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Health and food audits and analysis

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FINAL REPORT OF AN AUDIT
CARRIED OUT IN
ITALY
FROM 13 NOVEMBER 2017 TO 17 NOVEMBER 2017
IN ORDER TO
EVALUATE MEMBER STATE ACTIVITIES TO PREVENT TAIL-BITING AND AVOID
ROUTINE TAIL-DOCKING OF PIGS

In response to information provided by the competent authority, any factual error noted in the draft report has been corrected; any clarification appears in the form of a footnote.

Executive Summary

The report describes the outcome of an audit in Italy from 13 to 17 November 2017. This audit is part of a Commission project aimed at improving the implementation and enforcement of Directive 2008/120/EC which lays down minimum standards for the protection of pigs in the EU.

The objective of the audit was to evaluate the suitability and effectiveness of the measures in place to prevent tail-biting and to avoid routine tail-docking of pigs.

The Italian authorities have not taken effective actions to enforce the provisions of the Directive on preventing tail-biting and avoiding routine tail-docking of pigs. The absence of a national strategy from the authorities to reduce tail-biting or avoid routine tail-docking of pigs means that industry and research are providing the main motivation for any initiatives in this area at present, and that there is no official push towards compliance.

The absence of detailed guidance to judge compliance is leading to lack of consistent and effective enforcement. The use of generic statements - together with the absence of verification that conditions on farms really justify tail-docking - are perpetuating the non-compliances on this requirement and on the provision of enrichment material.

Pig producers are convinced their farms comply with legal requirements and that it is impossible to raise pigs with entire tails in the Italian farming system. These beliefs are a serious handicap for the authorities to change the status quo.

The competent authority is revising its inspection checklists and intends to monitor animal-based indicators on-farm and at slaughter, but the current state of progress does not yet provide clear compliance criteria to help improve compliance with the Directive with regard to several requirements related to tail-biting risks.

The authorities do not use certain available tools (e.g. data on tail-damage or other animal-based criteria obtained at slaughterhouse level) to measure the occurrence of tail-biting on-farm and to set intervention levels in slaughterhouses for follow-up actions on farms. This is a missed opportunity to improve its system (e.g. risk selection of farms, set intervention levels and measuring progress in reducing occurrence of tail-biting) and for using its resources more effectively.

The co-financed EU funding incentives are not used in any coordinated way to reduce tail-biting and avoid routine tail-docking of pigs and the competent authority has no overview of their implementation.

The report contains recommendations to the Italian authorities to address the shortcomings identified.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

Abbreviation	Explanation
EU	European Union
FVE	Federation of Veterinarians of Europe
IZS	<i>Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale</i> - Italian health authority and research organization for animal health and food safety
IZSLER	<i>Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale</i> of Lombardia and Emilia Romagna
NGO(s)	Non-Governmental Organisation(s)
Pig Directive	Council Directive 2008/120/EC

1 INTRODUCTION

This audit took place in Italy from 13 to 17 November as part of the planned audit programme of DG Health and Food Safety. An opening meeting was held with the Italian competent authorities on 13 November 2017. At this meeting, the objectives of, and itinerary for, the audit were confirmed by the audit team and additional information required for the satisfactory completion of the audit was requested.

The audit team comprised two auditors from DG Health and Food Safety and a national expert from a Member State and was accompanied throughout the audit by a representative from the central competent authority the Ministry of Health.

2 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

The objective of the audit was to evaluate the suitability and effectiveness of the measures in place to prevent tail-biting and to avoid routine tail-docking of pigs.

The scope of the audit included:

- Primarily measures taken and documentation from the period March 2015 to August 2017 but actions taken by the competent authority and others prior to this date were also included as findings in the audit report;
- Activities of competent authorities;
- Activities of farmers' associations, meat and feed industry, academia and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to prevent tail-biting and avoid routine tail-docking of pigs;
- Voluntary quality schemes, financial incentives or any other factors that aim to encourage and support farmers in avoiding tail-docking.

The main legal requirements are included in:

- Council Directive 2008/120/EC;
- Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

In assessing compliance with Council Directive 2008/120/EC the audit team will take into account Commission Recommendation (EU) 2016/336 and the accompanying Staff Working Document.

