

May 11, 2009

Dear Ian

Thanks for your questions regarding the pig welfare code

We do not wish to appear on the programme but provide this statement for your use.

At this stage, NZPork does not believe it is appropriate to comment on the upcoming review of the Pigs Code of Welfare because a review of the Code is soon to be undertaken by NAWAC. We understand that this review will be based on a careful assessment of the available science. Therefore we suggest you talk to NAWAC about this.

What we can say, however, is that the New Zealand Pork industry is committed to animal welfare, and continuously improving animal care based on sound knowledge.

Producers work with pigs because they like the animals, they also know there is a strong connection between good pig welfare and running a successful business.

The New Zealand industry runs a number of programmes as part of its commitment to ongoing improvement of animal care

- A strong commitment and participation in employee training of which a unique component is devoted to understanding and caring for pigs
- The industry is committed to NAWAC's pig welfare code and monitors compliance with the code
- The industry provides seminars, workshops and literature to help farmers assess and improve their own practices. This has high uptake
- The industry last year commissioned an independent review of sow housing options. The results confirmed that the scientific evidence in regard to sow housing systems is still equivocal, concluding that "no housing system is perfect and that each has its limitations". In response the NZ industry has committed significant funding and resources to a three year project that will compare new housing methods specifically within the New Zealand situation that do not use stalls. This research is programmed to start in late 2009. We've consulted SPCA in the development of this project.

The New Zealand industry operates in a global marketplace and is under constant threat from imported pork and pork products. Last year 700,000kgs per week of imported product came into the country from countries that have subsidised industries and welfare practices that fall below New Zealand's. Ensuring cost competitive animal care practices is a core ingredient in providing NZ consumers with the choice of NZ grown product long-term.

Specifically on the code: It is developed by NAWAC as an independent body whose function is to make recommendations to the Minister. The industry will abide by what is set down in the code. During the development of the code the pork industry like SAFE provided feedback and input to NAWAC on aspects of the code, but NAWAC and ultimately the Minister of Agriculture set the code.

Yours sincerely

Chris Trengrove

Chairman, NZ Pork