

The final section of the review presents the activities of the various Working Groups, which research and consider advice for discussion and endorsement by the Council. For example, the review reports that the Working Group on Slaughter has begun a study of the welfare of white meat species at slaughter, to accompany its completed study of red meat species. In addition to slaughterhouse visits, literature reviews and stakeholder meetings, the group has also issued a consultation to seek the views of interested parties. The review reports that the Strategy and Communication Working Group has spent much of the year investigating issues relating to good stockmanship, and will make recommendations to Council at the end of 2004, whilst the Markets and Transport Group produced a report on the Welfare of Animals at Markets and Other Gatherings, and has been monitoring the EC's proposed changes to welfare during transport rules, as well as considering the potential welfare problems associated with the electronic identification of livestock. It is reported that 2003/2004 also saw the establishment of a new Working Group on Welfare Labelling with the remit of investigating the extent of welfare labelling for the consumer, including information about the method of production, transport, marketing and slaughter.

The review concludes by outlining the structure of FAWC and how it works, including contact details for those requiring more information about its activities.

**Farm Animal Welfare Council Annual Review 2003/2004** (June 2004). Produced and published by the Farm Animal Welfare Council, Area 511, 1A Page Street, London, SW1P 4PQ. 14 pp A4 paperback. Available free of charge from the above address. Also available to download at <http://www.fawc.org.uk/pdf/annualreview.pdf>

*K Parkes*

*UFAW*

### **Food and plant imports to the UK: advice to charity workers**

On January 1st 2003 the import legislation relating to meat, milk, fish, shellfish and plants was revised, resulting in an effective ban on imports of these foodstuffs and their products from countries outside the European Union (EU). To raise awareness of this change HM Customs and Excise, together with the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), has produced two leaflets to highlight these new rules, one concerned with meat and products of animal origin, and the other with plant and plant products. They are intended to raise awareness of the strict controls on bringing meat, milk, fish, shellfish, plants, and their products into EU countries, and are aimed particularly at those who have contact with livestock overseas and who could therefore on their return to the UK unintentionally introduce harmful non-indigenous organisms. Whilst not fully comprehensive, the leaflets do provide an easily accessible summary of the new rules. Those requiring more detailed advice are directed to a number of helplines and websites where further information is available.

The leaflets cite the 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak in the UK as an example of how costly animal and plant diseases can be to rural communities, businesses and the economy. However, no mention is made regarding the negative impact that such disease outbreaks can have on animal welfare. This would have been a useful addition to these otherwise useful and informative guides.

**If in doubt, leave it out!** HM Customs and Excise (May 2004). Two 8-page fold out leaflets, one concerned with meat and animal products, and the other with plants or plant products. Produced and published by HM Customs and Excise. Details of the import allowances and restrictions can be found at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/illegal/allow/allowances.htm>

*K Parkes*

*UFAW*