In pursuit of the objectives, the following meetings were held:

Meetings with competent authorities			Comments
Competent authority	Central	2	Initial and closing meetings. Initial meeting included meetings with representatives of 4 regions, pig producer associations, private practitioners and university.
	Regions	2	Hereby Region 1 and Region 2
Farms		2	Farm in Region 1: 3,200 fatteners and 1,800 weaners. Farm in Region 2: 3,000 weaners.
Slaughterhouse		1	Slaughterhouse visit
Meeting with representatives of relevant bodies		2	Including representatives of pig producers associations and private practitioners during opening meeting and one other meeting.

3 LEGAL BASIS

The audit was carried out under the general provisions of EU legislation and, in particular Article 45 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules and Article 10 of Council Directive 2008/120/EC (hereafter the Pig Directive) laying down the minimum standards for the protection of pigs.

EU legal acts quoted in this report are provided in Annex 1 and refer, where applicable, to the last amended version.

4 BACKGROUND

Italy is the seventh largest producer of pigs in the EU with approximately 8.5 million pigs in total and Italian sow farmers keep about 500,000 sows and rear approximately 8 million fattening pigs annually¹. The vast majority of pigs are reared under intensive conditions. Almost 100% of commercial pigs in Italy are tail-docked.

This audit is part of a Commission project aimed at improving the implementation and enforcement of the Pig Directive laying down minimum standards for the protection of pigs, particularly reducing systematic tail-docking of pigs in the EU.

In 2014, the European Parliament published a study indicating extremely low implementation of the Pig Directive in relation to tail-docking.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Agricultural_production_-_animals

In 2016, the Commission published the Recommendation, which provides guidance on best practices as regards measures to reduce the need for tail-docking and an accompanying Staff Working Document on best practices with a view to the prevention of routine tail-docking and the provision of enrichment materials to pigs².

The Pig Directive leaves to Member States the choice of appropriate form and methods of ensuring compliance with these general conditions.

5 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 IMPLEMENTING MEASURES

Legal requirements

Paragraphs 4 and 8 of Annex I of Directive 2008/120/EC

Regulation (EC) No 882/2004

Findings

1. Legislative Decrees 122 of July 7, 2011 and 146 of March 26, 2001 transpose Directives 2008/120/EC and 98/58/EC respectively, into national legislation and these are directly applicable at regional level.
2. The application of and levels of sanctions applicable for non-compliances with the Pig Directive are laid down Article 8 of Legislative Decree n. 122 which indicates the pecuniary amount. The Italian translation of point 8 of Chapter I, Annex I of the Pig Directive including the phrase "*sia comprovato*" was interpreted by the Italian authorities as requiring proof of tail and ear injuries to be provided rather than "evidence". This has resulted in private veterinary certificates being required as part of the national checklist to fulfil this requirement. See also paragraphs 13-15 and 19.

Strategy for prevention of tail-biting and avoidance of routine tail-docking

3. There is no national strategy to reduce tail-biting or avoid routine tail-docking of pigs.
4. There is an ongoing project (over several years) at national level carried out by the Italian health authority and research organization for animal health and food safety (*Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale* - IZS, of Lombardia and Emilia Romagna- hereby IZSLER) that aims to revise national checklists (IZSLER checklists) for animal welfare inspections to include animal-based indicators as well as to develop a national database for the recording of animal-based indicators on farm and at slaughter. Region 2 has also developed checklists and a related manual for carrying out integrated controls on pig farms. The checklists and guidance do not yet provide the necessary information needed by inspectors to enable them to fully assess compliance and to consistently and effectively enforce the provisions of the Pig Directive concerning whether

² Commission Staff Working Document on best practices with a view to the prevention of routine tail-docking and the provision of enrichment materials to pigs (C(2016) 1345 final)

effective changes to management or environmental systems had been made on farms prior to routine tail-docking.

5. The authorities foresee the collection of data on tail lesions at slaughter and recording it in a national database. At present there is no national system in place to assess tail-lesions or tail-docking or record the data. Region 1, where half of the pigs in Northern Italy are slaughtered, has the capacity to report on the incidence of tail-damage as it is included in the collection of *post-mortem* data. However, there are no specific instructions for Official Veterinarians to collect this data and no instructions on how to assess tail-damage.
6. The central authority and both regions have organised meetings with the National reference centre for animal welfare, official staff, private veterinarians and industry to disseminate information on Commission Recommendation (EU) 336/2016.
7. Both regions visited have working groups on animal welfare which aim to disseminate information, raise awareness and raise welfare standards on pig farms.
8. During the audit neither the central nor the regional authorities could provide exact data on the prevalence of tail-biting and the percentage of tail-docked pigs. Estimates of the percentage of tail-docked pigs were 98% for Region 1 and 100% for Region 2. The prevalence of tail-biting in commercial farms was estimated at 11% in Region 1 and from 1% - 7% in Region 2.

