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## ***Finnish cattle and pig farmers' perceptions of animal welfare inspections***

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### **Abstract**

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*The aim of this study was to broaden the understanding of Finnish cattle and pig farmers' perceptions of the on-site animal welfare inspections carried out by official authorities in livestock farms. The study was conducted using an electronic questionnaire, aimed at 500 Finnish cattle and 500 pig farmers. Responses were received from 96 cattle farmers and 105 pig farmers, of which 20 and 55, respectively, had undergone an animal welfare inspection. It was found that most of the farmers recognised the need for animal welfare inspections, but also that a more negative attitude was prevalent among farmers who had undergone these inspections. The inspection itself was a far more negative experience if the farmer had not understood the reason for the inspection, no opportunity existed to be heard, or the findings of the report were found to be unclear. The results suggest that although the farmers generally approve of inspections, their own negative experiences affect their perceptions. Moving forward, efforts should be made by inspectors to enhance the level of communication, thereby ensuring the findings of the report are clear to the farmer.*

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**Keywords:** *animal welfare, cattle, farmers' perceptions, livestock farmer, on-farm inspections, pigs*