Linking animal welfare research with 'AssureWel'

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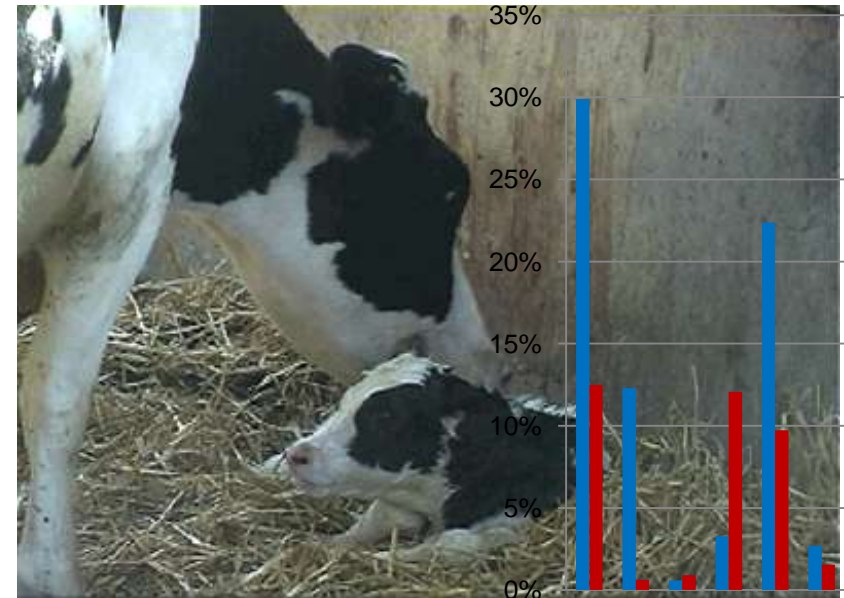
🔥 Is the measure relevant to animal welfare?

Example: Feather cover

- Poor feather cover = risk factor for skin injuries and increases metabolic stress (Deschutter and Leeson, 1986; Tauson and Svensson, 1980)

- Feather loss over back/ rump is usually due to feather pecking (pulling) (Bilcik and Keeling 1999)

- Pain associated with pulling out feathers established 20 yrs ago (Gentle and Hunter 1990)

➡ AssureWel measure

🔥 Can assessors be consistent?

Example: cattle lameness

↑consistency:

- Detecting severe lameness (Winckler and Willen 2001)

- Fewer categories in the scale (Channon et al 2009)

- More experience in observing lameness (March et al. 2007)

- Live assessments included in training (WQ report 2006)

➡️ AssureWel training and standardisation

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🔥 How many animals should we look at?

- Study at U of Bristol (Mullan et al. 2009)
- Every pig on 6 farms assessed (7535 pigs)

- Computer modelling

  - Random sampling of pens of pigs

    - Calculation of accuracy of sample

AssureWel sampling protocol

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