

Welfare management in *foie gras* production in France: a constant evolution

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(Arzacq - FRANCE)

BVPA Autumn Meeting
Belfast ; Nov 2019

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ABIPOLE Vet Practice

- ✓ Over 30 vets specialized in farm animals
- ✓ 6 dedicated poultry veterinarians

Foie gras ducks (breeders and meat)

Free-range chickens and layers

Broiler breeders / GP's

In-house Bio Chêne Vert laboratory

(necropsy, sero, bacterio, PCR, hygiene, salmo)



- ✓ Overview of foie gras production
- ✓ Industry commitments to ducks' welfare
- ✓ Future of the production and contradictions ?

“Foie Gras” = “fatty liver”

Defined only for duck (or goose)



✓ traced back over 4,500 years (Egyptian necropolis)
(banks of the Nile = migrating geese and ducks)

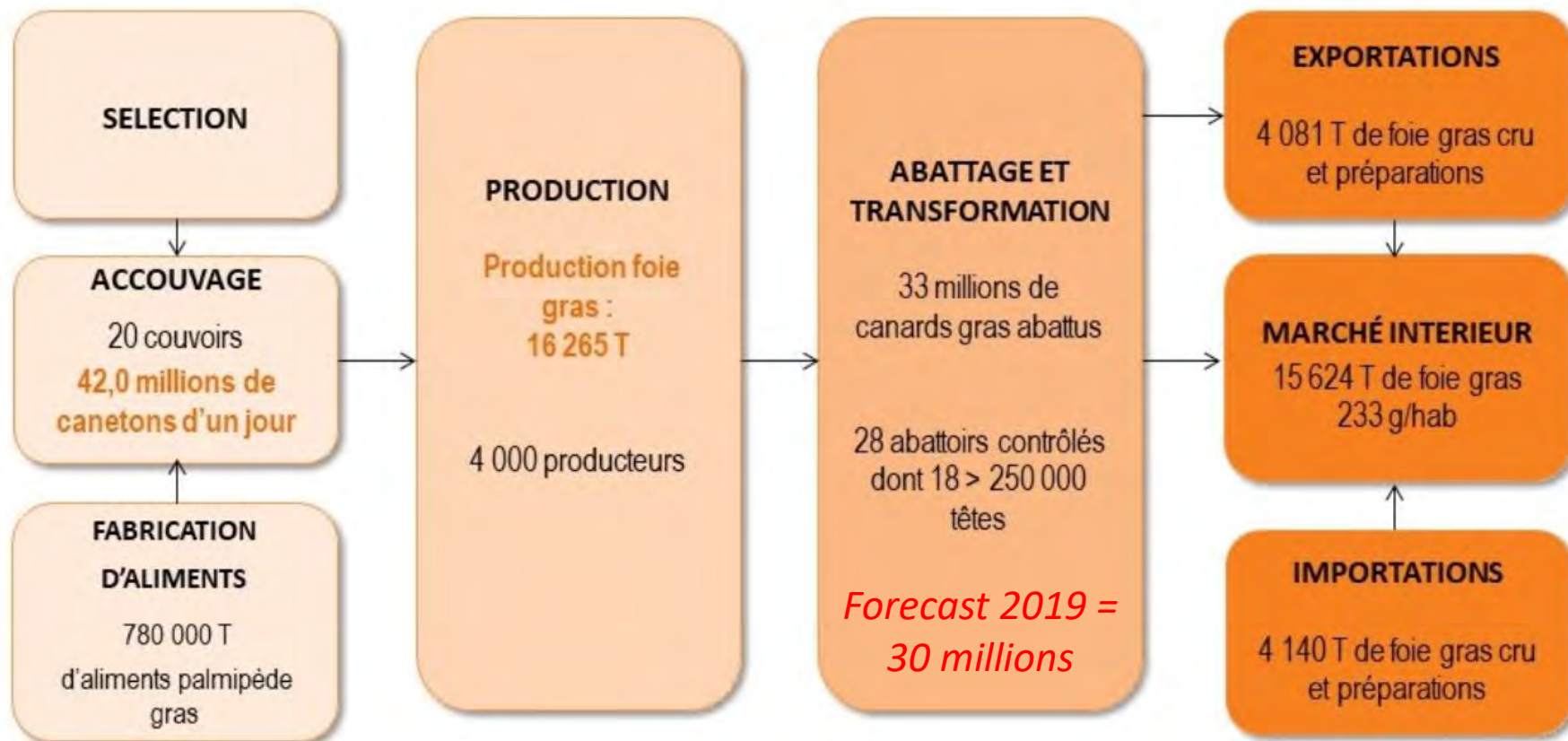
✓ Mule ducks >>> Geese & Muscovy ducks

Goose Foie Gras 600g to 700g ; Duck Foie Gras 450g to 650g

✓ Many other delicacies = breast, legs...



