

# Stakeholders and Member States meeting on implementation of Council Directive 2008/120/EC: Group housing of sows

## NGOs' perspectives

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# PMAF



Protection mondiale  
des animaux de ferme

- French NGO
- Set up in 1994
- Farm animal welfare
- Member of Eurogroup for Animals
- Positive communication, consumer's information

## EUROGROUP FOR ANIMALS



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- State of play from NGOs' perspective
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# State of play from NGO's perspective

- Positive aspects:
  - animals respect
  - consumers' expectations
  - scientific evidence
- 10 years transitional period:
  - 12 MS only to be compliant
- We fear a loss of credibility EU AW legislation



This is achievable,  
but big efforts still needed



# Our position

- One of the EU's main achievements in the field of AW
- Distorsion of competition / Disadvantage for converted producers in all EU
- We do not accept any form of derogation or postponement
- Report article 7.2 has to be published
- We support private initiatives with a high level of sows' welfare
- *Other concerns: routine tail docking, teeth clipping, foraging material*  
+ *pig castration issue*



# Views on implementation (1)

**Sows are kept in group...  
What is a group?**

- 2/3 sows	Management easier / not really a social group / no possibility to escape if agonistic behaviours
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- 6/8 sows - 15/30 sows	More place / it's a social group
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-100/200 sows	More place / too many sows / social behaviour not compatible with big groups
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## Views on implementation (2)

**Sows in group with permanent access to manipulable material...**

**What kind of material?**

- Chains or balls

No effective enrichment material

- Straw in dispenser

Destructible, deformable, chewable /  
Can be used on slatted floor

- Litter  
supplement

Deep litter or scraped systems /  
Comfort, warmth and  
pigs' diet



# Views on implementation (3)

**Sows in group are fed to ensure that each individual can obtain sufficient food...**

**What kind of alimentation?**

- Group-housing systems with more feeder places

Homogeneous groups

- Group-housing systems with individual feeders

More reassuring

- Electronic Sow Feeders (ESF)

Calmer sows/ no more agonistic behaviours or abortions





# Advantages for animals and farmers

- Better welfare of sows → better zootechnical results
  - impacts on piglets: immune responses, birth weight, mortality
  - impacts on leg weakness: transport, slaughterhouse
- Same average litter size and No weaned piglets / sow / year
- No change in sows' behaviour (aggressivity) with appropriate management measures
- Good feedback from producers



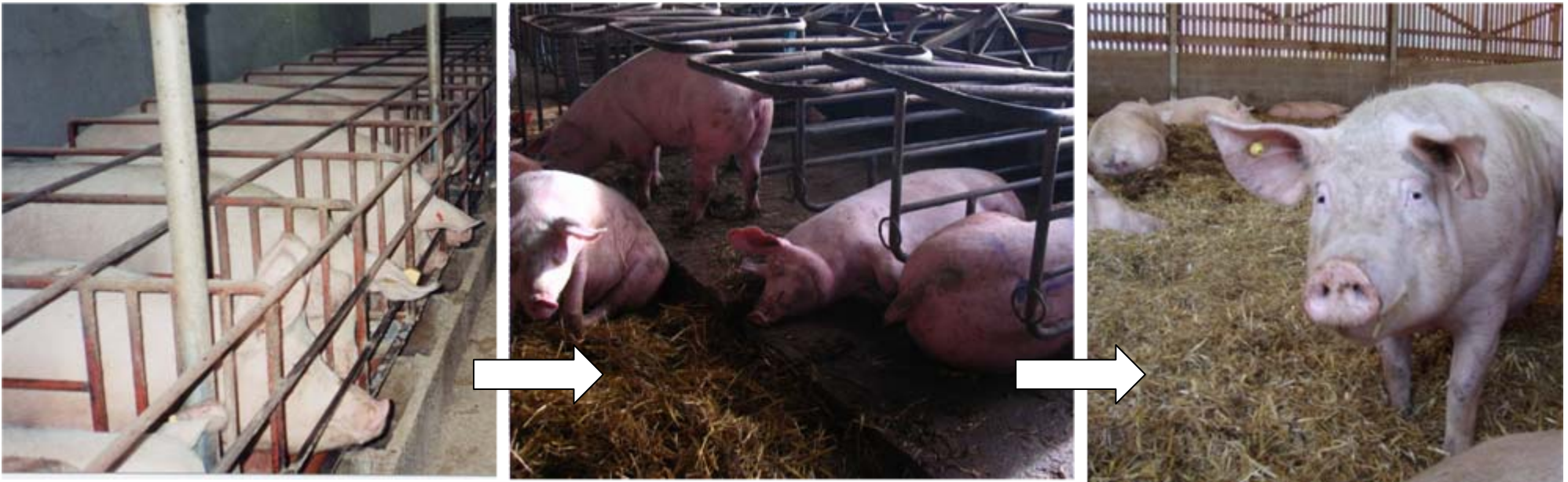
# Advantages for animals and farmers

- Building costs : average cost of alternative systems is less per sow than stall system
- With ESF, less batches and scale economy, better results
- Some subsidies can reduce investments (18 to 25%)
- Cross compliance



# Advantages for animals and farmers

**Better image / consumers**



# Our concerns

Advantages for AW will be obvious, only if:

- proper implementation  
(good feedback...)

**or / and**

- proper enforcement  
(systematic controls + efficient and dissuasive sanctions)



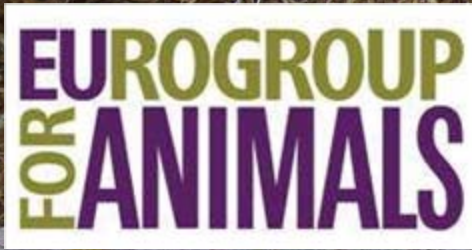
# Conclusions

- **Keeping sows and gilts in groups is an essential element to improve AW**
- **Multiple reasons make keeping of sows in group achievable**
- **Not a constraint but an asset**
- **NGOs ready to support (providing information + help to good implementation)**





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:



Thank you !

