasslands and how we use our crop land has a major impact on the environment, not just here within Europe but also in developing countries.

If you listen or attend the meetings of Agriculture Committee there are a lot of representatives who are proud of the productivity of the European farms. I agree we are very productive but at what price? If you calculate on balance what we import what we export we are completely reliant on feed imports. Europe currently produces only 20% of their own protein feed, the rest is imported either from N. America or the biggest part is imported from S. America and there it has a damaging effect on the environment. It contributes to the

destruction of the rainforest, the cerrado and it also has a negative impact on the health of the local communities because this soy production is linked with pesticides use and is very industrialised. This also has an impact on the environment in Europe.

The current CAP as José Bové and René Louail have already mentioned has resulted in a complete disconnection between the livestock sector, especially the poultry sector, partially also the pig sector, less so in the dairy sector and crop production. For farmers, and I am not sure if in this case I would call them farmers, it is possible to produce ten thousand poultry each year on 2 hectares of land because you can buy all your feed from other farms and you can have contracts for your manure. I think if you discuss our vision of the future and way how we want to produce food and how we want to raise our livestock it is necessary to abandon this disconnection and have a vision to come back to how we can produce our own food, how we can produce our own feed for our livestock sector and that there should be a relationship between the farm size and the animals which you can raise on it.

So, as friends of the Earth Europe the solution is first; we need to really push for protein production in Europe, this means it is not enough to have nice voluntary programmes in just some different member states and not in all of them, where you could get some 20/30 euros payments if you cultivate peas or beans. This is not enough, and this will never be enough to find the solution, therefore we think there should be a compulsory crop rotation and one part of this crop rotation should be a protein crop or to be more concrete not just a protein crop but a legume i.e. pea, bean, clover, alfalfa, etc.

The second, due to the lack of knowledge we also think it is necessary to offer the feed sector training, some research and also an advisory system on how farmers, how poultry farmers, how pig farmers can use home-grown protein crops because all this knowledge and skills have been lost and as it was more competitive to use soy from Latin America than the use of peas that you could cultivate on the fields.

The third demand is it is also necessary that the breeding sector get support, a kind of a "kick off" because if you don't support the breeding sectors the long-term development of new varieties for farmers suffers and they would not get access to improved varieties.

Besides this we think it is necessary to abandon the indirect support of factory farms because currently we have in different countries in

Europe, factory farms that are not acceptable. We have a lot of local resistance against this type of farm and sometimes they are directly supported as José Bové mentioned for example; this slaughter house in Germany for poultry which may receive funds from the second pillar for investments so we think it is necessary to develop a vision of which kind of agriculture and which kind of livestock sector we want to have. Therefore I think it is necessary to say not in the short term but in the mid-term there should be a relation between the size farms and the animals you can raise on it.

We are also thinking we have a problem with grassland. There is much decline of grassland for different European countries. If we have this problem, in the last few decades there have been no incentives for grassland farming. So if you want to change this, it is also not enough to have a voluntary scheme between different member states when there should be something really innovative to say if you have grazing pigs why don't you have a top up payment in the first pillar, this is really necessary. We need more than just minor changes in the CAP discussing if there should be 2% more in the second pillar or 3% more in the first pillar.

This is not what we need. The CAP is neglecting the role and the environmental impact and also the social impact of the livestock sector and I think it is necessary at least for the European Parliament to re-discuss this.

If you read the CAP communications from the commissioners there is one sentence or part of one sentence for encouraged synergy between the livestock sector and the crop farmers. This is not enough, if we want to change the situation and if you don't want a full implementation of the Smithfield system in Europe we really need major changes in the CAP.

Therefore we have clear visions, clear ideas and we are convinced there is no kind of contradiction between environmental policy and farming policy and just to remind you if we discuss about farmers in Europe, these are not two hectare farms, the average size in Europe is still twelve hectares, the average farmer in Europe is still a small scale farmer. If we develop a vision for a food and agriculture policy lets think about the farmers of Europe not part of the farmers lobby and unions that focus just on the biggest farms, because why should focus just on the big farms they should be competitive enough?

So lets introduce ceilings and refocus on the small scale farmer and develop innovative systems, develop systems on how to locally market, how we can locally process, how we can locally organise

and exchange knowledge on a regional and local levels and focus on this because I am sure that a lot of farmers of Europe have enough ideas, enough background, enough experience, enough skills on environmentally friendly pig, poultry and cattle production. We just need to motivate and enhance this.

