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Annual Abstract template:

Project title and acronym:	ANIPLAN; Minimising medicine use in organic dairy herds through animal health and welfare planning
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Period Covered:	1 st January 2009-31 st December 2009

Popular description of project progress and summary of results (1-2 pages).

Project progress and events

During 2009, the ANIPLAN project had the most intense data collection period and intense work for planning and starting the data analysis. The implementation of the animal health and welfare plan continued in farmer groups and individual farm meetings in various ways in the different countries throughout the year. Data collection will take place until late spring 2010. The project communication primarily takes place through email, website and Newsletters to project partners. The project core group (active researchers in the project) consists of approx. 20 persons. The project group suffered a major loss with the death of Vonne Lund in June 2009. Besides, more of the participants left the group (maternity leave or job change).

A 4th project meeting and workshop took place in Austria in May 2009, and this was allocated to work and planning of the data analyses and writing of articles. The different participating countries have different amount of resources, and clearly this makes the data collection and focus of the countries very different. The final project workshop, where a number of stakeholders will be invited, and the meetings are open for a limited amount of participants, will take place from 27th September-1st October 2010. This motivates an attempt to extend the project period until the 1st November 2010, because the proceedings will contain results from the entire project period and need to be finalised.

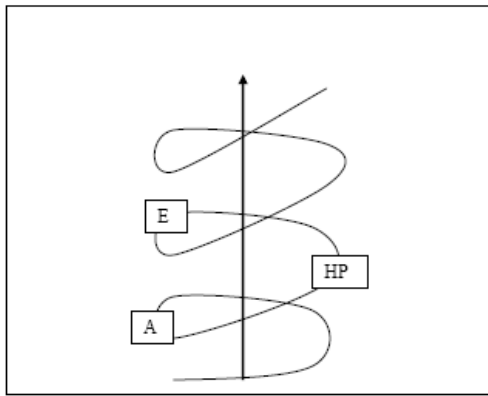
A common set of proceeding from the ANIPLAN workshop in Norway, April 2008, and the workshop in Ghent, September 2008, was published and distributed, as well as being uploaded on the website. The proceedings from the Calf Welfare workshop held in Fokhol, Norway, 30th March - 1st April 2008 were published as electronic version.

An effort to map and describe the health advisory systems, farmer group structures and approaches to advice organic farmers was initiated in all countries. Interviews (individual and focus group) and participation in farmer meetings were carried through in the Netherlands (July 2009), Austria (November 2009) and UK (December 2010). This activity was not planned but it was estimated that it could contribute to the results of the project, because a structured animal health and welfare planning process is not possible in all countries for financial reasons. Therefore, we draw on existing experience with different farmer group approaches and advisory service models.

Summary of results

Development of common principles in the ANIPLAN project

The goal of the project is to develop a model for animal health and welfare planning which can be implemented in all different types of farming environments, e.g. large scale dairy farming as well as alpine, smallholder and diverse farming systems. By developing a method of analysing the context of the farming environment, and include this in the process of animal health and welfare planning, we hope and expect that other research groups and countries outside the partnership in this project also can benefit from research results. The process of planning includes knowledge about the status within a given herd as background for taking decisions and planning future improvements as well as evaluating already implemented improvements. The respectful communication between the owner of the herd and other farmers as well as animal health and welfare professionals (veterinarians and advisors) is paramount, so that a balance between farmer needs, animal needs and the wider societal perception of health and welfare is achieved, whilst also satisfying the multiple objectives of organic farming. Based on these considerations, we developed the key principles described below, both in terms of describing animal health and welfare planning as a continuous process (Figure 1) based on 8 key principles (Figure 2) in the ANIPLAN project. The dialogue with the farmer, where the planning is taking place, is based on assessment (developed in WP3) and planning (means of communication; developed in WP4) and evaluation. Common principles for animal health and welfare planning were developed at an early stage of the project and is continuously being challenged and tested under different conditions. These principles are described in the following two boxes:



- A health planning process should aim at continuous development and improvement, and should incorporate health promotion and disease handling, based on a strategy including
 - current status + risks (animal based + resource based parameters)
 - evaluation
 - action
 - review
- Farm specific
- Farmer ownership
- External person(s) should be involved
- External knowledge
- Organic principles framework (systems approach)
- Written
- Acknowledge good aspects

These principles are partly based on learning processes from previous models in different countries, in particular in UK. One key point that became strongly apparent based on experiences from UK is that there is a big difference between the on-farm presence of an animal health and welfare plan versus animal health and welfare planning. This emphasised the approach in this project with focus on the animal health and welfare planning process. In this project, we work with very different farming conditions, emphasising the need for identifying relevant and different processes. We aim at developing concepts which refer to the organic principles and ideas and at the same time possible to adjust to national conditions.