Universities and research

9. Two research projects (in the period 2009-2013) on the feasibility of avoiding tail-docking in heavy pigs (160-170kg) had a direct impact in promoting the rearing of pigs with intact tails by two large producers for markets outside Italy. These producers concluded that this is possible to rear pigs with intact tails in Italian conventional systems which provide additional enrichment in the form of straw and a reduction in stocking density. Researchers and farmers rearing pigs with intact tails stated that the risk for and incidence of tail-biting is highest in the first weeks after weaning and to a lesser extent at the start of the fattening period. The latter stages of fattening particular to the production of heavy pigs in Italy (110-160kg) were not found to be problematic with regard to the incidence of tail-biting. This was backed up by the findings at slaughter where the incidence of tail-lesions in heavy pigs relating to recent injuries was insignificant.
10. The pig sector also presented evidence of trials conducted on farms which had shown the difficulties farmers faced in finding comprehensive solutions to rearing pigs with intact tails in average conventional systems. However, the trials were not carried out under comparative conditions as the variables were continually changed for the trial groups and it was difficult to gauge which factors were having an effect on the success or failure of the various initiatives.

Pig sector associations

11. In general the view of Italian pig sector representatives was that tail-docking is inevitable in the rearing of Italian heavy pigs to the minimum standards of the Pig Directive. Notwithstanding this view, they do appreciate that pressure from consumers and retailers is mounting to improve

standards on-farm that will lead to better conditions for pigs, but in a general sense, not specifically relating to the issue of tail-docking.

12. The audit team visited two farms rearing pigs with intact tails, one straw based system and one conventional system with slatted floors (weaners) and solid floors (fatteners). Both producers indicated that the transition was neither particularly problematic nor took particularly long (3-6 months).

Veterinary Association

13. The competent authorities at Regional level require statements from private veterinarians as part of their official controls (included in the national checklist) to provide evidence of the necessity for tail-docking and thus exempt farmers from complying with the requirements to avoid routine tail-docking.
14. Veterinary statements reviewed by the audit team, were not based upon any demonstrable evidence of tail-biting being noted or assessment of measures which should have been taken in the past or committed to in the future to improve inadequate environmental conditions or management systems that are required by point 8 of Chapter I, of Annex I to Directive 2008/120/EC before resorting to tail-docking. Tail-docking was justified on the basis that pigs will suffer welfare problems if tails are not docked. These statements (some undated) appear only to be produced and are only reviewed at the time of an official inspection which means perhaps once every 10 years as a minimum in Region 1 and once every 5 years in Region 2. In Region 2, the statements seen referred to the farm production group as whole and not individual farms. They are, therefore, a policy statement of the industry as opposed to being an assessment of individual farm conditions or improvement measures taken therein.
15. Although these are not certificates required by veterinary legislation, they do not respect the principles of Directive 96/93/EC on the certification of animals and animal products, Article 3 (1) and (2) nor with the general principles of certification of the Federation of Veterinarians in Europe (FVE)³ or with Article 50 of the Italian Deontological Code on veterinary attestations and Article 480-481 of the Italian Penal Code.

Conclusions on Implementing Measures

16. The absence of official government strategy is not leading the pig sector in the right direction to avoid tail-docking and improve compliance with the Pig Directive.
17. As inspection checklists have not yet been finalised and animal-based indicators on-farm and at slaughter are not yet assessed, the current controls are not moving the pig industry toward compliance. As the current drafts of updated checklists do not set sufficiently clear criteria for inspectors, it is very unlikely that they will have an important impact.
18. The fact that several research projects have provided promising results may indicate that there is no need for big structural or production changes in pig farms to produce heavy pigs with intact

³ FVE/doc/14/061, Adopted on 22 November 2014 <http://www.fve.org/news/index.php?id=163>

tails.⁴

19. Competent authorities have not taken effective actions to enforce the provisions of the Directive on preventing tail-biting and avoiding routine tail-docking of pigs. The misinterpretation of the legal requirements- and its inclusion on inspection checklists- has led to farmers carrying out tail-docking without any official verification that the conditions which must be fulfilled before it can take place are present.
20. The beliefs of the majority of the pig sector (e.g. conditions on pig farms are excellent, Italy is fully compliant with the Pig Directive, and tail-docking is inevitable in existing Italian systems as it is a difficult task for heavy pigs) is a big handicap to move the sector to better animal welfare conditions, and thus almost all pigs remain tail-docked.

