Animal health in Finnish farms
- salmonella-free production and herd health monitoring systems Sikava for pigs and Naseva for cattle

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Animal health in Finnish farms

Long history of disease-free status

- A strategy of eradication of contagious diseases from cattle population long time before EU

- Control programs of Brucellosis, TB, leukosis, IBR, BVD, Salmonella and EHEC

- After joining to EU 1995 the work continues, but reformed in EU context (officially vs. voluntarily):

Farmers and industry agreed to prevent the spreading of contagious diseases to Finnish cattle population

Association **Animal Health ETT** ry was founded 1995

Animal Health ETT – our "secret weapon"!

Animal Health ETT ry https://www.ett.fi/ – our secret weapon:

- **Association to prevent diseases and improve animal welfare** in animal husbandry in Finland
- Members are companies of Finnish food industry (slaughterhouses, dairys, egg companies)
- Farmers, veterinarians and officials are stakeholders
- Guidelines how to **import** live animals and semen safely without importing diseases, strenghtening biosecurity (inner and outer) measures
- **Herd health visits** by veterinarian, voluntary control programs and eradication strategies, health certificates
- **Herd health monitoring systems – the key tools of work!**
- Web-based recording system for farmers and industry: **Naseva for cattle and Sikava for pigs**
- Monitoring diseases, alerts for outbreaks, consultation of eradication procedures
- **"Positive list" of feed manufacterers free from Salmonella**
- Projects, campaigns, research,…

Measures to improve animal health and welfare - widely engaged by Finnish farmers

Finland's salmonella-free status – regulated in national legislation

- **Official control programs for Salmonella's ALL SEROTYPES** in Finnish national legislation

- **Cattle, pigs, poultry** – ensuring that national **production** and **products** are salmonella-free

- Regulary sampled in slaughterhouses and egg farms, also sampled from calves sent for breeding

- If found, the origin of the Salmonella and possible spreading are traced by epidemiological study done by official veterinarian

- the salmonella-positive farm/farms is/are cleaned, eradication plan delivered, biosecurity ensured and increased if needed

- Sampling, laboratory tests and official work paid by state; sanitary measures by insurance

- **ETT works as an essential consulting partner when planning the strategy and doing the sanitary procedure for the farm, ETT maintains the positive list for feed manufacturers published regularily in farmers' journal and ETT's website** https://www.ett.fi/rehu/positiivilista/

Sikava – registration and monitoring system for pig farms

Ref. https://www.sikava.fi/PublicContent/HealthClassification

- Practically all pig farms in Finland involved in system, connected to production contracts with slaughter industry

- **Basic level/Registration level – National level – Special level**

- Demands differ between levels, national level at minimum (legislation), but also extra disease surveillance on the list (f. ex. negative salmonella-status when joining)

- Basic level at minimum herd health plan (herd health veterinarian) of health visits and biosecurity evaluation of the farm

- Possible to use as a registration on database for used veterinary medicines on the farm (can be used also by official controls in special extent)

Sikava – registration and monitoring system for pig farms

▶ Farmer authorizes who is able to get the farm's information (f.ex slaughterhouses, dairies, veterinarians, advisory service etc.)

▶ Database is used for farm's benefits, but also for purposes of industry and advisory service

▶ Also the disease alerts built in system and the element of assessing animal welfare

https://www.sikava.fi/

Animal Health and Welfare on Finnish farms:

- Good animal health is essential part of the animal welfare – free from diseases, injuries and pain

- Animal health best promoted by good management, good feeding, good animal welfare and keeping diseases out of the farm

- Voluntary herd health monitoring systems (Naseva for cattle, Sikava for pigs) largely applied by farmers

- Salmonella control programs ensure the **salmonella-free animal production** (programs in legislation) – **also promoting comprihensive biosecurity on the farms**

- New national Animal Welfare Act approved, enforcing beginning of 2024, changes coming