## **Environmental Questions**

### **Question, Marek Wopawski:**

Contrary to you, I can't say that I liked this film. I didn't like it because it's a caricature of what's going on in Poland. On one hand we have these big farms and on the other hand we have pigs that wallow in mud, but this is not the real situation in Poland. We're not here to discuss the situation in Polish rural areas, because it could have lasted for hours, but I wanted to highlight one thing. There are many people in my part of Europe that disagree with this approach that we should go towards the extensive approach in farming.

There was a scene in the film, it was cut out, its on the DVD, but it says that people in the West of Europe spend 20-30% of their income [on food], people in Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic spend 60-70% of their income on food. If we follow the path of extensive farming, these costs are going to increase and people aren't going to accept that.

While this film says many things that makes sense, for example labelling. There's no problem, no-one in their right senses would object to putting a label on a sausage or piece of meat, from Poland from Germany, from an eco-friendly farm, from farms that use straw litter or don't use straw litter. But we can't have this wishful thinking kind of approach because no-one's going to be young or happy or beautiful forever.

The question is, shouldn't we stop persecuting these huge companies, because they are treated quite restrictively on things like liquid manure and how they dispose of it. Maybe we should focus on small and medium sized producers, this is what we're lacking in Poland, the market is monopolised by hypermarkets and supermarkets, that offer very cheap products because their costs are low, food prices are very important for us and hence the prob.

**Answer, Dan Jorgenson, MEP:**

To answer the question, you have to understand the question. I'm not totally sure what it is, but I'll try anyway.

If we're talking about the responsibility of the consumer, I agree that consumers do have a responsibility and in a perfect world we wouldn't need politicians because consumers would make informed choices in the market and would treat the environment better- not because of ethical reasons, but also because it would be in people's own interests.

Unfortunately that's not the way it works. I think the assumption that we can solve animal welfare and environmental problems by relying on political consumers rests on 2 assumptions that I don't think will hold up to the test.

The first of these is that consumers are informed- obviously they are not informed, we can do more to inform them and they should know that when they buy meat that is cheap, it's probably not produced in a very good way. But the fact of the matter is, they don't know. We can do something to help them make a more educated choice, but it's very difficult to give people full knowledge of the consequences of their choices when they buy things. So I think probably one of the reasons why we have a representative democracy is that people don't want to have to think about all the consequences of their choices in everyday life, they elect politicians to make those decisions for them.

The second assumption is that people have a choice. When I was a student, I couldn't afford to buy organic meat in Denmark, because it's very expensive. Now I can afford it, so I do it, but a lot of people can't, so really the combination of a lack of knowledge and information and the fact that a lot of people don't have this choice makes it not really a good idea for us to only assume that political consumers can help solve this problem.

I think that we as politicians need to lift our responsibility and make regulations and positive incentives to encourage organic farmers and farmers that fulfil certain criteria and make negative incentives for those that don't

# Human and Animal Health

## Janus Wojciechowski

I remember that in the previous term of the European Parliament we adopted three resolutions in which were expressed the very important declaration that animals are sentient beings and animal protection and welfare is a challenge of our humanity, of our culture and civilisation in Europe in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and I think we should remember this declaration. We should respect this approach in practice.

A situation which we observe in this film is against the European law, against the present pig directive and we can postulate better control, better supervisory and this situation should not exist in the future in Europe. This one question, better control and respect of European regulation which presently exists.

The second question is I think that in the future of the Common Agriculture Policy we should stop subsidises for industrial farming, industrial big farms that we observe in this film and I think Mr Siekierski's proposal that we should support/finance those farmers who cultivate the land and who have the proper number of animals connected with this farm it is a very good idea. We should change the system of financing in the Common Agriculture Policy and support this type of farming when there is land which is cultivated and the farmers, who have animals, use their own feed etc.

This is the proper way. I support very strongly this idea that this type of farming which observed in this film should not be financed, no Euro Cent should support this type of industrial farming. This is I think the real thing which we can do, this is the good time for us to discuss this because we are at the beginning of the decisions about the future of the Common Agricultural Policy and we have to remember this discussion and we have to try and introduce this into practice.