5.2 ECONOMIC FACTORS

Legal requirements

Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013⁵.

Findings

European and National Funding Measures in the Pig Sector

21. The competent authority does not have a readily accessible overview of information on EU funding for improvements to pig housing in Italy. The audit team reviewed information supplied by other Commission services which indicates that funding has been accessed by Italian regions. A number of programmes define various measures relating to the provision of lower stocking densities, defined trough space size, number of drinkers per animals and the provision of outdoor access. The programmes do not include any reference to the minimum requirements of the Pig Directive on the avoidance of routine tail-docking.

⁴ *In their response to the draft report the Competent Authority noted that " Region 1 feels that the this finding is not representative of the farms in northern Italy because other factors are involved with aggressiveness such as genetics (which is currently an important factor due to production of processed food) that could, in addition, be co responsible along with environmental factors and animal health. The investments necessary would be very important and require not only economic but also training investments for the entire production sector, while the opinion expressed in the report tends to make it seem very simplistic. The goal is clear and defined but the process will require compliance with certain necessary steps in order not to have a substantial impact on the animal welfare."*

⁵ Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 (OJL 347, 20.12.2013, p.487) on support for rural development by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

Other Economic Factors

22. Two research projects, funded by Region 2 on the feasibility of avoiding tail-docking in heavy pigs have had a direct impact in promoting trials and initiatives on rearing pigs with intact tails. This led directly to two large producers in Region 2 converting their production systems to introduce welfare-friendly production of pigs with intact tails for sale in premium markets outside Italy.

Conclusions on Economic Factors

23. There are co-financed EU funding incentives for improved welfare conditions in the rearing of pigs in Italy. These measures are not used in any coordinated way to reduce tail-biting and avoid routine tail-docking of pigs and the competent authority has no overview of their implementation.
24. Funded activities such as research projects which increase the value of the final products can successfully led to welfare-friendly initiatives.

5.3 OFFICIAL CONTROLS

Legal requirements

Directive 2008/120/EC

Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 in connection with Section I, Chapter II, point B(1) and point C. of its Annex I and the relevant provisions of Section II, Chapter I of that Annex.

Article 3 and Article 42 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004

Findings

Planning and procedures for farm inspections

25. There are satisfactory procedures for the planning of inspections. The animal welfare control plan includes criteria on the type of farms subject to controls and the minimum percentage of farms to be controlled (10%). Regions can add criteria for risk analysis and selection of farms, and can include additional inspections. Region 2 includes follow-up inspections for farms with non-compliances in the two following years. The regions visited had carried out the number of inspections indicated in their annual control plans.
26. The national guidance and checklist for carrying out inspections were available in both regions. In addition, a revised national checklist (IZSLER), and, in Region 2, an integrated checklist and corresponding manual have been drafted. None of these checklists and guidance set sufficiently clear criteria 1) to improve compliance with the Pig Directive with regard to several legal requirements associated with tail-biting risks, including the requirement on enrichment materials and 2) to enable inspectors to consistently and effectively enforce the provisions of the Pig Directive concerning whether effective changes to management or environmental systems had been made on farms prior to routine tail-docking (see Annex II). Some additional points were

noted in the checklist and manual drafted in Region 2 and the revised national checklist. These are explained below in paragraphs 27 and 28.

27. The revised national checklist (IZSLER) contains guidance for trough length where feeding is not *ad-libitum*, for adequacy of staff numbers and training and provides acceptable levels for gas concentrations. In relation to the requirements of the Pig Directive relating to the provision of water, whilst the checklist restates the requirements for "permanent access to a sufficient quantity of fresh water" it also indicates an alternative option for the provision of water "all animals.....must be able to meet their needs for absorption of liquids in other ways" which is not in compliance with Annex I, Chapter I, point 7.
28. Region 2 has drafted a revised checklist for carrying out welfare inspections in pig farms and integrated inspections where more than one subject is being controlled, e.g. animal welfare and veterinary residues or identification and registration controls. The checklists (and corresponding manual) now contain additional animal-based criteria and some limited guidance for assessing compliance with the requirements for temperature, ventilation and humidity and the adequacy of hospital pen provision and acceptable levels of sick animals. Regarding enrichment material, there is no specific guidance on quantity or suitability of materials and there is no clear requirement to provide it for sows, only gilts. With regard to stocking density, the guidance appears to permit overstocking in one out of every three pens assessed. A table for evaluation of injuries that can be attributed to biting or abnormal behaviours with the location of possible biting lesions and other abnormal behaviours is available, but there is no guidance on how to evaluate them or a scoring system for lesions.