Animal welfare assessment as a part of animal health planning (WP3)

The three elements of the project (communication, creating a background for decision making in terms of an animal health and welfare assessment, and being conscious about all stages of the animal health and welfare assessment process) all form important elements of the planning of improvements on herd level. A plan necessarily has to be based on knowledge of the animal health and welfare status on the farm, and therefore tools for assessing animal health and welfare on-farm are considered to important and need to be well developed and trained among the persons assessing welfare. Welfare assessment has been used to evaluate AHW in organic dairy herds in the UK, Austria, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, Norway and Denmark, *e.g.*, in research projects or certification. In the project we have used the assessments developed in the project 'Welfare Quality' where animal based parameters are emphasised, besides management information, assessment of the housing system, and assessments on flock level (social behaviour and interactions). These assessments should also be used at the stages of the project where it should be evaluated whether the planned and implemented improvements on the farm work in the way they were expected, and in order to ensure continuous improvements.

Welfare assessment should include calves and young stock, and form an integrated part of the planning process as explained above. An approach to address the calf health and welfare has been developed by the Norwegian partners, and used in practice in Norway and in Switzerland. The development process of the calf welfare assessments and planning of calf health and welfare has taken place parallel to the Welfare Quality assessments in the cow herds, and the calves have therefore not been included in the entire process in all countries.

Data analyses planned and initiated

Data and knowledge about the health and welfare status, the animal health and welfare planning initiatives in each herd and the advisory processes have been collected and entered into data bases. A number of publications is planned and on different stages of development. A joint effort in the process of data analyses is planned as an exchange visit of the Austrian Ph.D.student to the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences at Aarhus University in Denmark in the first 3 months of 2010. The visits to collect qualitative data about farmer groups and advisory processes for organic dairy farms in Norway, Germany and Switzerland will be carried through during the summer 2010, and the results will be presented and discussed at the last ANIPLAN workshop in late September 2010 and written into scientific journal papers afterwards. The intense effort for carrying through data analyses until late summer 2010 motivates an application for extending the project period for all countries until 31st October 2010.

References and links to papers/reports which have been published in the period:

ANIPLAN reports and farmer magazine contributions

Lund, V. & Mejdell, C. M. 2009. Calf welfare in organic herds – planning for the future. Proceedings from and ANIPLAN workshop 30.03.- 01.04.2008. Veterinærinstituttet, report no. 14, 2009, Oslo, Norway. Including the following publications:

- De Passillé, Anne Marie: What is a happy organic calf? An ethologist's view, (8-14)
- Vaarst, Mette: What is a happy organic calf? An organic veterinarian's view, (15-16)
- Wagenaar Jan-Paul: Happy Dutch organic calves: Suckling systems in organic dairying in the Netherlands (17-22)
- Winckler, Christoph: Welfare assessment of dairy calves in the Welfare Quality project (23-26)
- Henriksen, Britt: Experiences from Nordic projects dealing with calf welfare assessment (27-30)
- Langford, Fritha M.: Calf Husbandry and Welfare on British Organic and Non-organic Dairy Farms (31-35)
- Mejdell, Cecilie: Veterinary views on calf welfare in organic milk production in Norway – preliminary results from a survey (36-40)
- Nicholas, Philippa: Animal health and welfare planning principles and experiences from the United Kingdom (41-44)
- Vaarst, Mette: Calf health and welfare planning: how to use the concept developed in the project 'Minimising medicine use through animal health and welfare planning in organic dairy herds' (ANIPLAN) (45-47)
- Ruud, Lars Erik: What do Norwegian organic dairy farmers need and wish for in regard to dairy calf welfare, and what is possible to accomplish (48-50)
- Nyhus, Sissel: What do Norwegian organic dairy farmers need and wish for, and what is possible to accomplish? The Norwegian organic movement's view (51-52)
- Presentation of three farms: Alm Østre, Fokhol and Nøttestad farms (53)
- Lund, Vonne: Workshop report: The outcome and group discussion summarized (54-55)

Vaarst, M. & Roderick, S. 2009. The process of researching animal health and welfare planning. Workshop report from the ANIPLAN meeting in Norway in April 2008.

