

PRODUCERS FACTSHEET



With consumers increasingly looking at food safety, as well as the humane and **ethical treatment of animals** during meat production, **animal welfare** is within the EU recognised as a **market driving force**. In order to protect its market and trade in relation to equal footing for all producers trading in the EU market, the EU requires even third states wishing to export to the EU, to transpose its **Regulation No. 1099/2009** on the protection of animals at slaughter.

Producers' compliance with the Regulation's common rules regarding **stunning methods and equipment**, the appointment of **an animal welfare officer** in each slaughterhouse, and **health certificates** for exported meat is checked at Border Inspection Points (BIPs), through which BiH is given the opportunity to access the EU market with

more than **500 million** consumers, and further develop its meat production sector with animal welfare policies. In 2009 BiH adopted a **Law on animal protection and animal welfare**, and thus made the animal welfare domain (partially) harmonized with EU legislation.

Wherein then lies the problem? On 1 July 2013

Croatia, one of BiH's most important trading partners, is joining the EU. This poses a serious threat to BiH's export of products of animal origin and a **potential loss of 30 million Euros**.

Why? Because until now BiH has failed to fully adopt and implement the international **hygiene, laboratory and disease control standards**, as well as **animal welfare** requirements necessary to continue exporting to Croatia and start exporting to the rest of the EU.

Across the bh. private sector, international sanitary and production standards have been given priority in relation to the equally important implementation of the BiH national Law on animal welfare. BiH meat producers largely neglect the question of animal welfare. There is a profound **misunderstanding** of animal welfare and a **failure to recognise its importance**. Thus, animal welfare requirements in slaughterhouses, which have to be fulfilled if export is to continue, are not met: there are **no animal welfare officers**, and **no animal welfare monitoring systems** in place. The relations between producers and inspectors, who are supposed to check the companies' fulfilment of standards set out in national legislation, often **lack professionalism and border on a conflict of interest**.

Solutions? The question of whether BiH will be able to continue exporting products of animal origin to Croatia is partly dependent on the actions of the state. However, as a producer you should also equip yourself for the EU regulation on animal welfare coming into effect.

1) **Educate** yourself on the **benefits** animal welfare has to health, competitiveness and profit, as well as on **responsibilities** of all the various standards and animal welfare as included in the respective laws and bylaws, and **fulfil** these standards with the help of training and cooperation with BiH and international institutions.

2) **Invest** money into **training and employing animal welfare officers**, especially those with knowledge of EU requirements.

3) Together with other producers **organise and exert pressure** on the Veterinary office through the association of producers in order **to intensify and ensure faster implementation** of all activities of the Road Map with the aim to continue exporting to Croatia.

Consumers should be seen as the main incentive for producers to change their approach. Populari's research shows that in BiH consumers care about what they eat. A number of local butchers have confirmed that customers are increasingly enquiring about the origin and quality of the meat they buy. Animal welfare should be among the top priorities for BiH meat producers – if for nothing else but for profit.