Official controls on pig farms

29. In 2016, at national level 1100 farms (12.6%) were inspected of which 1009 were found compliant (non-compliances detected in 8.3% of farms). The category "Buildings" accounted for most non-compliances with 42 out of 205 (21%) followed by "Enrichment" with 39 out of 205 (19%). There were 3 cases of non-compliances for "Mutilations".
30. In 2015 at national level 27% of farms (1900) were inspected and 7.3% of them (1,764) were found compliant. The category "Buildings" accounted for most non-compliances with 58 out of 337 (17%), "Enrichment" accounted for 47 out of 337 (14%). There were 5 cases of non-compliances for "Mutilations".
31. From 2015 until October 2017 in Region 2 183 farms (11.3%) were inspected. Non-compliances were detected in 16 (7.4%) of farms. The category "Enrichment" accounted for most non-compliances with 6 out of 25 (24%) total non-compliances detected.
32. In the two farms visited rearing pigs with intact tails the official veterinarians were not able to provide consistent judgements on the criteria indicated in Annex II relating to on-farm conditions due to inadequate guidance and instructions. Instead, they relied on personal judgement and professional experience.
33. In the two regions visited, the primary form of enrichment material accepted by the Regional authorities and used on farms is a chain with a piece of wood attached. This is not in line with

the Commission's Staff Working Document (which indicates this would only constitute an element of enrichment material if it is a piece of softwood on a chain where the material is at the level of the pigs snouts and on the floor) and therefore would be considered as a material classified as suboptimal.

34. The National checklists require statements from private veterinarians on the necessity for tail-docking to exempt farmers from complying with the requirements to avoid routine tail-docking (see paragraphs 13-15), and the local authorities use these. There is no proper assessment of the incidence of tail-biting and improvement measures taken on-farm before allowing tail-docking so the competent authority is not ensuring the effectiveness of official controls as required in Art 4.2 (a) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004.

Official controls in slaughterhouses

35. The competent authorities do not monitor levels of tail-damage in slaughterhouses and do not set intervention levels for tail-lesions, which is not in line with the principles of Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 854/2004⁶. They do not use any scoring system or provide any guidance to inspectors to assess the severity of tail-lesions in slaughterhouses. There are no measures taken to standardise scoring of tail-lesions between different slaughterhouses.
36. In Region 1 the results of *ante-mortem* inspections are recorded in a regional database. According to the records, official veterinarians reported that tail injuries were very infrequently seen at *ante-mortem* inspection. Official veterinarians recorded information on the incidence of a wide range of *post-mortem* conditions leading to part or full condemnation in the official database. Data on lesions linked to tail-biting is entered into the system but is only collated on a farm basis. The authorities indicated that the system could be modified to provide collated information on the categorisation of abscesses (spinal, limb etc), to give useful feedback on the levels of sub-clinical lesions and the economic cost of tail-biting. Farmers will receive information from slaughterhouses on carcass condemnations resulting from abscessation but there is no link made to the presence (or not) of tail lesions.
37. In 2016, in one Province of Region 2 there were 1,867,594 pigs slaughtered with 30 cases of tail-lesions or abscessation reported. In 2017, 1,582,053 pigs were slaughtered in the same Province with 4 cases recorded.

Conclusions on Official Controls

38. The current instructions and guidance are not sufficient to allow official staff to judge in a consistent manner compliance regarding enrichment material, other legal requirements associated with cleanliness, thermal comfort and air quality, competition for food and space,

⁶ Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 requires official veterinarians to carry out inspection at slaughterhouses, to verify compliance with relevant EU and national rules on animal welfare, and take appropriate measures as regards the communication of these inspection results. In this case it is relevant to the prevention of tail-biting and avoidance of routine tail-docking;

health status and diet. This, together with the over-reliance on generic statements on the need for tail-docking provided by veterinarians hampers the effective enforcement of provisions with regard to the avoidance of routine tail-docking of pigs.

