

# ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY



**FirstFarms**

## **I. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY**

- Get a united codex that describes how FirstFarms relates to and acts upon ethical issues, as animal welfare.
- Secure that FirstFarms' employees are familiar with and understand the company's approach to animal welfare.
- Ensure that decisions regarding animal welfare are made in line with defined management of animal welfare.
- Introduce FirstFarms' management of animal welfare to interested parties.

## **II. SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

- This internal policy is introduced to all employees and is available at the headquarters of each company in the FirstFarms group and at FirstFarms' corporate webpage.
- The provisions of this policy are valid for all the companies in FirstFarms group (Appendix 1) until new modifications.

## **III. KEY PRINCIPLES**

FirstFarms is a Danish public limited company, which acquires and manages agriculture in Eastern Europe. Based on professional management and best practice, we acquire, develop and operate business in the area of agriculture and food products. FirstFarms approves the development towards a more sustainable agriculture.

FirstFarms is a responsible company. We are fully aware of the great responsibility it is to run a modern and efficient agricultural enterprise. We run our business by taking care of our environment, our employees, our animals and involvement in local communities.

Our operations include handling of live animals in our milk and pig production. Providing animal welfare to our animals is a cornerstone for delivering high-quality products. FirstFarms complies with all applicable legal and regulatory requirement in the area of working with live animals. We are committed to maintain a high-level of animal welfare on all our sites within a framework of modern and efficient conventional production system.

Daily established routines on all our farms are targeted to maintain health status and wellbeing of our livestock. All employees are trained to handle and treat animals in the correct way. With constantly improvement of health status of animals, we are minimising usage of antibiotic treatments. FirstFarms' approach to antibiotic usage is restricted. We are treating animals with antibiotics in serious cases. Antibiotics are not used as preventative treatment.

FirstFarms places a great emphasis on housing of our livestock and makes constantly investments in improvement of the production facilities.

Transportation of our livestock for further breeding between our subsidiaries are conducted by company owned trucks according to the European Union and local legislation. Transportation time doesn't exceed 4 hours. FirstFarms doesn't conduct transportation of the livestock to our customers which are local agricultural or processing companies. FirstFarms enters a contract agreement only with partners, who are following the legislation of livestock transportation.

## **IV. MANAGEMENT OF ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE MILK PRODUCTION**

Health, well-being and housing of our herd is essential for cows' ability to deliver high-quality milk. Providing good care to our animals is always in focus in our company. Our work with dairy herd welfare is based on the Cow Comfort program, that consists of the following principles:

- Free access to water;
- Access to balanced diets;
- Avoiding thermal stress;
- Facilities and animal behaviour;
- Free of diseases and injuries.

At our dairy farms, animals have access to clean water and well-balanced nutritious diet 24 hours per day. Good feeding management is supported by usage of the modern monitoring system. The system provides real time data about animals' health status based on their activity patterns. Animals are also inspected on a daily basis by veterinarians or in house zootechnicians. Health data from the monitoring system, together with the daily inspection, ensure effective disease prevention at the farm. Medication of the animals at the farm takes place in accordance with the local regulation in force and only to a necessary extent. To increase health status and immunity of our herd, and thus reducing mortality, we undertake the following actions:

- Vaccination of all calves against respiratory issues;
- Selective drying off cows;
- Tailored rations for sensitive groups like dry and fresh cows;
- Feed supplements and optimise colostrum quality by vaccination of the dry cows;
- Improve hygiene standards.

FirstFarms strives to provide housing facilities that allows cows to exhibit their most natural behaviour as much as possible. Our stables have wide passageways, equipped with individual stalls with soft and clean bedding, that allow animals to lie down and rest. Stables at the farm have to be properly cleaned, passageways and scraper lanes are kept in good condition in order to prevent injuries. Ventilation systems ensure fresh air in the stables. Air cooling by a sprinkler system is used to avoid heat stress among milking cows. FirstFarms makes constantly investments in improvement of the herd housing facilities.

Employees, who are working with the animals, have to treat animals with respect and may not physically harm animals. In addition, hoof trimmers are constantly educated in proper treatment of hoofs and animals to avoid leg injuries. All employees are provided with the knowledge about animals' behaviour and needs, and they are trained how to handle animals to avoid stress in the herd. FirstFarms has also a collaboration with the University of Vienna and an external consultant in order to improve management practices at the farm.

We strive to conduct good and responsible management practices to ensure long and healthy life of the animals at the farm.

## **V. MANAGEMENT OF ANIMAL WELFARE IN THE PIG PRODUCTION**

### **Health**

Well-balanced nutrition diet affects animals' health status and well-being. At all our farms, we ensure the necessary access to clean water and high-quality feed for our herds. Well-balanced nutrition influences also the ability of our sows to deliver high-quality colostrum, that plays an essential role in the lifetime immunity, health and growth of our piglets. Colostrum provides the necessary immunoglobulins, which create foundation for piglets' immune system. Early and sufficient intake of good quality colostrum is essential for the health and growth of the piglet.

The daily health check of our herds is part of farm management and controlled by a veterinarian. Different types of laboratory checks are conducted, also as part of farm management. They provide information about diseases, bacteria, viruses, antibiotic resistance in the herd and immunoglobulins in the colostrum. Daily health check and routinely laboratory checks helps us to make right decision regarding health management in the herds and implement necessary preventative actions.

Our approach is restricted to individual antibiotic treatments in serious cases. We do not use antibiotics for the group of animals as preventative treatment. In our herds, we are practicing various kind of natural plant extracts (for example algae, pumpkin and garlic extracts) as feed supplements together with organic acid combination in drinking water. It has a positive effect on animals' health. Keeping health status and immunity of our animals on a high level from the moment of birth enable them to self-protection from different diseases.