I will not have a long speech as we are a little late and my suggestion is to give the floor to the next speaker. Once again Tracy Worcester you have done a very good job giving to us the possibility to see the film and we have to consider the situation which this film shows and to remember it when we will discuss the future of the Common Agriculture Policy.

## **Peter Stevenson**

I'm going to talk about the animal welfare implications. I'm going to first talk about the fattening pigs; these are the pigs that are actually reared to provide meat. Then I'll talk about the problems of the breeding sows.

We rear 250 million pigs every year in the EU: nearly all of them are factory farmed. What I mean by that is that they're kept in very barren systems, they have no enrichment materials, even though by EU law they should be given straw or something similar. They are kept on fully slatted floors and they're routinely tail docked, even though that is illegal under EU law.

Let me explain the problem about tail docking. In natural conditions, pigs spend 75% of their day in activity, they root, forage, explore... When they're kept in these barren factory farms, they can't do that, they get very bored and so they turn to the only thing that's in their world, which is the tails of other pigs. And not out of aggression, but out of boredom, they begin to chew and then bite tails. What factory farmers do is just slice off part of the tail, even though the science has told us for years that the right way to prevent tail biting is not to cut off part of the tail, but to keep the pigs in good conditions and above all to give them enrichment materials like straw, but we're getting this routine tail docking, even though it's illegal.

Now the big problem we face is that we have some good laws, but they are being widely ignored. We did an investigation recently on six big pig producing countries, in virtually every farm we went to there was no enrichment and the pigs were routinely tail docked. There was a similar investigation carried out by another organisation in France with the same results- breaking of the law, no enrichment, routine tail docking. Now this is not just found by NGOs, the Commission's own Food and Veterinary Office carries out regular missions to the member states and has found that in many cases, the pigs are not given enrichment and they are routinely tail docked. Finally the European Food Safety Authority has said that over 90% of pigs in the EU are tail docked, despite the fact that it's illegal.

This is how I'd like to see pigs being kept- if they're indoors, they should be given straw and space- even better is to keep them outdoors. So to sum up on the fattening pigs, the big problem is that the laws we have got, that are quite good, are being widely ignored. We need the Parliament and Commission to put much more pressure on Member States to enforce these laws.

I now want to turn to the breeding sows; their role on the farm is not so much to provide meat- though of course they'll be slaughtered for meat at the end of their lives- it's to produce piglets.

Most sows in the EU are kept in sow stalls- these stalls are so narrow that the pig can't even turn around and she's kept like that throughout her pregnancy. Happily these are banned in the EU from 2013, but there are still a couple of worries. Even after 2013, farmers will still be able to use stalls for the first four weeks of pregnancy. However the EU Food Safety Authority, which reviews the science on animal welfare has said that keeping them for the first four weeks in these narrow stalls will be bad for welfare, so what we want to see is that this first four weeks exemption should be stopped and that sow stalls should be banned altogether.

The banning of sow stalls that are used during pregnancy could lead to further problems. Farmers have got to put their sows into groups, not individual stalls. I fear that some of them will do that but still come up with some pretty awful systems. These systems will actually be illegal, because under the directive even sows have got to be given some kind of straw or something similar from 2013. The directive prohibits the use of fully slatted floors for sows and to prevent hunger, sows have got to be given some bulky food. The best way of giving them bulky food and providing enrichment is to give them a deep bed of straw. Or, of course, ideally raise the sows outdoors.

As I said these stalls are being used during pregnancy, but there's an equally nasty inhumane system used when the sow gives birth, these are called farrowing crates. The sow is put in there about a week before she's due to give birth; while she's giving birth; and for about three to four weeks afterwards, until the piglets are weaned, so she's there for about a month. As you can see, they're even more restrictive than the stalls. Sadly these are not illegal. The science is very much supportive of our concerns about farrowing crates; we want to see sows being kept in pens where they are free to move.

Now the reason farmers use crates is because sows can crush piglets if they lie down, but scientific research shows that a loose farrowing system if well designed and well managed can keep piglet mortality as low as these very restrictive crates. So they should either be like this or they should be giving birth and mothering their piglets outdoors. So we need a big reform in which we end these farrowing crates. As you can see, there are a whole load of welfare problems that need to be addressed.

