

THEMATIC SECTION: 39TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION OF EMBRYO TECHNOLOGY IN EUROPE (AETE)**CONTRIBUTION FOR WORKSHOP I**

Animal welfare in ART's

Pascal Salvetti¹

¹ELIANCE, France
e-mail: pascal.salvetti@eliance.fr

Keywords: Animal welfare, embryo technologies

The welfare of animals is becoming increasingly important in our society, particularly in Europe where, according to the Eurobarometer of March 2016, 94% of people believe that it is important to protect farm animal welfare. Facing this societal evolution, the number of laws and standards regulating and protecting the welfare of animals is increasing around the world: 336 regulations on animal welfare have been noticed by FAO during the last 25 years and 75% of them came from European region. This trend involves a growing demand from policy-makers for expertise and advice on animal welfare in order to create these new regulations in the image of the European Commission who has committed to revise the following pieces of EU animal welfare legislation by 2023, under the EU Farm to Fork Strategy. Logically, we can observe an increasing number of publications on this topic from 442 in 2000 to more than 2500 in 2022. Embryo technologies sector is not spared by this evolution and practitioners and breeding companies must take into account these aspects in their daily activities. Assisted Reproduction Technologies (ART), including embryo technologies, is an efficient way to improve genetics, making it possible to rapidly breed and multiply genetically superior animals. These techniques include medical and technical procedures resulting in efficient and safe reproduction of mammalian species, but these advantages may be challenged by part of the society particularly from the welfare point of view. In that context, this workshop has 3 main objectives. The 1st is to discuss about the perception of animal welfare by people involved in embryo technologies: view on these evolutions, issues encountered, expectations from the workshop or from the AETE, etc... The 2nd is to present the current situation of regulations and current market requirements about animal welfare in Europe and abroad and how these requirements could impact embryo technologies activities. Finally, the 3rd is to highlight some initiatives including some research studies aiming to evaluate impacts of some ARTs on animal welfare. One of these studies will compare these results to other common breeding practices. Moreover, a French survey has been done in reproduction centers (semen and embryo production centers) in 2022 and the main conclusions will be presented. This survey aimed to evaluate animal welfare levels in these specific herds in order to promote good practices through a training guide. Finally, after a short summary of the main conclusions of these exchanges, an interactive discussion with the audience will highlight the main perspectives and future challenges for the sector.