### **Well-being**

Besides taking care of our animals' health, we are committed to protect our herd from mental suffering. Our employees' human approach to the herds play a crucial role in the animals' well-being. All our employees are trained to take calm care of the animals and to ensure good living conditions for them.

In addition to satisfactory supply of fresh air, fresh water, feed and comfortable environment, we provide permanent access to manipulable materials like straw, wood or other organic materials, in order to encourage activities among the pigs.

Stress sensitivity of animals depends on genetics. Our animals have Danish genetics that is characterised by lower stress sensitivity. To perform on high level, according to genetic capacity, we have to provide high level of welfare to our animals.

Tooth grinding and tail docking will only be done if necessary. That contributes both to minimising stress among piglets and avoiding spreading of bacteria and infections.

### **Housing**

FirstFarms is fully aware of the great responsibility it is to run a modern and efficient animal production. In our production system, we are constantly working on improvement of animals' housing and biosecurity, which does not compromise with animal welfare level for conventional pig production.

In our production, the sows are mainly housed in groups to give possibility for practice social behaviour. But in the first 28 days of pregnancy the sows are very sensitive to any kind of stress, which we handle by keeping the sows in individual pens in this time period. In case of a sow do not thrive, we will separate it for special care. In the maternity unit, we have individual crate systems, to give high survival rate of the suckling piglets. We have welfare nests with floor heating for suckling piglets. The nest has an opening which allows the sow to watch her piglets anytime.

In our production system we wean the piglets at an average of four weeks and not younger than 3 weeks. We use family weaning, which means that we keep the group of suckling piglets from each sow together in a weaner house until the end. This system minimize stress and spreading of diseases. If we have piglets that do not thrive in the group, they will be selected and housed in a pen with special care.

To counter restlessness among our pigs we implement feeding technology where the pigs have to be active to get the feed.

This internal policy enters into force and effect on all companies from the FirstFarms group.

In Billund, on February 2020

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Anders Holger Noergaard

## **Appendix 1: Companies from the FirstFarms group**

**FirstFarms A/S**, a Danish joint-stock company, registered in the Trade Registry under CVR-no. 28312504, headquartered in Majsmarken 1, 7190 Billund, Denmark.

**FirstFarms Agra M s.r.o.**, with its registered seat at Vinohrádok 5741, Malacky 901 01, the Slovak Republic, BIN 34 122 087, registered in the Commercial Register maintained by the District Court Bratislava I, Section Sro, Insert No. 13205/B, the Slovak Republic.

**FirstFarms Mlyn Záhorie a.s.**, with its registered seat at Vinohrádok 5741, Malacky 901 01, the Slovak Republic, BIN 34 104 071, registered in the Commercial Register maintained by the District Court Bratislava I, Section Sa, Insert No. 4869/B, the Slovak Republic.

**FirstFarms Mast Stupava a.s.**, with its registered seat at Vinohrádok 5741, Malacky 901 01, the Slovak Republic, BIN 36 529 401, registered in the Commercial Register maintained by the District Court Bratislava I, Section Sa, Insert No. 2375/B, the Slovak Republic.

**FirstFarms s.r.o.**, with its registered seat at Vinohrádok 5741, Malacky 901 01, the Slovak Republic, BIN 35 916 346, registered in the Commercial Register maintained by the District Court Bratislava I, Section Sro, Insert No. 34492/B, the Slovak Republic.

**MORAVA AGRO s.r.o.**, with its registered seat at Malé Leváre 469, Malé Leváre 908 74, the Slovak Republic, Id. Nr. (IČO): 35 920 653, registered in the Business register of the District Court Bratislava I., Section Sro, Insert No.: 34880/B, the Slovak Republic.

**Obilná s.r.o.** with its registered seat at Vinohrádok 5741, Malacky 901 01 the Slovak Republic, Id. Nr. (IČO): 54 084 438, registered in the Business register of District Court Bratislava I., Section Sro, Insert No.: 145035/B, the Slovak Republic.

**FirstFarms Gabčíkovo s.r.o.**, with its registered seat at Patašská 586 Gabčíkovo 930 05, Company ID no.: 35 844 761, registered with Commercial Register of the District Court Trnava Section: Sro, entry no.: 15266/T, the Slovak Republic.

**Gabčíkovo City land s.r.o.**, with its registered seat at Patašská 586 Gabčíkovo 930 05, Company ID no.: 36 264 881, registered with Commercial Register of the District Court Trnava Section: Sro, entry no.: 15353/T, the Slovak Republic.

**FirstFarms Granero s.r.o.**, with its registered seat at Vlasatice 419, 691 30 Vlasatice, BIN 454 78 295, recorded with the Commercial register maintained by the Regional court Brno, Section C, Insert No. 5080, Czech Republic.

**FirstFarms Hungary Kft.**, with its registered seat at H-5932 Gádos, Tanya 1, recorded with the Commercial register maintained by Békes Megyei Bíróság, Hungary.

**FirstFarms Agro East SRL**, with its registered seat at Surdila Greci, Garii Street, no. 1, Braila registered with the Trade Registry under reference number J09/220/2009 Braila, unique registration code (CUI) RO 15104360, Romania.

**FirstFarms SRL**, with its headquarter at Calea Sagului nr. 219, Com. Giroc, Loc. Chisoda 307221, Jud. Timis, registered at ORC J09/349/2012, fiscal code RO 21795228, Romania.

**AIMS SRL**, with its headquarter at Str. Corneliu Coposu, nr. 2, Et. 3, Ap. 21, Jud. Satu Mare, registered at ORC J30/192/2006, fiscal code RO 18429294, Romania.