



World Organisation
for Animal Health



กรมปศุสัตว์
กระทรวงเกษตรและสหกรณ์
DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT

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Asking pigs questions: Shifting from resource based to animal-based measures of animal welfare (WOAH Chapter 7.13)

**Regional Animal Welfare Training Conference
25 - 26 February 2026 Vang Vieng, Lao PDR**



Presentation Theme

The concept of animal welfare is continuously evolving, driven by advancements in biological science and shifting societal values. Welfare assessments must transition toward outcome-based criteria, with a primary focus on animal-based measurables that reflect the actual state of the individual. Furthermore, the standards must synergize animal well-being with yield optimization and meat quality, while aligning with sustainable development goals to ensure a holistic balance between ethical integrity, resource efficiency, and global food security.



Why do we need to assess animal welfare?

We assess animal welfare because...

"what gets measured, gets managed."

It allows us to move from subjective "feelings" about animals to a data-driven approach that benefits the animal's quality of life, the producer's profit, and the consumer's conscience.



Why do we need to assess animal welfare?

We have *the standard* about "Good farmer", "Good environment",
"Good products"

"Good animal welfare?"





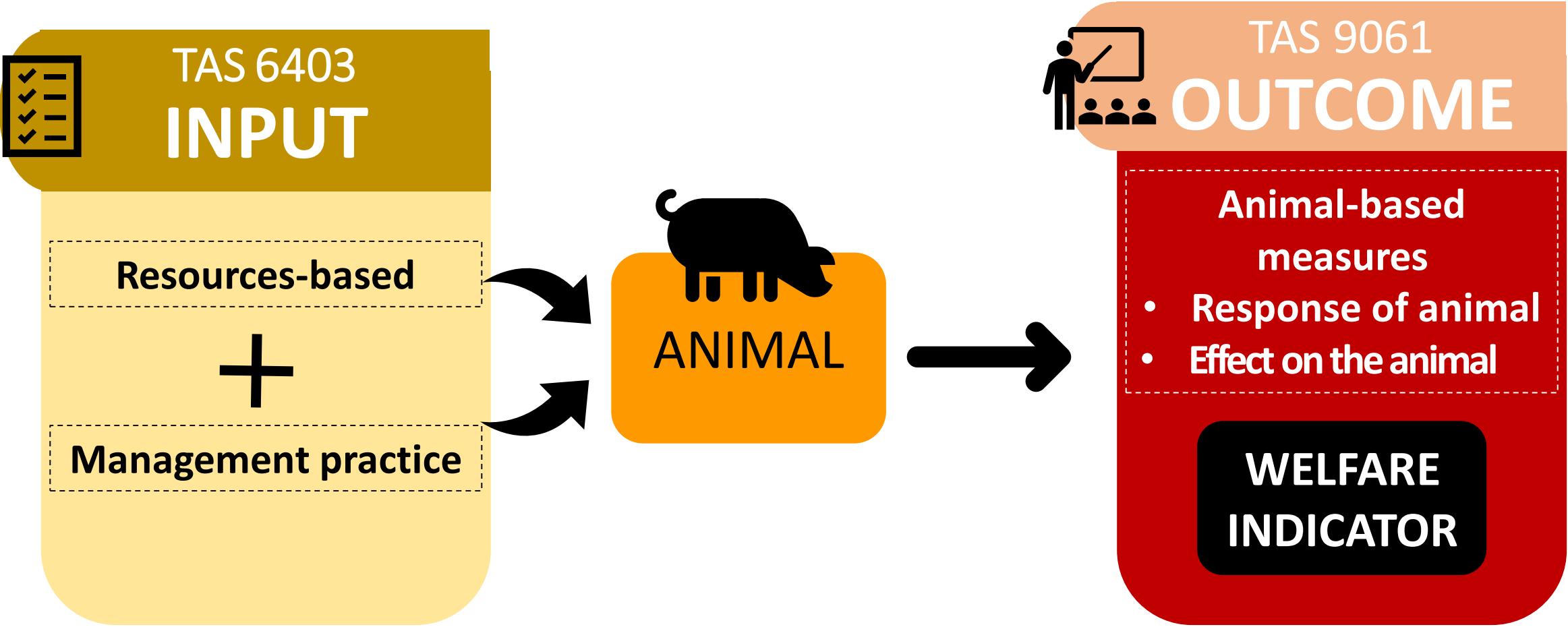
Brief Introduction “Short bite issue”

TAS 6403:2022 and TAS 9061:2022 work together to strengthen pig production standards in Thailand. TAS 6403 establishes Good Agricultural Practices at the farm level, while TAS 9061 ensures animal welfare outcomes are achieved. Together, they create a practical and measurable framework for responsible, sustainable pig farming.