39. The existing guidance for carrying out inspections does not enable inspectors to consistently and effectively enforce the provisions of the Pig Directive concerning whether effective changes to management or environmental systems had been made on farms prior to routine tail-docking.
40. Although there is no detailed guidance on all relevant legal provisions of the Pig Directive, the authorities take some enforcement actions on-farm, mainly regarding enrichment material.
41. There are valuable tools available to the authorities (e.g. data on tail-damage or other animal-based criteria obtained at slaughterhouse level) to measure the occurrence of tail-biting on-farm and to set intervention levels in slaughterhouses for follow-up actions on farms, but these are not used.

6 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

The Italian authorities have not taken effective actions to enforce the provisions of the Directive on preventing tail-biting and avoiding routine tail-docking of pigs. The absence of a national strategy from the authorities to reduce tail-biting or avoid routine tail-docking of pigs means that industry and research are providing the main motivation for any initiatives in this area at present, and that there is no official push towards compliance.

The absence of detailed guidance to judge compliance is leading to lack of consistent and effective enforcement. The use of generic statements - together with the absence of verification that conditions on farms really justify tail-docking - are perpetuating the non-compliances on this requirement and on the provision of enrichment material.

Pig producers are convinced their farms comply with legal requirements and that it is impossible to raise pigs with entire tails in the Italian farming system. These beliefs are a serious handicap for the authorities to change the status quo.

The competent authority is revising its inspection checklists and intends to monitor animal-based indicators on-farm and at slaughter, but the current state of progress does not yet provide clear compliance criteria to help improve compliance with the Directive with regard to several requirements related to tail-biting risks.

The authorities do not use certain available tools (e.g. data on tail-damage or other animal based criteria obtained at slaughterhouse level) to measure the occurrence of tail-biting on-farm and to set intervention levels in slaughterhouses for follow-up actions on farms. This is a missed opportunity to improve its system (e.g. risk selection of farms, set intervention levels and measuring progress in reducing occurrence of tail-biting) and for using its resources more effectively.

The co-financed EU funding incentives are not used in any coordinated way to reduce tail-biting and avoid routine tail-docking of pigs and the competent authority has no overview of their implementation.

7 CLOSING MEETING

A closing meeting was held on 17 November 2017 with representatives of the competent authorities, at which the main findings and preliminary conclusions of the audit were presented by the audit team. The competent authorities expressed their intent to ensure that measures would be followed through to bring improvements in compliance with the Directive's requirements.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The competent authorities are invited to provide, within 25 working days of receipt of the report, an action plan containing summary details of the actions taken and planned in all regions, including deadlines for their completion, aimed at addressing the recommendations set out below:

No.	Recommendation
1.	<p>The competent authority should provide inspectors with suitable compliance criteria to enable them to effectively enforce legal requirements of Council Directive 2008/120/EC and Council Directive 98/58/EC that are associated with risk factors for tail-biting.</p> <p>Conclusions 17, 38 and 39. Findings 4, 26, 27, 28, 34 and Annex II.</p>
2.	<p>The competent authority should provide inspectors with suitable instructions and guidance (compliance criteria) to enable them to effectively enforce the provision on the prevention of tail-biting and avoidance of routine tail-docking, as laid down in the second paragraph of point 8 of Chapter I of Annex I of Council Directive 2008/120/EC, including how they should assess evidence of tail and ear lesions on-farm and what constitutes sufficient measures by farmers to change inadequate environmental conditions or management systems before resorting to tail-docking of pigs, including the situation where tail-docked pigs are purchased from rearing farms which have shown no evidence of tail-biting. This entails the development of measurable criteria to enable inspectors to properly assess progress with regard to the risk factors listed in the Recommendation.</p> <p>Conclusions 17, 38 and 39. Findings 4, 26, 27, 28, 34 and Annex II.</p>
3.	<p>The competent authority should provide instructions and guidance (compliance criteria) for inspectors to enable them to assess if the requirements on the provision of enrichment material as laid down in point 4 of Chapter I of Annex I of Directive 2008/120/EC regarding the suitability (“proper manipulation and investigation activities”) and sufficiency (“permanent access to a sufficient</p>

