A Scientific Conception of Welfare and Housing in Dairy Farming

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Abstract

Good animal health and welfare is an explicit goal of dairy farming, but this is not always achieved and may be at risk. Several studies have shown that production diseases such as lameness, mastitis or metabolic disorders, play a considerable role in dairy production (Brinkmann and Winckler, 2005; Hamilton et al., 2006; Hardeng and Edge, 2001; Reksen et al., 1999; Weller and Bowling, 2000), thus demonstrating a need for innovative improvement strategies in livestock farming (Hovi and Vaarst, 2001 and Hovi et al., 2004). Some important index could be use for determining the animal well fare and housing conditions in intensive farming. In this paper these indexes and some indicators of animal wellfare will be discussed.

Keywords: Welfare, Housing, Dairy Farming.