## **Colin Nunan**

My name is Colin Nunan and I represent the Soil Association the organic farming organisation in the UK and I'd like to thank Tracy for having invited me to speak here.

I am here to speak about the human health consequences of the overuse of antibiotics in farming.

Intensive farming still very much relies on the routine use of antibiotics, this is despite the fact many people think that the excessive use of antibiotics was solved when in 2006 when the EU finally banned the antibiotic growth promoters. However this only had a very limited effect as the EU still permits the routine use of antibiotics in feed and water for disease prevention, for prophylaxis the only difference is you need a veterinary prescription, but many of the antibiotics which previously used for growth promotion are used for prophylaxis so this is sort of growth promotion and prophylaxis all in one.

The industry which depends the most on antibiotics is the pig industry followed by the poultry industry, i.e. the most intensive ones. In the UK they account for 96% of antibiotic use in agriculture. Most of the remaining 4% is used by dairy cows which are also farmed quite intensively and just to give you an idea of the differences in the UK there are fewer than five million pigs but there are 33 million sheep. Pigs use 60% of antibiotic use and sheep use less than 0.3% because sheep are usually kept outdoors (1:38' 50").

So what are the risks to human health? The risks fall into 3 categories:

The first category, perhaps the most important is the antibiotic resistant bacteria which develop in farm animals and can then be passed onto humans and cause infectious diseases which cannot be treated with those antibiotics. They can pass to humans either on food or through the environment or via direct contact with the farm animals.

The second problem is the use of certain antibiotics can increase the levels of some pathogens in the farm animals thus increasing the risk to the humans consuming the animal products.

The third risk is that some of the antibiotics, not most of them, but some of them are toxic and may leave residues in food.

So dealing with the first problem, the major problem, antibiotic resistance. Sometime we hear from the industry that there is no evidence at all that farm animal use contributes to resistance in human medicine, however both the WHO and EFSA have concluded that there is clear evidence that some human resistance does come from the farm animal antibiotic use, although it is very difficult for a whole range of scientific reasons to prove exactly how much comes from farm animals, how much comes from humans it is all very controversial area. Never the less there was a recent Dutch report by their food standards agency which estimates that in the Netherlands 30 – 50% of resistance in humans comes from farm animals, I should point out that in the Netherlands they have very low use of antibiotics in humans and high use in farm animal so perhaps[s the figure would not be as high as in other EU countries.

So dealing with MRSA which is one of the best know antibiotic resistant bacteria. In most countries and certainly up until very recently MRSA with mainly associated with the hospital use of antibiotics, not farm animal use. However in the decade a new strain of MRSA has emerged in pigs, mainly, but also in poultry and in some dairy calves. This strain is called ST398 and it is wide spread in many continental EU countries and it spreads to humans, particularly farm worker or vets and it can cause seriously infections including deaths. It is so wide spread in pigs some scientists are concerned that it will have the opportunity to mutate and become even more dangerous to humans in the future. It isn't however the only strain in European pigs and in some EU countries there is another strain called ST1 and there are scientific reasons which would suggest that it may, if it becomes as wide spread as ST398 may be even more dangerous to humans than ST398.

Other examples of resistant bacteria which can get their resistance in farm animals and then infect humans are *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* and most resistance in most of these bacteria actually comes from farm animal use, it mainly does not come from human use but it can cause serious problems in human medicine.

With *E. coli* is it is more complicated and it is hard to say exactly where it is coming from, never the less we do know some definitely does come from farm animal and this is significant particularly because there are highly resistant new forms of *E. coli* called ESBL *E. coli* which is present in livestock in Europe. ESBL *E. coli* which although not as well known as MRSA in many countries it already kills many more people than MRSA.

The second major problem is the increase of certain pathogens so the oral use of certain antibiotics can kill off good bacteria in the

animal's gut allowing other bacteria to move in and become more widespread. The first example of this is *Clostridium difficile* which until recently was mainly a hospital problem but now in Europe there is a new 'hypervirulent' strain of *Clostridium difficile* called 078 which is present mainly in European pigs and despite being virtually unknown in human medicine just a few years ago it has become the third most common strain in humans throughout Europe so it is potentially a major pathogen that is coming from intensive farming to humans.

The second example of this phenomenon is *Salmonella* which became a major worldwide problem only after the introduction of animal feed additives in the 1950s and there's a huge amount of science showing the link with the use of antibiotics.