Data 2018



TEC: Tonnes Equivalent Carcasse

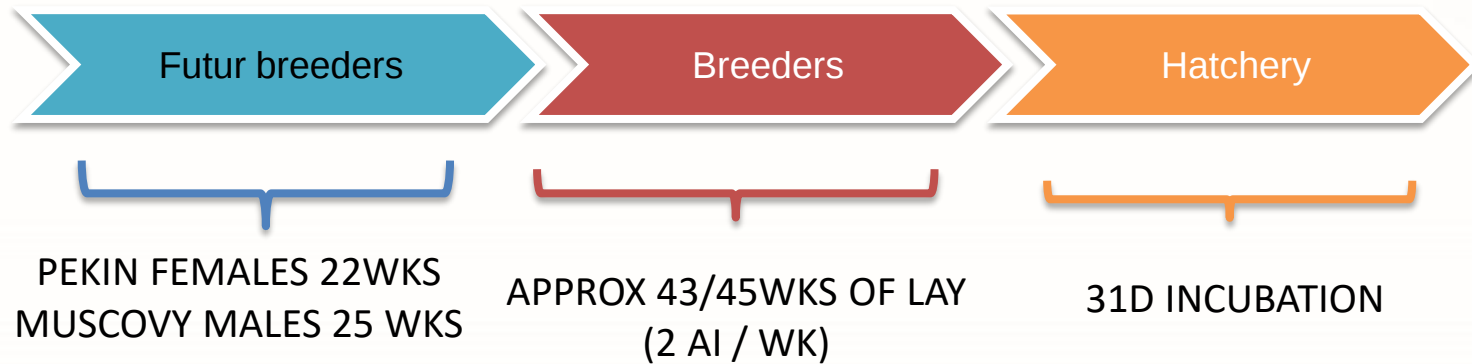
Sources: SSP, Cifog, Adépale, Douanes, Coop de France NA, données 2018

Male Muscovy X Female Pekin



“Mule” = Cross breed (sterile)

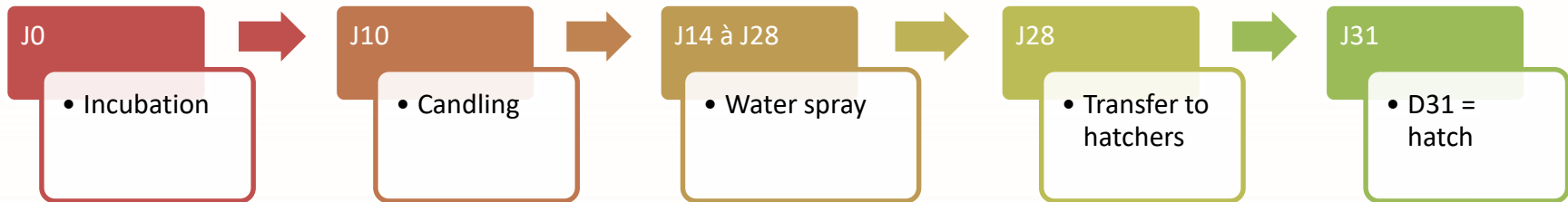
Males only (females' livers unsuitable)











- ✓ Quality control
- ✓ Sexing: ♂ black stain Vs ♀ albinos (females killed or export)
- ✓ +/- vaccinating (Goose Parvovirus) & beak trim