- March, S., Gratzner, L., Brinkmann, J. & Winckler, C. Results of the CoreOrganic Workshop on animal based parameters in Trenthorst, Germany (04.02.08-08.02.08),
- Whistance, L. Eliminative behaviour of dairy cows,
- Roderick, S. & Waarst, M. The ANIPLAN project: Reflections on the research approaches, methods and challenges,
- Smolders, G. Improving animal welfare by assessing college's farms,
- Vaarst, M. Learning and empowerment in farmer groups as one way of creating a healthy process of animal health and welfare planning,
- Vaarst, M. & Roderick, S. Implementation of farmer groups for animal health and welfare planning considering different contexts.

<p>References and links to papers/reports which have been published in the period:</p>	<p><i>Conference presentations and farmer meetings</i></p> <p>Smolders, G. 2009 (proceedings paper from ASG farmer meeting 30.10.2008 made public) Droogzetstrategieën in kaart gebracht. Http://www.biokennis.nl</p> <p>Vaarst, M. 12th February 2009: Danske Fjøs-skoler – er det en rådgivningsmetodikk vi kan bruke i Norge? Talk at 'Husdyrforsøksmøtet', Oslo, Norge. [Danish Stable Schools – is that a way of advisory service which we can use in Norway?' In Danish, at The Annual Animal Research Meeting]</p> <p>Henriksen B, Lund V, Hansen B, Mejdell C. Velferdsregistreringer som ledd i velferdsplanlegging hos økokalv. Husdyrforsøksmøtet, Lillestrøm, Norge, februar 2009, proceedings s. 495-498 ISBN: 978-82-7479-020-9</p> <p>Vaarst, M. Phasing out antibiotics in organic dairy herds using farmer group approaches. Teaching at master course at Scottish Agricultural College, 2 hrs., 1st May 2009.</p> <p>Gratzer, E., F. Bernardi, J. Brinkmann, M. Kirchner, C. Leeb, S. March, C. Winckler, M. Vaarst, 5th-6th March 2009. Animal welfare assessment protocols as part of herd health and welfare planning tools. Oral presentation at 'Knowing Animals Conference'</p> <p>Smolders, G. 14.05.2009. Koeien gaan sneller liggen in pot- en heuvelstal. ASG farmer meeting. Http://www.biokennis.nl</p> <p>Smolders, G. 17th July 2009. Europese verschillen in melkveehouderij. ASG farmer meeting. Http://www.biokennis.nl</p> <p>Hansen, B., B.I.F. Henriksen, V. Lund 2009. Welfare assessment as part of welfare planning in organic calf production. Poster ved NJF seminar 422 i Estland, Tartu 25. – 27. August 2009. NJF Report 5(2):60</p> <p>Berit Hansen Calf welfare and health planning. Poster presentation at conference in Tartu, Estonia: Fostering healthy food systems through organic agriculture – Focus on Nordic-Baltic region, international scientific conference, August 25-27, 2009.</p> <p>Brinkmann, J., S. March, C. Winckler 25th-26th Sep. 2009. Avoidance distance of dairy cattle on pasture is related to measures at the feed bunk. ISAE regional meeting, Vienna/ Austria (oral presentation)</p> <p>Gratzer, E., J. Brinkmann, S. March, J. Huber, C. Winckler, 25th-26th Sep. 2009. Qualitative behaviour assessment in organic dairy herds before and after animal health and welfare planning. ISAE regional meeting, Vienna/ Austria (oral presentation)</p>
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<p>References and links to papers/reports which have been published in the period:</p>	<p>Vaarst, M. & Leeb, C. Workshop in Bio-Austria 10th November 2009: 'The Danish Stable School concept and the facilitation of farmer groups'.</p> <p>Vaarst M. Presentation and group facilitation at workshop for organic advisors held by IOTA: 'Being a facilitator' 9th December 2009.</p> <p>Vaarst, M. Co-organiser of a one-day workshop with participation of 70 farmers, processors and advisors 15th December 2009: 'Lavt forbrug af antibiotika i økologiske malkekvægbesætninger. Muligheder, konsekvenser og forudsætninger' ['Low use of antibiotics in organic dairy herds: Possibilities, consequences and pre-conditions'. In Danish]. Includes among others the two contributions: Whistance, L. 'Provide the cows with a good framework' (Proceedings, 24-27; in Danish), and: Vaarst, M. 'What do we need to ascertain good animal health and welfare in a phasing out strategy' (Proceedings, 16-23; in Danish).</p> <p><i>Agriculture magazine contributions</i></p> <p>Brinkmann, J., S. March, C. Winckler, November 2009. Voneinander Lernen – Die Stable School. Farmers Magazine ,Bioland'.</p> <p>Henriksen B.I.F. 2009. Slik vil kalven ha det, Del 2. Buskap 4:50-52</p>
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