Finnish farmers: It is very cost-effective to keep the diseases away from farm

Strategy chosen by Finnish farmers: High-quality production

▶ "Clean, safe and sustainable food production"

▶ **Reducing the need of antimicrobials through keeping the animals as healthy as possible**

▶ Biosecurity and disease control –programs decrease diseases

▶ Optimised management and husbandry support animal health

▶ Animal welfare – legislation, official controls, voluntary schemes

▶ Awareness and information, voluntary Heard Health systems

▶ Antibiotics only used for veterinary therapy, not as a preventive tool

▶ **When antimicrobials are needed, prudent-use guidance applied for veterinarians**
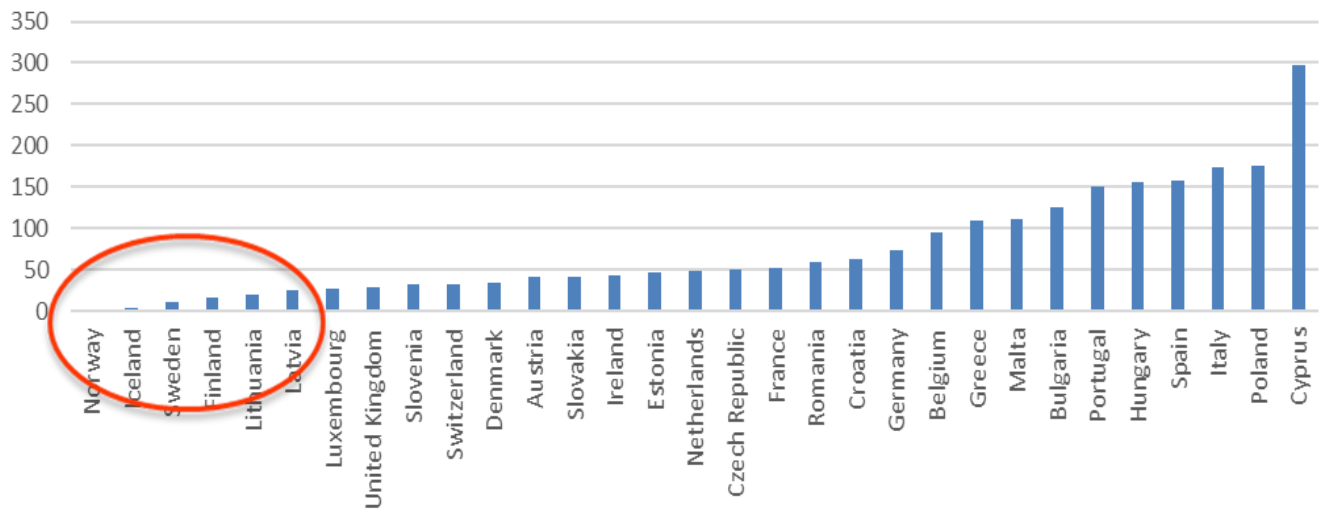
Voluntary measures (Sikava and Naseva) - agreed by all food industry actors

Sales of antimicrobials used farm animals in 31 countries in Europe year 2021

Mikrobilääkkeiden myynti 2021 tuotantoeläinkäyttöön 2021 Euroopan 31 valtiossa (mg/PCU population corrected unit) (ESVAC raportti 2022)

6 Nordic and Baltic countries are the less-antimicrobials-sold countries in Europe 2021

FI:
No antibiotics given for broilers since 2009

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) issues important for Finnish farmers…

- Residues in food, water and environment should be as minimal as possible (responsibility, sustainability, clean production)

- Veterinarian's essential role as a "gatekeeper" (prescripton, professionalism, awareness)

- Monitoring system for used drugs on species level for veterinarians (cost-effective and light as possible)

- New EU legislative frame for **use** of antimicrobials in animal husbandry ready

- Finnish farmers: Preventive use without diagnosis should be restricted

- **Good AMR situation in Finland should be maintain, the measures taken have been proven to be effective: we are going to right direction in our antibiotic policy!**

As little as possible, but as much as necessary...