Femelles



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

Mâles



Figure 6



Figure 7

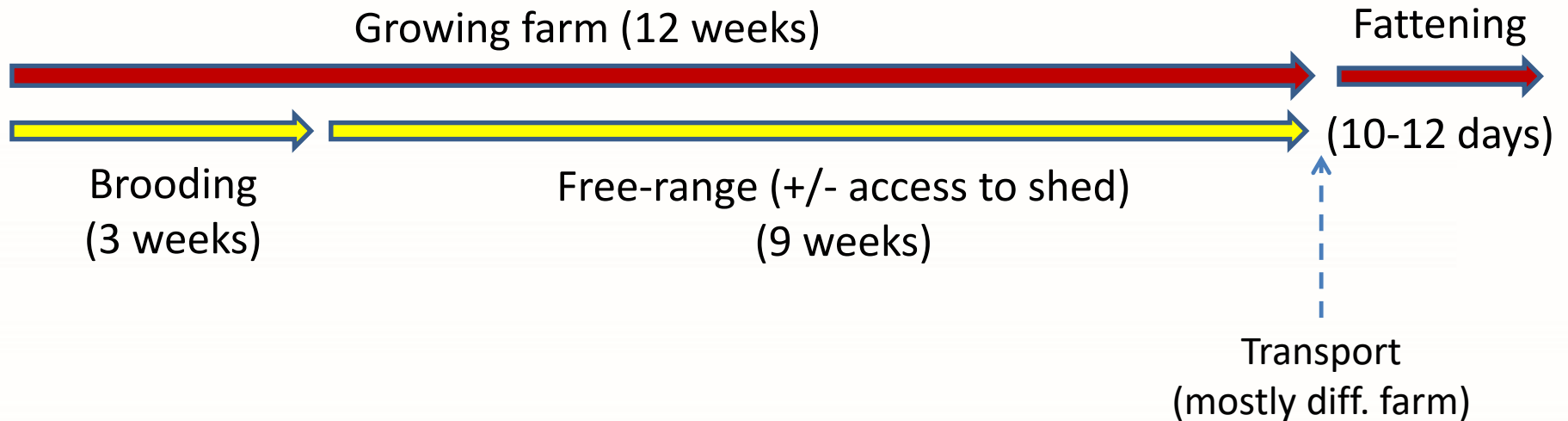


Figure 8





Fattening duck production





Brooding : 7 to 15 birds / m²







Ducks = no crop !!!
→ feed restriction
(last weeks)
“binge”



Handlings & vaccinations



Handlings & transport



- ✓ No more individual cages
- ✓ 2 meals / day (high-energy corn mash)
- ✓ Ad libitum water
- ✓ Liver steatosis (reversing process)



220g mash (+ 80% water)
<100g liver



Ducks = no crop !!!



450g mash (+ 80% water)
400-650g liver





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Technical gesture



**FOIE GRAS
FOOD FOR SADISTS**

GAIA
www.gaia.fr

Foie gras is made by force-feeding
ducks and geese until their livers
swell up to 10 times their normal
size. Keep steady off your plate.
DON'T BUY FOIE GRAS.

