

WG Impact of animal welfare improvement on working conditions in farms

This WG is co-organised by 2 French thematic networks focused on Work in Farms (RMT Trace) and Animal Welfare (RMT Bien-être). The organising team consists of :

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Context

Over the past fifty years or so, regulatory changes and consumer expectations around the concept of animal welfare in Europe have led farmers to change their breeding methods. This may have taken the form of structural changes in building conception (housing laying hens in aviaries, housing sows in groups, active stables, livestock precision farming, etc.), replacing systematic practices (tail docking, tooth clipping) with case-by-case treatment, and so on. All of these changes impact the way farmers work which has consequences on the way farmers interact with animals, and so on their respective welfares. As a matter of fact, some of these changes lead to stressful situations, but other ones do not.

This working group falls under the theme of “dynamics of work.” Indeed, changes in farming methods linked to the growing consideration of animal welfare is a fundamental trend which, over the last few decades and in the years to come, will bring about many changes in the way agricultural workers operate.

Aim of the group

The aim of this working group is to **describe the impact of the changes due to animal welfare improvement on the agricultural work in all its dimensions**: working hours, job content, physical or psychological strain, meaning of work, skills, fulfilment, etc. Participants will present the results of studies from a variety of production sectors, countries and disciplines (animal husbandry, ergonomics, psychology, sociology, applied ethology). The workshop aims to answer the following questions:

- How do the changes due to animal welfare regulations impact work organization, physical strain, and farmers and salaried workers skills?
- How do these changes impact the meaning of work and professional fulfilment?
- How do these societal demands impact the way farmers collectively define their profession and the professional standards?

One welfare approaches are welcome.

Format:

The WG will be organized as three 1,5 hours sessions :

- introduction (and summary of the debates from the previous sessions) : 5'
- 4 scientific presentations (15 minutes each) : 60'
- questions and global debate about the 4 presentations 20'
- conclusion 5'

The convenors will produce a synthesis of the debates after the symposium. Writing a joint communication will be proposed to the authors involved in this working group.