No.	Recommendation
	<p>quantity of material”) of enrichment materials have been fulfilled for all pigs on farms. Assessment methods for checking access to enrichment materials should include checks based on the guidance given in point 7 of Commission Recommendation (EU) 2016/336 and/or other suitable best practice.</p> <p>Conclusions 17, 38 and 39. Findings 4, 26, 27, 28 and Annex II.</p>
4.	<p>As required in Article 4.2 (a) of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 The competent authority should assess the incidence of tail-biting and the effectiveness of improvement measures taken on-farm as required in point 8 of Chapter I, of Annex I to Directive 2008/120/EC, including when piglets are going to be sent to rearing farms for further fattening, instead of relying on veterinary statements.</p> <p>Conclusion 19, 20 and 38. Findings 13, 14, 15 and 34.</p>
5.	<p>The competent authority should ensure that the level of tail-damage and associated lesions in slaughterhouses is monitored and that high levels trigger actions on the respective farms, as required in Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 854/2004.</p> <p>Conclusion 41. Findings 35 and 36.</p>
6.	<p>The competent authority should consider liaising with other Government Agencies centrally and at Regional level responsible for funding new buildings where pigs are to be kept and renovating existing ones with the assistance of European funding under Article 17 of Regulation (EU) No 1305/2013 to ensure not only that the relevant animal welfare payments related to such facilities are suitable to commitments going beyond the relevant mandatory standards but that in addition the facilities, as a minimum, comply with relevant mandatory requirements (of Directives 2008/120/EC and 98/58/EC) including the avoidance of routine tail-docking e.g. slurry systems that can handle optimal enrichment materials, different temperature zones, suitable flooring, feeding, space allowances etc.</p> <p>Conclusion 23. Finding 21.</p>

The competent authority's response to the recommendations can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/audits-analysis/rep_details_en.cfm?rep_inspection_ref=2017-6257

ANNEX 1 – LEGAL REFERENCES

Legal Reference	Official Journal	Title
Reg. 882/2004 - Article 46 (TC)	OJ L 165, 30.4.2004, p. 1, Corrected and re-published in OJ L 191, 28.5.2004, p. 1	Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules

Annex II

Parameter Commission Recommendation (EU) 2016/336	Legal requirements Directive 2008/120/EC, 98/58/EC	National Checklist	New checklist (IZSLER)	Integrated checklist & Manual Region 2 V2 of 24/06/2016
Enrichment material	“permanent access to a sufficient quantity of material to enable proper investigation and manipulation activities” (Directive 2008/120/EC Annex I, Chapter I, 4)	No guidance on quantity of materials and whether they are suitable/used. Text follows the directive and asks for inspectors to: Indicate the manipulable material used and indicate if necessary the reason for the absence of manipulable material.	Text follows the directive and asks for inspectors to: Verify the presence of materials that can perform the function of exploration and manipulation and that they are available to the animals. Presence of marginal or suboptimal materials is considered acceptable. No guidance on quantity of materials and whether they are suitable/used.	Text follows the directive and asks for inspectors to: assess whether material (listed) is available to animals (specifying what kind of material is used) and, for gilts only if access to the material is constant. Animal based indicators (including tail lesions) are checked according to table d 64 However there is no scoring system / there are no thresholds in the table.
Cleanliness	“a lying area physically and thermally comfortable as well as adequately drained and clean which allows all the animals to lay at the same time” (Directive 2008/120/EC, Annex I, Chapter I, 3)	No guidance for the assessment of this requirement.	1. The ISZLER checklists contain some animal based measures. • For breeding farms: skin condition sows (cleanliness), shoulder ulcers sows, enteric disease suckling pigs, lameness sows, Body condition scoring of sows. • For fattening farms: tail lesions, skin condition (cleanliness), lameness, respiratory disorder and enteric disorders. However there are no defined scoring systems and thresholds and some of the indicators are set at high levels (for example 10-19% of shoulder lesions in sows is considered acceptable by the checklist). Also there are no instructions with regard to what consequences would follow if animal based measures are at unacceptable levels.	No guidance for the assessment of this requirement.
Thermal comfort and air quality	“air circulation, dust levels, temperature, relative air humidity and gas concentrations must be kept within limits which are not	No guidance for the assessment of this requirement.	“Suitable temperature and humidity with natural ventilation or ventilation systems without control systems” are considered acceptable.	Guidance given on thermal comfort and air quality: including values for gas concentrations, temperature, dust levels and humidity which together with animal based indicators could form the basis for taking enforcement