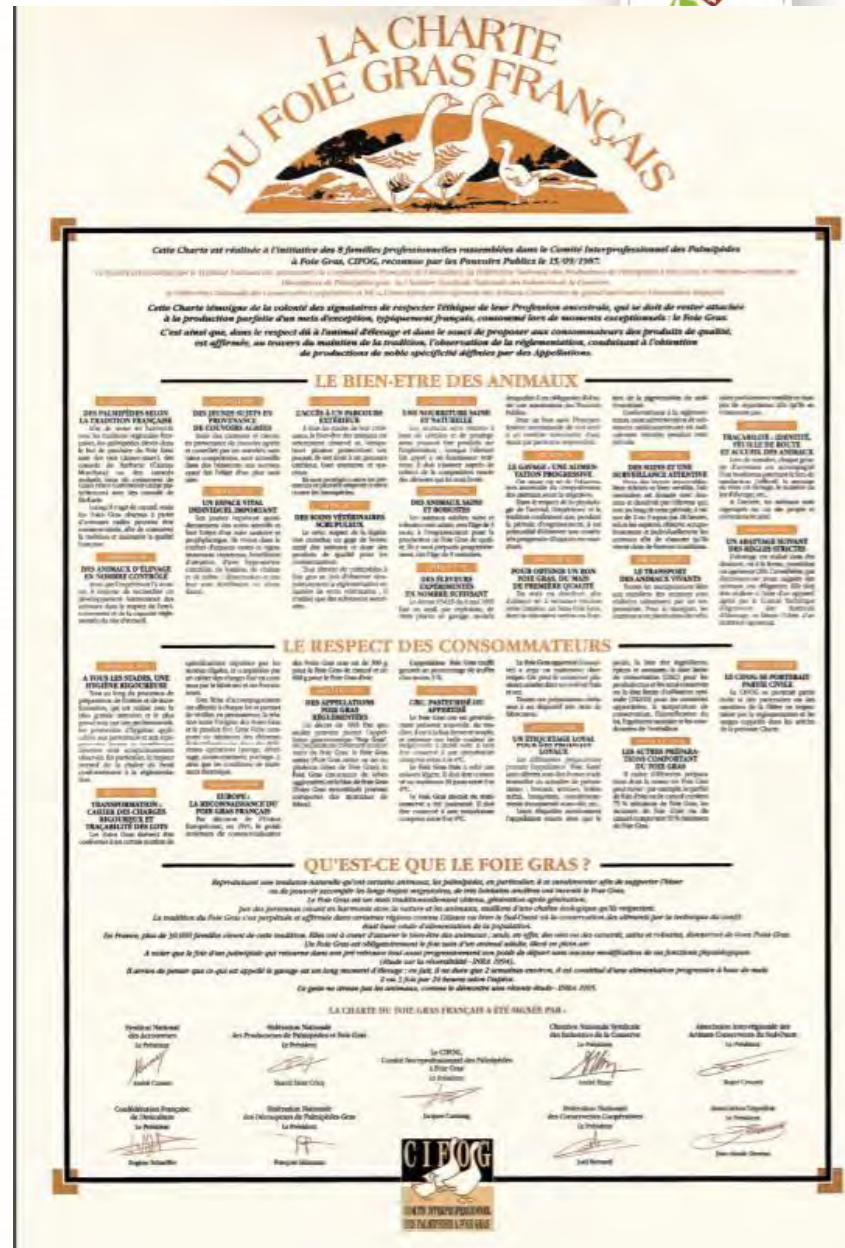


Get a Taste for
**FOIE
GRAS**

1996 charter of French Foie Gras

✓ voluntary process to set out the basic rules of animal welfare and provide guarantees for consumers

✓ charter contains 23 articles describing the rules to be followed at each step of foie gras production



2008 Euro Foie Gras federation

- ✓ first joint task committing producers to the 12 points set out by the European Commission on animal welfare
- ✓ within the framework of the Welfare Quality Project



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EURO FOIE GRAS FÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE DU FOIE GRAS

EUROPEAN CHARTER ON BREEDING OF WATERFOWL FOR FOIE GRAS*

In July 2008, the five European countries producing foie gras, namely Belgium, Bulgaria, Spain, France and Hungary, formed the European Federation of Foie Gras (Euro Foie Gras) to promote their profession, explain its specificities and develop specific common projects aiming at improving and harmonising the practices for the whole sector.

Concerned about the respect of animal welfare, Euro Foie Gras has published in the form of a charter the commitments stemming from the experience of breeders who have to regulate these farming activities in the spirit of the 12 principles of the Welfare Quality Project.

Whereas:

- ✦ a. Only some races or lineages of waterfowls selected over generations are capable of producing foie gras,
- ✦ b. The major site of synthesis of fats, lipids or fatty acids is located, in birds as well as in fish, in the liver, which plays naturally the role of storage in a reversible process as it does not cause cellular disintegration,
- ✦ c. Waterfowls lack sudoriferous glands and evacuate, just like dogs do, the excess of heat by panting,
- ✦ d. In addition to the above physiological specificities, waterfowls present the following particular anatomic characteristics:

- Particular morphology of the oral cavity with possibility for alignment of the beak and the neck due to the absence of cartilaginous glottis;

- The opening of the air ways is located at tongue level and it is closed by retractor, which allows waterfowls to feed under water without choking and therefore without drowning.

- Elastic walls of the oesophagus and formation of a storage pouch at the base of the oesophagus called "take crop", that allows them to swallow larger prey (fish or frog) or vegetal matter in large volumes followed by gradual liberation of this food into the proventriculus and then into the gizzard.

- Existence of natural protection of the oesophagus walls which allows them to

ingest without damage small pebbles that participate in the grinding of the food at the level of the gizzard.

- ✦ e. At present, the only mastered method for production of foie gras is the assisted feeding of waterfowls in the end period of breeding,
- ✦ f. The best interest of farmers is closely connected with maintaining the animals' good health and respecting their welfare.

The European Union producers have developed special breeding modes adapted to the concerned species and genotypes and allowing production of foie gras based on 2 phases:

1) Breeding phase stretching from hatching to the end of growth. It covers the major part of the breeding cycle, i.e. between 10 and 15 weeks depending on the specific species. During this phase the waterfowls have systematic access to an outdoor course;

2) The phase of fattening which comes after the end of breeding and extends, in most cases, over a period from 9 to 20 days depending on the species.

In order to better prepare the animals to fattening, there is a transition phase that links the 2 phases above. It consists in getting the animal used to be fed by portions thus developing its aptitude to fattening (elasticity of the oesophagus, storage of food and synthesis of lipids).

✦ 1. Animals should not suffer from prolonged hunger, i.e. they should have a sufficient and appropriate diet.

During the breeding phase, animals should receive well balanced feed adapted to their specific needs. This feed shall comprise cereals and green grass produced either on the farm or by an external supplier whereas in the fattening phase the farmer must modify the composition of the feed supplied.

Over the last weeks of fattening, animals shall be provided the fattening phase by receiving feed allocated in meals in order to stimulate the digestive motor of waterfowls.

After the end of growth, only robust and healthy animals shall be fattened. During this phase waterfowls shall be fed by assisted feeding mostly between 2 and 4 meals per day depending on the species. This gradual feeding shall be adapted to the capacity of each animal and shall stop the natural process of preening and regurgitation. Feeding practices consist in putting the food into the oesophagus and the take crop, which is an elastic storage pouch located at the base of the throat. To this end, the farmer shall use a cup adapted to the anatomic specificities of each species, which is verified on a regular basis.

