

Brussels, 11 October 2007

New Publication Urges Retailers to Improve Animal Welfare as CIES Conference Starts in Prague

As top retailers meet in Prague today for the CIES (International Committee of Food Retail Chains) conference, Eurogroup for Animals has launched a major new publication to help retailers understand more about animal welfare and urge them to adopt more animal-friendly policies.

The new guide – called Responsible Retailing, Putting Animal Welfare at the Heart of Your Food Products Supply Chain – will be distributed at the conference in a bid to show retailers that animal welfare can and should be improved as part of sustainability development in the supply chain.

Consumer research carried out by the European Commission in March this year showed that an overwhelming 62% of EU citizens would be willing to change the place where they usually shop in order to buy goods produced in line with higher welfare standards. Yet many top retailers continue to sell eggs produced by hens in battery cages and meat produced from animals kept in poor welfare systems.

Director of Eurogroup for Animals, Sonja Van Tichelen, says: *“We want to help retailers make positive changes for animal welfare and our new guide clearly sets out what constitutes good welfare standards and explains how many retailers are already looking at this issue in the context of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility.”*

“Research clearly shows that European shoppers want to buy more animal-friendly products so it's time the big retailers made changes that will satisfy their customers and improve the lives of millions of farm animals,” adds Sonja.

Although the keeping of laying hens in battery cages will be banned in the EU from 2012, some retailers have decided to respond to consumer concerns about laying hens by not selling eggs from caged hens in their stores and Eurogroup for Animals is urging other retailers to follow suit.

Moves to improve food animal welfare are supported by European Commissioner for Health, Markos Kyprianou, who stated: *“From the last Eurobarometer results it is evident that the majority of Europeans are willing to make a concerted effort to buy animal welfare-friendly products. This is evidence of the competitive edge that animal-welfare friendly products can have for the food sector. And this is an opportunity that the EU food producers, from farm to retail, must seize.”*

For more information about Eurogroup for Animals and to download a copy of the “Responsible Retailers: Putting Animal Welfare at the Heart of Your Food Products Supply Chain” visit:

www.eurogroupforanimals.org/consumers/pdf/responsibleretailingoct07.pdf

For further information call Sonja Van Tichelen on +32 (0)2 740 08 20 or +32 (0)477 246 077.

Note to Editors

1. Eurogroup for Animals is a Europe-wide campaigning organisation established in 1980 whose members include Dierenbescherming in the Netherlands, Deutscher Tierschutzbund eV in Germany, Fondation Brigitte Bardot in France, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in the UK and Asociación Nacional para la Defensa de los Animales in Spain. It represents its member organisations at a European level, provides advice and expertise on animal welfare to European institutions and campaigns for animal welfare to be taken into account in all areas of European policy and legislation.
2. Commissioner Kyprianou's statement was taken from his speech at the Animal Welfare Labelling conference organised by the German EU Presidency on 28 March 2007.
3. Eurobarometer is a survey of the opinions of European citizens carried out by the European Commission. The most recent results were published in March 2007.
4. See www.ciesnet.com for more information on the conference.