

**INTERAMERICAN MEETING ON ANIMAL WELFARE OF THE OIE  
AMERICAS 19 – 20 AUG 2008**

**PANAMA RECOMMENDATION**

**BACKGROUND**

The OIE has defined until now standards on different aspects of animal welfare such as:

The slaughter of animals for human consumption, transportation by land, sea and air and the slaughter of animals for disease control purposes.

Besides the work already in progress in the transportation and slaughter of animals, the OIE begun working in four new priority areas established by the International Committee – control of canine populations, laboratory animals, animal welfare in production systems and wildlife.

The resolutions adopted in the 74, 75 and 76 General Sessions in 2006-2008 emphasized the important role played by the OIE Member Countries and the Regional Commissions

These resolutions influenced the decision to convene a regional workshop in Panama in August 2008 and to present the conclusion and recommendation in the 19th Conference of the OIE Regional Commission for the Americas, to be held in Havana, Cuba from 18 to 21 November, 2008.

The Panama workshop defined the necessity to prepare a proposal on a regional strategy and to make recommendations that would recognize the cultural, socio-economic, geographic, and production system differences. It must be borne in mind that animal production has played and represents an important role in the historical and future development of the region and continues to contribute to its sustainable and socio-economic development, as provider of food for the local population as well as supplying the increasing world demand for food

**CONSIDER THAT:**

The primary objective of the member countries of the regions of the Americas is to achieve the maximum levels of production and productivity of quality food of animal origin to feed the population of the region and to continue to supply the increasing demand of the purchasing countries.

One of the relevant aspects to increase and maintain animal production in a sustainable manner is having an adequate animal health.

Animal health is a key component of animal welfare.

Animal welfare is also applied to segments of animals that are not destined for food production, such as, dogs, companion animals, wildlife, draught and research animals among others and their relationship with public health , animal health and environmental impact.

Animal welfare is a relevant aspect in public opinion with important awareness in consumers

OIE has included animal welfare in its Strategic Plan and is the only reference organization in the world for the elaboration of international standards.

It is of concern to the region that the demands arising from private standards are not in accordance with the OIE standards; these impact production and trade of animals and products of animal origin.

The regional animal welfare strategy for the Americas represents a shared and integrated vision and is an approach to and an interaction among the different sectors of the productive chain and animal health, public health, industry, transportation, academia, research, government and non-government organizations. This is led at the national level by the Veterinary Services.

The strategy reflects the action, coordination and integrated planning of animal welfare at the national and regional level.

The strategy reflects the vision of a number of countries in the region as well as those of a amount of organizations, members of the chain of production of food of animal origin and the use of animals for purposes other than for food production.

The strategy is a dynamic document and will be updated as necessary.

The strategy recognizes the relationship between animal health, welfare, production and food security. It facilitates a consultative regional approach to animal welfare which welcomes the participation of different sectors of government, non-government organizations (NGOs), the productive sector, industry, consumers, academia and research among others.

The strategy recognizes the relevant role played by private and public veterinarians as well as animal managers, owners of establishments and other members of the productive chain who have a direct relation with the animals in their different phases of production and trade.

The strategy recognizes that development and implementation of animal welfare implies an inter-institutional and inter-disciplinary interaction.

#### **RECOMMEND THAT:**

The standards of animal welfare should be science-based, bearing in mind the finality and use of animals in each case, besides the environmental, regional, geographic, production systems, economic and cultural aspects, among others.

The scientific information that is applied or taken as reference in the preparation of international standards should be properly evaluated and validated in the different systems of production, environment, climate, sanitary situations and animal species.

Ensure animal health by promoting the development and adoption of animal welfare OIE standards and good management practices.

Promote regional assistance to implement the OIE standards.

Request the OIE to prioritize different systems of beef production in the work in animal welfare standard

Recognize the necessity of a progressive implementation of international standards adapted to the economic and structural possibilities in member countries.

Promote research, capacity building, education and communication in animal welfare.

The coordination of the actions shall be done by the OIE Regional Representation of the Americas.

Establish a framework for sustainable results in animal welfare based on practice and on evidence and scientific knowledge, taking into consideration the socio-economic and geographic aspects, practices and production systems.

Ensure that the private standards in animal health and welfare, in case they are used, be coherent, and not in conflict, with those of the OIE.

Promote the creation of a Regional Committee for Animal Welfare in the Americas coordinated by the OIE Regional Representation for Americas.

Promote the development and implementation of OIE standards and national legislation.

Promote education and capacity building.

Stimulate the inclusion of animal welfare and OIE standard topics in the curriculum of veterinary schools.

Promote research and development according to the conditions, needs and characteristics of the region.

Promote communication.

The scope of these recommendations is for all terrestrial and aquatic animals destined for food production, and the canine population and animals destined for show, and research with a special focus on public health, animal health and environmental impact.

Adopted in Panama, on 18 and 19 of August 2008.