✦ 2. Animals should not suffer from prolonged thirst, i.e. they should have a sufficient and accessible water supply.

Waterfowls shall have permanent free access to drinkable water.

✦ 3. Animals should have comfort around resting.

While they are young, animals shall be placed in a building, which is well-lit, heated and ventilated and must have a well-maintained resting area. As soon as possible conditions allow it, the animals shall have access to an outdoor course on quality ground.

During the fattening phase, the living quarters shall be equipped with flooring that allows the respect of the hygiene and comfort of the animal.

✦ 4. Animals should have thermic comfort, i.e. they should neither be too hot nor too cold.

Buildings that house young animals shall be properly heated and ventilated to get them the thermal comfort that they need depending on their age.

During the fattening phase, in order to facilitate the regulation of their body temperature, the buildings shall be ventilated and, if necessary, with controlled temperature. The air quality and humidity and the sound level shall be continuously monitored to protect the animals' comfort.

✦ 5. Animals should have enough space to be able to move around freely.

The space allocated for each animal shall be appropriate and adapted to each growth phase.

As soon as outdoor conditions allow it, waterfowls shall have access to an outdoor course allowing them to move freely. However, it should be noted that the herd instinct of waterfowls makes them move and stay in groups.

During the fattening phase, the animals should be kept in groups in order to make natural movements that are required for their needs. To this end, the European producers shall gradually put in place collective lodgings.

✦ 6. Animals should be free of physical injuries.

The breeder, male and female, shall be trained in the physiological specification of waterfowls, learn how to handle the animals safely.

During the various stages of the animal's life, and especially during transport, disease prevention and assisted feeding, they take care of the good quality and maintenance of the materials that come into contact with the animals.

Farms are monitored by specialised technicians and certifications are carried out by veterinarians who supervise the animals' good health condition.

✦ 7. Animals should be free of disease, i.e. farmers should maintain high standards of hygiene and care.

Knowing that the strict respect of the legislation is a prerequisite for the animal's good health and thus for the supply of high quality products to the consumers, each waterfowl breeder shall take special care of the animals. The local veterinary doctor and technician in charge of supervising the farm shall carry out verification.

A premises used as a sanitary check point shall be installed at the farm's entrance to prevent entry of any animal contaminated by virus. The animal instead of care shall be taken care of in strict respect of the legislation and of the local veterinarian's instructions.

✦ 8. Animals should not suffer pain induced by inappropriate management, handling, slaughter, or surgical procedures.

Assisted feeding shall only be implemented by competent staff well aware of the physiological characteristics of waterfowls and the fattening techniques using appropriate tools and equipment. The breeder must use a cup that is adapted to the anatomic specificities of each species and a suitable basin for regurgitation. The cleaning and disinfection shall be carried out in strict respect of the recommendations.

✦ 9. Animals should be handled well in all situations, i.e. handlers should promote good human-animal relationships.

The handling, in which the waterfowls are subjected during their breeding, shall be limited to the necessary minimum. The waterfowls must be handled with a cup that is completed and made available to the animal well in advance under the responsibility of the breeder.

During fattening operations, the breeder shall make sure that every effort is made to prevent any damage to the waterfowls. It could be appropriate to maintain a low-intensity light source for this purpose.

✦ 10. Negative emotions such as fear, distress, frustration or anxiety should be avoided.

From their youngest age, the breeder shall ensure a daily visit. The regular presence of the breeder within the premises is a prerequisite for good animal care. Furthermore, the outdoor courses shall be protected and enclosed to limit any predatory entry.

of the Permanent Committee of the Council of Europe. Animals shall be slaughtered before slaughter using a device that is correctly adjusted and performed manually.

✦ 11. Animals should be able to express normal, non-harmful, social behaviours.

Waterfowls are animals that live in groups naturally. The size and density of the group are compatible with appropriate human supervision on a daily basis so that the animals' welfare conditions are met. Therefore, during the fattening phase, the European producers shall put in place collective cages to replace the existing individual cages.

✦ 12. Animals should be able to express species-specific behaviours.

During the breeding phase, the access to an outdoor course adapted to their needs, the waterfowls shall have the possibility to express the natural environment. Outdoor watering equipment shall be positioned in a way to prevent the presence of still water, which is a potential contamination source, and designed to allow the animals to express species-specific behaviours.

During the phase of fattening, the collective cages shall allow, in particular, the waterfowls to stand, to turn around, to spread their wings and to smooth feathers as specified in the recommendation of the Standing Committee of the Council of Europe.