The final problem is antibiotic residues. Many antibiotics are not particularly toxic and do not leave significant residues in food, however the Ionophore family of antibiotics which are mainly used in poultry they are toxic and they can leave residues, particularly in eggs. These Ionophores we know very little on their direct effects on humans but there are large numbers of studies in animals that show they've been linked to a range of disease including heart arrhythmias and sudden death syndrome. Unfortunately we don't know what the full danger to humans is because the EU does not publish full safety data on antibiotics so it is not possible for us to evaluate on what basis this is licensed in the EU because the EU won't, and/or EU countries, not just the institutions, won't not publish the full safety data.

In conclusion, the over use of antibiotics in agriculture has many serious consequences for human health, the growth in antibiotic resistance requires particularly urgent action because very few new antibiotics are coming onto the market and we are down to the last ones for certain diseases and the EU should conduct a full and open review of the routine use of antibiotics in feed and water for disease prevention because the ban on the growth promoters has not really solved the problem at all. Finally, the EU should publish antibiotic safety data so that it can also be independently assessed by scientists and other stake holders.

## **Prof. Dr. Hab. Robert Karczmarczyk**

I would like to say a few words about MRSA, which is *Methycillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus*. *Staphylococcus Aureus* is nothing new- it's a bacteria well known in both human and veterinary medicine, I'm representing veterinary medicine. It's a real risk for animals and humans and what is very important is that the agent can be transmitted from animal to animal; animal to human; human to human and from human to animal, so its multi-routed and the route of the infection is very important in the chain of infectious diseases. This is a joint point of veterinary and human med and if you look at the end of the chain it is a consumer health problem.

There have been a lot of publications about MRSA, but often not scientific point of view. The first strain of MRSA was isolated in 1961 the next 30-40 years it became a real problem. If you look at the human medicine and the human consequences after the infection, it can cause pneumonia or skin lesions or many other mild diseases, as we've heard. What really is a problem is the source of infection. We have detected from veterinary field studies that there are a lot of carrier animals among livestock. Its hard to be 100% sure that this is only a problem in factory farms, but a large part of the problem lies in the big and intensive farming of animals.

What species of animals are involved?

Mainly pigs, sheep, poultry and cattle. But it's not only farm animals, as the agent could spread from animals to humans and vice versa and so our companion animals are also in danger, such as cats, dogs and horses. We don't think that we, or our children, could be exposed to this when we play with fluffy animals, but it can be a problem, especially if we are in weakened physical condition.

Carriers show no outward signs of disease. From first sight it looks like a healthy animal- nothing looks wrong. But if you take swabs, it becomes clearer, in pigs up to 25% of the population could be carriers on big farms and in some research we can find that 40% of a population could be carrier animals. And in humans in the risk group, as we've heard some minutes ago, vets, animal carers, it's about 20%. There was some research in North America- the risk of appearance of the disease in humans that stay close to animals is more than 700 times more than in the rest of the population. The primary reservoirs of *S. aureus* are pigs, then cows, then broiler chickens.

Drug Resistance.

Of course, it's really not a mass problem today, and I believe nobody would like it to be the case, but it's a growing problem. It starts off with a simple infection- something on the skin or just pneumonia, but it is resistant to the drugs that are normally used to treat it. And unfortunately, in some cases it ends with death.

Most MRSA strains are not just resistant to methicillin, but also to tetracycline, trimethoprim, and aminoglycosides, which are very popular drugs, used in veterinary and also human medicine.

What is a danger or what factors impact the danger for humans?

Intensively reared food producing animals also contaminated food. We can eat something that was contaminated during the process of production and of course slaughter houses and abattoirs. It's not only in animals; humans could also be carriers, because they have close contact with animals, which enables the pathogen to jump from one species to another. And raw meat, if you like to eat it, remember.

One of the factors that exacerbate drug resistance and the spread of pathogens is the extensive use of antimicrobials for prevention of disease. It has been said today five or six times, but it's a fact unfortunately. As humans we would like to have healthy food and happy animals, but we are on the wrong path to achieving that goal. Of course, if bacteria are resistant to treatment, it is not only expensive but sometimes; unfortunately, there are large losses in production.

