Japan's comments to the draft chapter of animal welfare in the *Report of the February 2013 Meeting of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission*

Chapter 7.X Animal welfare and dairy cattle production systems

Article 7.X.5.

1. Recommendations on system design including physical environment

f) Location, construction and equipment

(para.4)

Electrified equipment (e.g. cow trainer, electrified gate) has been associated with increased incidence of welfare problems and should not be used, where possible. If this equipment is used, it should be used in such a way as to minimise any pain and stress to the animal.

Rationale

A cow trainer, if properly used, does neither cause constant pain nor distress to the cattle whereas provides clean and comfort bedding. A cow trainer bow needs to be located above the chine at appropriate position so that it solely contacts when the cow arches its back for defecation or urination.

The benefit of a cow trainer should not be dismissed. It helps to keep the floor clean, therefore contributes to animal welfare, udder health and improved milk quality.

Article 7.X.5.

2. Recommendations on stockmanship and animal management

h) Sire selection and calving management

（para.1）

Dystocia can be a welfare risk to dairy cattle. Heifers should not be bred before they are at stage of physical maturity sufficient to ensure the health and welfare of both dam and calf at birth. The sire has a ~~highly~~ heritable effect on final calf size and as such can have an ~~significant~~ impact on ease of calving. Sire selection for embryo implantation, insemination or natural mating, should take into account the maturity and size of the female.

NOTE Proposed changes of text are highlighted in grey, of which additions are indicated with double underline and deletions in ~~strikethrough~~.

Rationale

It is not appropriate to put too much emphasis on genetic effects because heritabilities of calving ease are low. Please see the following papers:

- http://www-interbull.slu.se/bulletins/bulletin33/Jakobsen.pdf
(Table 2 Column DCE/Heritabilities)
- http://www-interbull.slu.se/national_ges_info2/framesida-ges.htm
(Table 3 Column h2DCE)

Heritabilities from all over the world are also available at:

- http://www-interbull.slu.se/national_ges_info2/framesida-ges.htm
(Column Ca)

For information, heritabilities in beef cattle are higher than those in dairy cattle.

- Kizilkaya, K., Banks, B.D., Carnier, P., Albera, A., Bittante, G., Tempelman, R.J. (2002) Bayesian inference strategies for the prediction of genetic merit using threshold models with an application to calving ease scores in Italian Piemontese cattle. J Anim Breed Genet. 119, 209-220
- Trus, D., Wilton, W. (1988) Genetic parameters for maternal traits in beef cattle. Can J Anim Sci 68, 119-128
- Mujibi, F.D.N., Crews Jr, D.H. (2009) Genetic parameters for calving ease, gestation length and birth weight in Charolais cattle. J Anim Sci. 87, 2759-2766

Article 7.X.5.

2. Recommendations on stockmanship and animal management

m) Painful husbandry procedures

i) Dehorning (including disbudding)

（para.3）

Where it is necessary to dehorn dairy cattle, producers should seek guidance from veterinary advisers as to the optimum method~~, use of anesthesia and analgesia,~~ and timing for their type of cattle and production system.

Performing dehorning or disbudding at an early age, where practicable, and, seeking guidance from *veterinarians on* the use of anesthesia or analgesia~~, under the supervision of a *veterinarian*,~~ are strongly recommended.

Rationale

Consistency with the text adopted twice at the OIE General Session on beef cattle which is the same species.