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FOR THE NATIONAL GOOSE AND DUCK FEDERATION

Abdoulkader
Andreas CSILAGHI

FOR ASHEGRA

Jordi TEROL

FOR APPAG

Michel PETIT

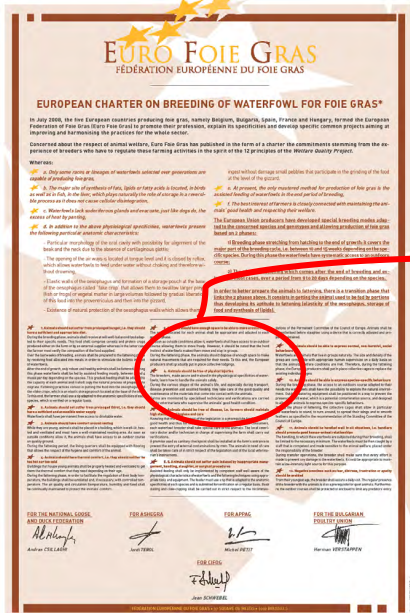
FOR THE BULGARIAN POULTRY UNION

Herman VERSTAPPEN

FOR CIEFG

Jean SCHWIBEL

FÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE DU FOIE GRAS • 37, rue de la Belgique • 1000 BRUXELLES



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As soon as outside conditions allow it, waterfowls shall have access to an outdoor course allowing them to move freely. However, it should be noted that the herd instinct of waterfowls makes them move and stay in groups.

During the fattening phase, the animals should dispose of enough space to make natural movements that are required for their needs. To this end, the European producers shall gradually put in place collective lodgings.

France → individual cages banned from Jan 1st 2016



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2014 “Palmi G confiance”



- ✓ French voluntary initiative to ensure that farmers follow best practices for animal welfare commitment to transparency and ongoing improvement
- ✓ Independent organization carries out inspections to ensure that farmers comply with the commitments
- ✓ Added market value ?



My best practices for Palmiped breeding

Palmtrust is:

7 chapters

8 21 commitments



The seven chapters:

1. **Farm identity:** keep a complete, descriptive sheet of the farm
2. **Farmer training:** classes on how to breed the animals with concern for their welfare (including biosecurity)
3. **Feeding:** ensure that the animals receive healthy food in sufficient quantities
4. **Animal comfort:** providing them with enough space in a comfortable environment that enables them to lie down and move about freely and ensures they are neither too hot nor too cold
5. **Health and hygiene:** ensure that the animals stay healthy by providing good hygiene conditions and appropriate care
6. **Human/animal relations:** avoid all stressful situations for the animals by ensuring that there is a good relationship between humans and animals
7. **Safety:** ensure that both animals and humans are safe at all times

