

Assessment of Poultry Farm Management Practices on Welfare Perspectives

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Abstract

Animal welfare is ensuring the well-being of animals, humane treatments, proper care and state of the animal (physical and mental health). This assessment was the well-being of a laying hen flock under an intensive farm in Kundasale, Mid country of Sri Lanka. The five freedom elements and Welfare indicators (Behaviors, Environmental conditions and Farm production) were used to assess the overall welfare of the farm. Values of welfare measures (feeding, drinking, resting, walking, dust bathing, foraging, excretion and flapping) and the Five Freedom Assessment F1: Freedom from hunger, thirst and malnutrition, F2: Freedom from Discomfort, F3: Freedom from pain, diseases and injuries, F4: Freedom to display most normal pattern of behavior, and F5: Freedom from fear and distress, obtained through observations. Data revealed significant differences in variables related to welfare categories such as Five Freedom Assessment, Behavior (feeding, drinking, resting, walking, dust bathing, foraging, excretion and flapping) significant differences were observed for the variables related to welfare indicators. The results demonstrated that in Kundasale, the farm category as a “Normal farm”, because this overall welfare score was 44.73%, (40%-60% range was the Normal farm category). The intensive broiler breeder farm is moderate to satisfy the conditions of animal welfare. The results of this assessment contributed to enhancing flock welfare standards and improvements in the poultry farming practices of this farm.

Keywords: Behaviors, Farm production, Five Freedom Assessment, Welfare status