## **Health Questions**

### **Question:**

Hi, my name is Charles Fraser, from the World Preservation Foundation. I'd just like to know, within the global context - where the UN is reporting imminent food riots, and where 40 million children die every year because they can't afford to buy food - why we are not concentrating on promoting a more plant-based diet?

The production of meat under intensive, or extensive, means that there are going to be higher grain prices, which, if we were feeding ourselves under plant-based diets, we could feed the 2050 population with today's food supply. The projected 2050 population. I don't understand why within this global context which we're in, that issue isn't being recognised. Why isn't that being dealt with? Thank you

**Answer, Peter Stevenson:**

Yes, you're quite right that plant-based diets are a much more efficient way of feeding people, but I really want to stress that Compassion in World Farming is not a vegetarian society. But if we're looking at efficient ways of feeding a growing world population, very industrial systems - of which pig-farming is a very good example - are massively inefficient; and they are inefficient because they are totally dependent on feeding grains and soy to the animals, and every study shows that the amount of nutrition that you have to put into the animal with grains and soy, is very much less than the nutrition that you get back out of the animal in the form of meat.

So, we do need to have farming systems that are not dependent on feeding huge quantities of grains and soy to animals, and that really means going over to much more ruminant production, because the great efficiency of cattle and sheep, if raised on grass, is that they are converting food that we cannot eat - grass - into something we can eat. So, let's move away from very industrial pigs and poultry, and indeed industrial cattle, to extensive, and probably much more ruminant based agriculture. But that's a very simple answer to a complex question. Thank you.

**Answer, Colin Nunan:**

I would just like to partly back-up what he's saying, but I'd also point to the fact that part of the reason we have such intensive pig and poultry production, is because, like us, they are mono-gastric animals. They are not ruminants, they cannot eat grass, and they don't have, like we don't, the ability to eat grass, because they don't have the same complex micro-organisms in their gut. And, as a result, we can feed them antibiotics daily, and this does help protect their health if they're kept in terrible conditions.

Quite simply, you cannot do that with ruminant animals, and in particular with sheep. You can do it, to some extent with cattle, but it's very very difficult with sheep, and this is why essentially the sheep have escaped, and they are out in the fields. It is because of antibiotics, largely; because the ruminant animals, sheep, simply get sick if you feed them antibiotics. You have to inject an antibiotic, and treat them generally individually, whereas the mono-gastric ones, you can feed them the antibiotics.

And the other point about the ruminant animals, is not only can they eat food that we can't eat, they can bring nitrogen into the whole system. Because if they eat a grass clover lea, that grass clover lea is constantly fixing nitrogen and they are eating that, and the very fact that they are eating that is enabling the land to fix

more nitrogen, and we can then rotate and grow crops in that field without using any artificial fertiliser. On the other hand, the pigs and poultry are eating grain. They are not only our competitors for food. They are also taking nitrogen out of the system, rather than bringing it in, essentially for free.

**Question:**

Thank you very much. Bryan Kilgannon's my name. I'm with the Permanent Representation of Ireland to the European Union, here in Brussels. Thanks to the organisers, for this very useful debate. And thanks to Tracy, individually. I'll be brief.

As has been said several times today, standards in the EU, regarding welfare, and the environment, and so-forth are very high. They are the highest in the world. And it's not co-incidental. It's because of the work done here, in Parliament, in Council, and in the Commission. What we have no control over here, is global standards. And the difficulty thus arises, when we negotiate trade agreements - free trade agreements - with other world powers, as is being done all the time.

When we talk of new standards, as mentioned by Mr Jorgensen - new transport, your new other angle welfare standards - we must remember that every new law created here, raises the bar for European standards, but not for those in the rest of the world. Every new law increases the cost on European farmers, thus making them more uncompetitive on the world stage, so products on supermarket shelves - be they pork, be they eggs, whatever - that are produced in less regulated societies, are going to be cheaper than their equivalent EU products. That's the bottom line.

So by making our farmers here, animal welfare-friendly, environment-friendly, produce uncompetitiveness. We are actually in danger of undermining ourselves, and encouraging lower global standards. This is the danger.

So, by all means, let's continue talking about animal welfare. Let's continue to push animal welfare standards. But let's not do so in a way that puts our farmers out of business, and let's encourage the rest of the world to catch-up with us. Thank you.

