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## **PRESS NOTICE**

12 October 2009

The Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) today publishes its Report on the Welfare of Farmed Animals in Great Britain: Past, Present and Future

### **Chairman of FAWC, Professor Wathes said:**

“In this landmark Report, FAWC has examined the effectiveness of British policy on farm animal welfare since the Brambell Report in 1965 and sets out a strategy that will lead to improvements in welfare over the next 20 years.”

“Of course, policy and practice must seek to eliminate cruelty and unnecessary suffering and to cater for an animal’s needs. But in the future farmers must ensure that each and every animal has a life worth living, from the animal’s point of view. This emphasis on an animal’s quality of life means that positive as well as negative experiences must be counted. This will require new methods to assess animal welfare over the animal’s lifetime.”

“Eating meat and using animal products requires hard moral choices to be made. The main conditions that we believe to be necessary for ethical consumerism and improved farm animal welfare are:

- i. The Government to act as the guardian of farm animal welfare
- ii. Standards for a good life to be defined by an independent body
- iii. Minimum welfare standards to be defined by an animal’s quality of life
- iv. Stockmen to be educated and trained to a high standard about animal welfare
- v. Welfare assessment to be valid, feasible and rigorous with independent audit
- vi. The food supply chain to show due diligence with marketing claims verified
- vii. Citizens to be educated about food and farming from childhood
- viii. Animal products to be labelled according to welfare provenance to provide consumer choice.”

“I look forward to working with Government on the reasoning behind the report and on how its recommendations will be taken forward.”

### **Farming Minister Jim Fitzpatrick said:**

“This important report gives us a fresh insight into the moral and ethical debate about the humane treatment of farm animals.”

“The report acknowledges improvements to farm animal welfare made in recent years, and the government is committed to ensuring that all farm animals are treated humanely.”

“I will consider the report’s recommendations carefully and look forward to continuing to work closely with the Farm Animal Welfare Council on the issues raised in this report.”

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### Notes for Editors

1. The Farm Animal Welfare Council (FAWC) is an independent advisory body established by Government in 1979 to keep under review the welfare of farmed animals on agricultural land, at market, in transit and at the place of slaughter; and to advise Ministers in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales, of any legislative or other changes that may be necessary.
2. Professor Christopher Wathes was appointed Chairman of FAWC in January 2005. He is Professor of Animal Welfare at the Royal Veterinary College, University of London.
3. All FAWC members serve in a personal capacity and do not represent any organisation with which they may be associated.
4. Copies of FAWC Reports are available from the FAWC Website at the address below. Media approaches should be routed through the Secretariat.

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