

Management tools in organic egg production, focusing on animal welfare and food security

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Background

During the last couple of years there has been in-creasing public concern about intensive animal productions systems and their consequences for animal welfare, food security and environment. This has among other things lead to an increase in organic food production, incl. organic egg production. However, recent figures point to severe problems with increased mortality, feather pecking and cannibalism in organic flocks. Some of these problems could correlate with problems managing large flocks of loose-housed hens. It is therefore necessary to develop advisory tools for organic egg producers, to secure animal health and welfare in the flocks.

The HACCP system is a quality assurance system, which is widely used in the industry, but also recently adapted to animal production. It aims to prevent problems by identifying and monitoring critical control points in the production and suggests proper actions in cases of deficiencies. It is a controle system well suited for authorization. Another approach to improve welfare on farms is via welfare assessment reports, which works as an input for discussing welfare with the farmes and simultaineusly gives farmes the opportunity to compare themselves with other farmers and thereby points the attention to problematic areas regarding welfare in their own production.

Objective

The aim of the project is to develop management tools for organic egg producers using the welfare assessment system and HACCP-concept, thereby securing animal health and welfare at the farms and accounting for food security.

Progress - 2004

Data collection is concluded and the welfare assessment reports have been worked out. Data is prepared for analysis. A HACCP seminare on health and welfare in livestock production has been started-up.

Cources

The following PhD cources have been attended "Generalised linear models" (DJF, 01.04.02-25.06.02, 9 ECTS), "Writing for Academic Publication" (RAPH, 13.01.03-28.03.03), "Research Methodologies in relation to Principles and Practice in Organic Farming" (SOAR, 07.10.02-11.10.02, 4 ECTS).

The following cources are ongoing: "Veterinary epidemiology" (KVL, 31.08.04-14.12.04, 18 ECTS), "HACCP i Husdyrproduktionen" (DJF, 10.06.04-08.10.04, 5 ECTS), Is Organic Farming the Key to Sustainability (SOAR, 20.09.04-24.09.04, 4 ECTS)

Plans - 2005

Analysis of data collected from from producers. Assembling an expert panel for the HACCP analysis, and perform the expert panel analysis.