**Answer, Janusz Wojciechowski:**

Thank you very much for this question. I do agree with you, and even here in the European Parliament we agree on that, because the European Parliament has expressed its opinion many times in line with that. In the Arabic Culture Committee, we come back to this problem every time we debate something. We should have the

same requirements for the European farmers and producers, as well as for all those who export their products to the European Union. This is a very simple rule, but it is very very difficult to put into practice.

Well, you said we don't have any influence on the global rules, but we don't even try. Animal protection today, well I said about this declaration, that we treat it as a challenge for human kind. And it is high time that there were certain minimal standards as far as animal welfare is concerned, and it should be treated as a non-trade standard. It should be treated as a non-trade value in all the international trade agreements.

But why does this not happen? Well, in the former term of office - I think it was Commissioner Mandleson who was dealing with trade at that time - he responded quite frankly that we do not protect the interests of our farmers in international trade, because there are some other issues in industry. Industry accounts for 85% of our foreign trade, and agriculture accounts for only 15%. But this is the wrong approach. Because if our representatives - people who represent the European Union outside in international trade negotiations - sacrifice agriculture, and the good of this sector in the name of other sectors, well I think this is a very wrong approach, and this will threaten our food security in the European Union in the future.

Here in the European Parliament, I think we understand this issue quite well, but this understanding has to be shared by the other institutions: in the Council, in the Commission. But I fully support this direction, this line of thinking, that we should have the same standards, that we should raise animal welfare standards, and that we should raise this issue with regard to international trade standards.

**Answer Peter Stevenson:**

Yes, obviously this is a crucial question. One thing: there is always the assumption that better welfare is an economic disadvantage, and, indeed, sometimes it is a problem. We do need to also look for the kind of win-win situations, where better welfare can be economically beneficial, in terms of healthier animals, lower veterinary costs, lower mortality.

Certainly, my own background- I'm a lawyer, I have some expertise in WTO rules and I think that we in the European Union could actually go much further towards requiring imports to meet standards roughly equivalent to our own.

The final point I would like to make - as I'm sitting next to one of the Vice-Presidents of the Parliament's Agriculture Committee - I agree with Linda McAvern earlier, that clearly the CAP is not the answer to all our problems, but it is being reformed at the moment, and I'd love to see the Agriculture Committee - which is obviously in the lead on CAP - looking at how we can use the CAP; how can we support farmers, with the costs involved in moving from very industrial pig and poultry systems; to something more sustainable and humane.

I really think we mustn't lose this opportunity of influencing the debate on the CAP, because there is a lot of money there which could, and should, help us move away from factory farming, to something better and healthier.

**Question Boguslaw Sonik:**

I wanted to pick up on what a representative of Ireland said. In the previous term of office I worked on the Reach Directive, on the chemical industry. And in the Reach Package we had imposed, on the importers, the obligation to comply with EU legislation (i.e. the Reach Package). The aim was to eliminate dangerous substances from chemical products which are exported to the European Union, and this obligation was also imposed on importers who are obliged to require the compliance with this legislation. But, on the other hand, we also heard that 250 million pigs which are kept in Europe, 250 million pigs, are kept in inhumane conditions, in appalling conditions, which fly's in the face of what we're trying to achieve (i.e. animal welfare). Thank you.

**Question:**

One more question, picking up on this discussion, I would like to say that we have instruments at our disposal, and directives, and all the directives that deal with the protection of animals, we have the stipulation which says that there is a ban on importing animals, and animal products, from those countries who do not meet the criteria of the European Union.

Of course, there is some kind of liberal approach towards this EU law, because in the directive on broilers, we do not have very strict wording on the ban of import. But we can read there that a member state should encourage their operators to purchase broilers, and broilers meat, from the farms where these standards are similar to those standards that apply in the European Union. So we have some instruments, but we do not make the full-use of these instruments in order to implement the law.

And one more question, for Mr Stephens. You said that tail cutting is illegal, tail docking is illegal. You also said that keeping pigs on beds without bedding is illegal. I don't know why, because the Directive – the said Directive 2008 120 – says that tail docking should not be used as a routine. But if there is tail-biting in pens, then it should be admissible. And this is specified within what time-period this tail-docking should be applied. And the directive does not say that we cannot keep pigs in pens without any bedding, and there are some requirements on the widths, the sizes and everything. And the directive says also that straw should be provided to the sows just before pregnancy, but if we have other kind of bedding, it is not obligatory. I don't know what's your basis for saying that tail-docking is fully illegal.

