

UK events

A reply to the UK Shechita Board press release by Mara Miele (Coordinator of the DIALREL project)

Friday 8th January 2010

Dear Editors,

I read with interest the Shechita Board UK press release regarding the EU funded Dialrel project and I have some comments on this. As coordinator of the EU Dialrel project I want to reassure the Shechita UK Board and the readers of the journal that the team of academics working in the project have not any hidden anti-Semitic agenda as inferred in the press release. I want to stress that our concern is the welfare of animals at time of death and our commitment is to open a dialogue for improving all slaughter methods in Europe and to learn from the best available practices. These aims of the projects are clearly stated in official website

www.dialrel.eu

Regarding the press release I have only two points to make. The first one is about the practice of inversion and the second is about the concept of stunning. I agree that the short presentation of the survey of slaughterplants in Europe presented in the factsheet posted on the IRTA website might be misleading if generalised, and I am sorry if they offended the Shechita UK Board, however the results cited at that stage of the project were gathered on the base of available data at that time, this does not mean that they are representative for all countries in Europe, and this is as well stated in the factsheet. The perception of a misrepresentation seems to arise from the difference between European and UK practices. In the UK the practice is different and inversion is not legal. New results from the slaughterplants survey are now available and they will be presented at a meeting organised with DG Sanco next February 9th in Brussels as well as at the final Dialrel workshop the 15-16th of March in Istanbul.

On stunning I have to disagree with the representatives of the Shechita UK Board. What is stunning and how it should be performed (i.e. those methods that effectively make the animals unconscious before the cut of the throat, so that they do not experience pain at time of death) is defined in the EU regulation and in the factsheet posted on the IRTA website the reference is to

those stunning methods. In the press release it is argued that the Shechita method is the best stunning methods, but this not consistent with the EU regulation.

Best Wishes

Mara Miele

Coordinator of the Dialrel project

This letter has been sent to Mrs Chloe Markowicz following the article : "Kosher Slaughter Under Fire From EU" published in the website totallyjewish.com on Thursday 7th January 2010.

<http://www.totallyjewish.com/news/national/c-13161/kosher-slaughter-under-fire-from-eu/>

- Defra (the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs), a Government Department in the UK is consulting on the proposed introduction of an EU regulation to protect the welfare of animals at the time of slaughter or killing

. This will replace Directive 93/119 and associated national implementing legislation.

This consultation asks for views on the impact the proposal will have on the welfare of animals. Views are also sought on the costs and benefits to Food Business Operators, farmers and others involved in slaughtering and killing animals.

[Summary of responses](#) (MAY 2009, PDF 200 KB)

More information at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/slaughter/>