	harmful to the animals” (Directive 98/58/EC Annex, 10)		Concentrations of harmful gases for animals (limit reference: NH3 <20 ppm, CO2 <3000, H2S <0.5 ppm) are considered acceptable.	action.
Competition for food and space	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “unobstructed floor area” (Directive 2008/120/EC, Article 3, 1a) 2. "measures taken to prevent fighting (...) adequate opportunities to escape and hide from other pigs" (Directive 2008/120/EC, Annex I, Chapter II, D 1, 2) 3. “feeding and watering equipment must be designed constructed and placed so that (...) the harmful effects of competition between the animals are minimised” (Directive 98/58/EC, Annex, 17) 4. "permanent access to a sufficient quantity of fresh water" (Directive 2008/120/EC, Annex I, Chapter I, 7) 	1-4 Minimum requirements Directive	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stocking density according to Directive is considered acceptable. The optimum dimensions are given according to the formula $m^2 = 0.048 \times P.V.0.67$ 2. some guidance given on the separation and isolation of animals and measures and medication that may be administered to affected animals. 3. Guidance on trough lengths for rationed feeding. (the minimum trough length for each pig must be of (mm) = $60 \times (\text{live weight})^{0.33}$ (e.g. 50 Kg = 22 cm, 110 Kg = 28 cm, 150 Kg = 31 cm). 4. guidance gives an alternative option for the provision of water "all animals.....must be able to meet their needs for absorption of liquids in other ways" which is not in compliance with Annex I, Chapter I, point 7 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Inspectors measure floor surface and surface occupied by feeders to assess unobstructed floor area. Guidance would appear to permit overstocking in one out of every three pens assessed. (manual d73-87 2 Guidance on the assessment of animal indicators and resource (housing) based measures. A table for evaluation of injuries that can be attributed to biting or abnormal behaviours with the location of possible biting lesions and other abnormal behaviours is available, but there is no guidance on how to evaluate them or a scoring system for lesions.
Health status	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "sufficient number of staff who possesses the appropriate ability, knowledge and professional competence“ (Directive 98/58/EC, Annex, 1) 2. “sick or injured animals shall be accommodated in suitable accommodation with, where appropriate, dry comfortable bedding” (Directive 98/58/EC, Annex, 4) 3. "specialised housings (for piglets weaned less than 28 days of age) which are separated from housings 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training course frequency and the organising institution should be included in information gathered. 2. Minimum requirements of the Directive. 3. Minimum requirements of the Directive 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One operator for 2,000 to 4,000 fattening pigs is considered acceptable. One operator for 200 sows is considered acceptable Experience of at least 2 years or presence of educational qualification or training course and presence of practical instructions to all employees is considered acceptable in fattening herd. Experience of at least 10 years or presence of educational qualification or training course and presence of practical instructions to all employees is considered acceptable in fattening herd. 2. Minimum requirements of the Directive. If the condition of an animal requires on farm killing it is necessary to comply with the methods covered by 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessment of training documentation required. In the absence of documentation, staff knowledge should be evaluated through interviews. No additional guidance regarding e.g. number of staff and / or specific training courses. 2. Evaluation of the presence of animals not previously identified as sick animals. On a sample of 50% of animals, with a maximum of 50 animals per category, the number of sick animals for which there is no evidence that have been previously took care should be identified. Also evaluation of the appropriate frequency of inspection by the staff. To answer this question, it is advisable to consider if the % of sick animals is higher than 15%, between 3% and 14% and below 3% in each production category, to assess if the inspection by the staff is

	where sows are kept" (Directive 2008/120/EC, Annex I, Chapter II, C3)		the specific legislation (EC Regulation 1099/2009) " 3. Minimum requirements of the Directive. No guidance on what can be considered adequate housings for early weaned piglets.	adequate. Also there should be an evaluation if there is a way to identify the treated animals in the boxes and if the staff are aware of it. 3. No guidance on what can be considered adequate housings for early weaned piglets.
Diet	"animals are fed a wholesome diet appropriate to their age and species and which is fed to them in sufficient quantity to maintain them in good health and satisfy their nutritional needs." (Directive 98/58/EC Annex, 14)	Minimum requirements of the Directive. No guidance for the assessment of this requirement	Minimum requirements of the Directive. No guidance for the assessment of this requirement	Minimum requirements of the Directive. No guidance for the assessment of this requirement