**Answer, Peter Stevenson:**

The Directive has two provisions. First, it requires for all fattening pigs – and from 2013, for sows – that they be given material such as straw, hay, wood, peat; and it makes clear the purpose; which is to allow the pigs to engage in their natural investigation and manipulation behaviours.

So, if a farmer doesn't want to use straw, hay or wood, he has got to use something that is going to be equally effective in allowing that natural routine and manipulation behaviour.

The second provision: yes, the ban is on routine tail-docking, but the farmer has to go much further than you suggested. He has to show not only that there is tail-biting, but that he has tried other ways of preventing what the Directive calls 'inadequate conditions'. He has to show he's genuinely tried to stop tail-biting, and failed, and then he can dock, he can cut off the tail.

But the most obvious inadequate condition, according EFSA, to the science, is lack of enrichment materials. So, if a farmer has got a totally barren farm - which is very, very common in the EU - he cannot legally tail-dock. Only if he has provided straw, or some other similar material: space, ventilation, and has still got a biting problem, then he can dock. Thank you.

**Question, Czeslaw Siekierski:**

Yes, I would like to ask, and to invite Tracy to Poland, to see what the situation is like now, because the film is about the past. Of course, the film was very good, but the situation has changed in Poland, and I'd like to invite you to Poland to see it first-hand.

The situation has changed, and we should not punish Polish farmers, who are decent people, because the film is about the past.

The film is not about the present. So I'd like to invite you to Poland, to see it first-hand.

**Answer, Tracy Worcester:**

The bottom line is go and see the Romanian farms, and maybe you'll realise that it's still bad there, and maybe it's cleaned up a bit in Poland.

**Janusz Wojciechowski**

Ladies and gentlemen, first and foremost, I would like to thank you very much, and especially Tracy Worcester and other panellists who presented their interesting presentations, and all the guests who came in such large numbers to this event. There are numerous members of the Parliament, representatives of NGOs from many countries all throughout Europe. There were veterinary doctors, scientists, and we are very happy.

This meeting was not aimed at presenting certain ready-made recipes. It was rather a brain-storming session, and we wanted to make people think of what's going on at present, and what needs to be changed. But there are these six asks, and they are very specific, and they should be implemented in practice, and we'll try to take that into consideration in our work here in the European Parliament.

With regard to what Mr Siekierski has just said, I would like to tell you that the situation in Poland that is depicted in the film, was indeed met with huge interest. In Poland we have the so-called Supreme Court of Audit. I am very familiar with it because I was its Chairman before coming here, and the Supreme Chamber of Audit, some three years ago, carried out an inspection.

Mr Marek, knows about this inspection. And it was a very in-depth inspection that revealed a very difficult situation, which was not far from what we saw in the film. But I hope that today, after this inspection - after the implementation of certain conclusions drawn from this inspection - the situation has improved. And I believe it's better, because there are more controls, there are more inspections in Polish farms, and I believe that the situation in Poland is better.

But it doesn't mean that we can rest on our laurels, and stop taking interest in this issue. But we have to strive for at least the directive to be observed, and members of the European Parliament should approach the European Commission, and member states, to do so.

Another thing I'm fully convinced about, and I've tried to convince my colleagues of- we should strive for this kind of farming not to be supported from European funds. And in the CAP, and its objectives, it says that one of the objectives of the CAP is to support environment-friendly farming. Maybe it shouldn't be intensive pig farming, because it's not environment-friendly.

So, we should do something in line with what Mr Bové has said. We should support these farmers who cultivate land, and also raise animals. Maybe this could be a solution. I don't know what the standards should be, but maybe we could come up with some additional top-ups for these farmers that have their animals which they feed with their own feed, which they have produced themselves. I think this is the right direction we should go in.

Now, there are still some lengthy discussions ahead of us. We'll come back to this film, and to this discussion that we've had today.

I'd like to thank you once again Tracy, for this inspiring piece of work, because we really needed it in our considerations, and for the future.

Thank you very much once again, and I would like to invite you to a small reception that is outside of this room, and the Chairman kindly thanks the interpreters as well.