Step 1 =

- Accreditation (or not) by area manager
- Renewal every 2 years



Step 2 =

- Inspection by independent organization



N° d'exploitation		FR	
☐ Visite de validation initiale ☐ Visite de maintien (En visite de maintien, les termes « s'engage » ne doivent pas être pris au sens propre. Les éléments demandés doivent être mis en place.)			
Objectif	Atteint de progrès	Non atteinte	Commentaires, engagement de l'éleveur et date
A- BONDITE DE L'EXPLOITATION			
1- INFORMATION DES CLIENTS			
2- ALIMENTATION			
2-1 Je garantis à mes animaux une alimentation adaptée et locale	☐	☐	☐
2-2 En élevage, je tiens un plan d'alimentation pour mes animaux	☐	☐	☐
2-3 En phase de gestation, je respecte un plan d'alimentation progressif, adapté à chaque animal et vérifie régulièrement la précision du matériel de distribution de l'aliment	☐	☐	☐
2-4 Tous mes animaux ont un accès permanent à de l'eau de qualité	☐	☐	☐
3- BIEN-ÊTRE DE L'ANIMAL			
4-1 Je garantis à mes animaux une aire confortables, leur permettant de se coucher	☐	☐	☐
4-2 Je préserve l'intégrité physique de mes animaux	☐	☐	☐
4-3 J'assure le confort thermique de mes animaux en évitant qu'ils soient exposés à une chaleur ou à un froid excessif	☐	☐	☐
4-4 Je mets à disposition de mes animaux tout l'espace nécessaire à l'expression des comportements caractéristiques de leur espèce	☐	☐	☐
5- SANTÉ ET VIGILANCE			
5-1 Mes animaux sont élevés sur une durée suffisante pour permettre un développement optimal et sont en bon état corporel	☐	☐	☐
5-2 Je maîtrise globalement les risques sanitaires	☐	☐	☐
5-3 Pour assurer de prévention, je tiens mes installations propres	☐	☐	☐
5-4 Je peux tester les animaux atteints	☐	☐	☐
5-5 J'assure la bonne gestion de la pharmacie vétérinaire et je connais les recommandations prescrites par le vétérinaire	☐	☐	☐
5-6 Pour limiter les risques de contamination, je respecte toutes les règles d'hygiène relatives à la conservation et à l'administration des cadavres	☐	☐	☐
5-7 Pour protéger les consommateurs, j'enregistre et garde une trace de tous les médicaments vétérinaires et des traitements réalisés	☐	☐	☐
6- TRAITEMENTS PHARMACOLOGIQUES			
6-1 J'habille mes animaux à la présence humaine et j'érige les visites isolées de personnes extérieures à l'élevage	☐	☐	☐
6-2 J'assure à mes animaux la meilleure protection contre les prédateurs	☐	☐	☐
7- SÉCURITÉ			
7-1 Pour assurer la sécurité des personnes, je préviens les risques d'accident	☐	☐	☐
7-2 J'assure un niveau d'éclairage suffisant dans mes bâtiments	☐	☐	☐
L'ÉLEVEUR		LE TECHNICIEN	
Je soussigné :		Je soussigné :	
Nom : _____ Prénom : _____		Nom : _____ Prénom : _____	
Adresse : _____		Adresse : _____	
Tél : _____ Fax : _____ Email : _____		Tél : _____ Fax : _____ Email : _____	
J'accepte la conclusion de visite formelle par le technicien et m'engage : - à respecter les critères des charges de la Démarche - à accepter tout contrôle concernant son application et à en faciliter la bonne exécution en mettant à disposition les documents nécessaires - à me faire enregistrer en tant qu'éleveur agréé ou engagé dans la démarche et à accepter la diffusion de cette information à tous les juges de la CDEG. Je dispose d'un droit d'accès, de modification, de suppression des données qui me concernent (art. 34 de la Loi Informatique et Liberté). Pour exercer ce droit, je m'adresse au CDEG - rue du Bourg-Poissonnier - 73000 PARIS Je peux interrompre mon engagement dans la Démarche à tout moment par simple courrier recommandé		Attesté M. _____ éleveur, pour l'actualisation de son profilant. Je me suis rendu sur place. Au vu des résultats de cette visite de validation, je propose de : ☐ Valider / ☐ Diffuser / non agréé (1 ^{ère} visite) ☐ Mieux / ☐ Suspendre ou retirer / ☐ Retirer / non agréé (suite de maintien) Fait à : _____ Signature du technicien : _____	
Fait à : _____			
Le : _____			

Ongoing research projects on ducks welfare...

VALIDATION HISTOLOGIQUE DU SYSTEME DE NOTATION DES DERMATITES DU COUSSINET PLANTAIRE CHEZ LE CANARD MULARD A DIFFERENTS AGES

Litt Joanna¹, Chaumier Julia², Bernadet Marie-Dominique³, Laborde Marie¹, Vogelaer Julie², Albaric Olivier⁴, Huguet Jean-Marc⁷, Guerin Jean-Luc⁸

¹ITAVI, Maison de l'Agriculture, cité Galliane BP 279, 40005 MONT DE MARSAN Cedex,

²CEPSO, Maison de l'Agriculture, cité Galliane BP 279, 40005 MONT DE MARSAN Cedex,

Podo & feather scoring = soon implemented to PalmITrust certif

1	2	3
Absence de lésion - hyperkératose légère à modérée avec possibilité de coloration marron et sans perte de substance	Hyperkératose modérée à sévère du coussinet avec possibilité de coloration marron et/ou perte de substance modérée	Hyperkératose sévère et perte de substance sévère
	 	 

0	1	2
Canard plumé de façon homogène sur toute la surface du dos	Peau visible sur moins de 50% de la surface du dos	Peau visible sur plus de 50% de la surface du dos
		

Ongoing research projects on ducks welfare...

TRANSPORTS BÂCHÉS DE PALMIPÈDES

Caractérisation d'ambiance dans les transports bâchés

RESPONSABLE :
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R. GUET³, J. LUTT³

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¹ ITAVI – ANGERS
² UMR SAS – RENNES
³ ITAVI – MONT DE MARSAN



A retenir

Le transport de palmipèdes apparaît comme un facteur à risque dans la dissémination du virus d'Influenza Aviaire au niveau des territoires. En l'absence d'étude sur le sujet les transporteurs ont équipé leur flotte de bâches micro-perforées ou de filets brise-vent. Cependant des questions se posent quant aux conditions d'ambiance lors du transport avec des bâches, ainsi que sur le nettoyage de ces bâches.

