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To Phil Hogan  
Commissioner of Agriculture and Rural  
development  
European Commission  
DG Agriculture and Rural Development  
130, Rue de la Loi  
B – 1049 Brussels  
Belgium

Bournezeau, 11 August 2017

Dear Sir,

The Dutch eggs scandal is a criminal case, whereby Fipronil, which is illegal for use on chicken farms, was secretly added to a cleaning product called DEGA 16 which was then sold as a miracle cure for red mite. It is being dealt with, and has to be, as a crime, separate from the question of animal rights. Notwithstanding this, the scandal is yet another instance of farming practices laying themselves open to epidemics of disease and pest infestation by the very nature of the overcrowding and stress caused by present day farming methods. It is further proof that good farming practices should go hand in hand with animal rights. Bad practices lead to violation of animal rights and well-being and that in turn leads to outbreaks of disease in circumstances where it is well-nigh impossible to contain the outbreak.

The whole vision of the farming industry has to be revised to recognise that human health and safety cannot be separated from concerns about animal rights and welfare.

In this particular case of laying hens, the question needs to be addressed as to how red mite infestations, which are a welfare problem for the hens, can be dealt with? There are over 300 million laying hens in the EU. A study by the University of Wagening, Netherlands, suggests that more than 80% of chicken farms have an infestation of red mite. It is therefore a major problem of animal health and welfare for which a solution must be found that is effective for the hens and not detrimental to human health.

It is a problem that has existed for a long time. Might this be likened to "orphan" illnesses, for which no research is done because no commercial interest is seen in it? This story about contaminated eggs must prove that there would certainly be a commercial profit to be made in finding the right remedy...

Yours faithfully,

Marit de Haan

President of Nos Amis Les Animaux 85480