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The Old School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead,
Hertfordshire AL4 8AN, UK

Animal Welfare 2011, 20: 69-78
ISSN 0962-7286

The performance of farm animal assessment

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Abstract

This paper argues that the current drive towards greater use of animal-based measures for welfare assessment raises important issues for how farm visits by welfare assessors are performed. As social scientists, we employ a number of contemporary social science ideas to offer a new approach to examining the practice and performance of farm animal assessment. We identify key findings from a recent study of contemporary farm assessment and speculate upon what some of the challenges of introducing animal-based measures may be. We conclude by arguing for a greater awareness of how sets of knowledge are made, circulated, practiced and become an integral component of the procedures, practices and discourses around farm animal welfare assessment in farm assurance.

Keywords: *animal-based measures, animal welfare, assessment, assurance schemes, farm inspections, practice*