Une étude sur le sujet a été initiée par le Palmipôle en 2018 pour appréhender ou l'ambiance dans les camions de transport, puis pour formuler des préconisations quant aux solutions de fermeture des camions. Des rencontres avec les transporteurs de canards ont ainsi été programmées afin de caractériser leur flotte et d'avoir leur retour d'expérience sur le bâchage des camions. Des mesures de température, d'humidité et de dioxyde de carbone ont par ailleurs été effectuées sur quatre camions transportant des canards en période « froide » (Novembre 2018). Si l'étude se poursuit en 2019, quelques tendances peuvent d'ores et déjà être notées, notamment d'éventuelle zone à risque à l'avant et au centre des camions. D'autres mesures seront réalisées durant la période d'avril à août 2019.

Welfare monitoring during transport

- ✓ Net cover on trucks (IAHP)
- ✓ Heat waves ?

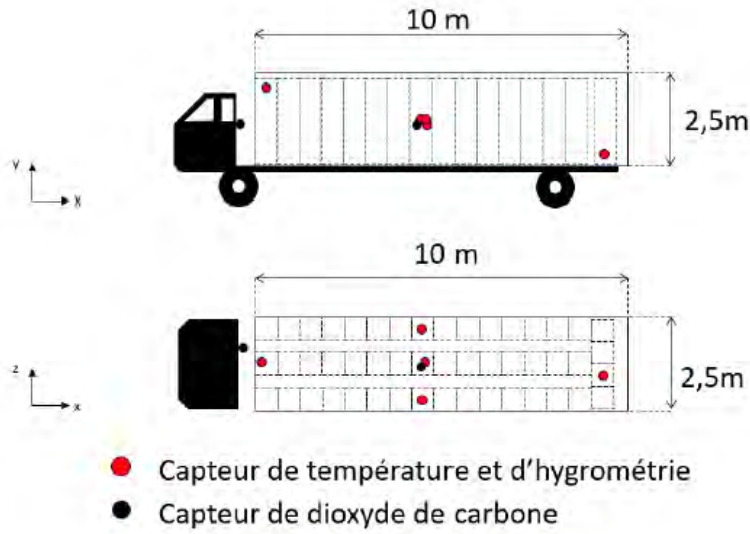


Figure 1 Schémas de la position des capteurs



Before 2016



Small sheds,
most of time outside



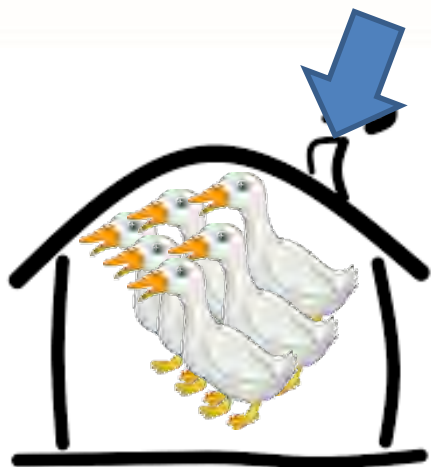
small flocks ; multi age



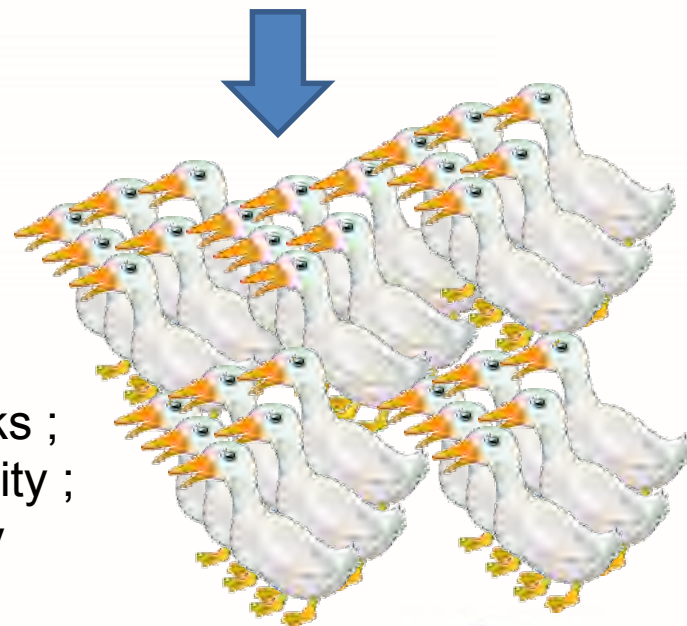
After 2016

Indoor confinement
(if requested)

Single age only
(per farm)



Bigger buildings ;
automation ;
change in landscape ;
declaw ?



Bigger flocks ;
Higher density ;
nervosity



**What consumers
(animals?) want....**



**...what we are building
for the future**



French Paradox



Now that you know... you decide!



*January 7, 2019 : U.S. Supreme Court
bans foie gras throughout the state of
California*



Thanks