

OIE–ISO collaboration: ISO/TS 34700, a new ISO standard on animal welfare for the food supply chain, based on the OIE code.

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ISO is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a network of the national standards institutes of 163 countries. ISO develops voluntary, consensus-based, market relevant International Standards. ISO forms a bridge between the public and private sectors, and aims at in particular facilitating the international coordination and unification of industrial standards. ISO is an observer at the WTO Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade (WTO TBT) and the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS).

ISO and OIE signed a cooperation agreement in 2011 that led to the creation of an ISO working group on animal welfare in the food chain, gathering more than 130 experts from all regions of the world, with a large participation of developing countries and a large variety of stakeholders (competent authorities, farmers, industry, NGOs, consumers...).

The first objective of this work is to facilitate the implementation of the animal welfare principles of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code by the private sector. By creating a common vocabulary and a common approach of Animal Welfare management based on the OIE principles, this ISO technical specification will improve the dialogue between suppliers and customers within the food supply chain, especially between primary production and processing operators. This will be a Business to Business tool. The first beneficiaries of this ISO TS will be the business operators of the animal production food chain: organizations representing a group of business operators of the whole or of a part of the food supply chain, including animal farmers, livestock transport companies and slaughterhouses. It will be useful in some developing countries where Animal Welfare regulation is not yet well developed allowing private operators to develop their animal care policy based on OIE THAC principles and requirements.

ISO/TS 34700 "Animal welfare management — General requirements and guidance for organizations in the food supply chain" is about to be published after four years of work. This document will be the first publication of a joint work between ISO and the OIE. For the future, it may be useful for ISO and the OIE to look how the standard is implemented.

Key words: animal welfare - food chain - ISO - ISO/TS 34700 - public-private-partnership - voluntary standards.