GAP practices under TAS 6403 enable and support compliance with animal welfare outcomes in TAS 9061 Welfare indicators strengthen and validate the effectiveness of GAP implementation



Brief Introduction “Short bite issue”



Animal-based criteria = more direct assessment of welfare



Importance of the issue to the welfare of pigs

- Ensures pigs' physical health, comfort, and normal behavior are addressed alongside farm productivity
- Translates farm management practices (TAS 6403) into measurable welfare outcomes (TAS 9061)
- Reduces stress, injury, disease, and mortality through proper housing, handling, and care
- Promotes consistent welfare standards across farms, not dependent on individual practices
- Supports humane, ethical, and sustainable pig production aligned with national and international expectations



Evidence-based recommendations

- Uses **measurable welfare indicators** (health status, behavior, injuries, mortality) to guide decisions.
- Bases farm improvements on **observed outcomes**, not assumptions or tradition.
- Enables early detection of **welfare risks** such as stress, poor housing, or inadequate care.
- Supports **continuous improvement** through monitoring, evaluation, and corrective action.
- Aligns pig welfare practices with **scientific principles and international standards**.



Overview of the completed trainings

The training program was divided into 2 main parts:

- 1) **Auditor training** focused on understanding the requirements of TAS standards, audit techniques, interpretation of welfare indicators, and ensuring consistency and objectivity in assessments. Auditors were trained through structured sessions, case studies, and practical examples to promote good auditing practices. In parallel, a policy to **increase the number of qualified auditors** was implemented to ensure sufficient auditing capacity to cover the growing number of pig farms.
- 2) **Farmer training** focused on practical implementation of GAP and animal welfare principles at farm level, including housing, handling, health management, and record keeping. Training emphasized participatory learning, clear guidance, and practical demonstrations aligned with good training practices.



Overview of the completed trainings

The training program was divided into 2 main parts: **Auditor training**



On **November 20, 2025**, we conducted auditor training in alignment with our policy to increase the number of competent auditors nationwide.



- ✓ Accelerate the expansion of the number of qualified auditors to support farms entering the mandatory system.
- ✓ Emphasize in-depth interpretation skills of animal welfare indicators to reduce inconsistencies in assessments.



Overview of the completed trainings

The training program was divided into 2 main parts: **Farmer training**



The use of real farm examples and animal welfare indicators helps trainees gain a clear understanding of practical implementation.

Challenges: The time allocated for hands-on practice is still insufficient.

Focus on-site learning to address immediate issues related to housing facilities and animal health.

Challenges: Variation in farm conditions – diverse housing systems and animal health situations may make standardized training difficult.





Reflection on the trainings

The main challenges were different experience levels among participants and limited time for hands-on practice.

Next time, the training would include more practical, level-specific sessions. The separate training for auditors and farmers, using real farm examples and welfare indicators, worked particularly well.



Plans on future trainings

FOR Auditor:

Future trainings will focus on expanding the number of qualified auditors, advanced interpretation of welfare indicators, and more practical, on-farm sessions for them.

Training will be delivered in tiered modules to match experience levels and support consistent implementation and continuous improvement across farms.

Simple Tools - Develop user-friendly data recording tools and checklists.

Expansion - increase the number of qualified auditors

Advanced Interpretation - skills of animal welfare indicators



Plans on future trainings

FOR Farmer: We will emphasize the shift from "classroom theory" to "practical implementation at on-site"

Future trainings for farmers will focus on practical implementation of *GAP* and the standards, on-farm problem solving, and improved daily management practices. In parallel, training will actively support farmers to meet standard requirements, with the long-term goal of upgrading pig farms nationwide to *GAP*-compliant farms through step-by-step capacity building and continuous improvement.

Prepare - small-scale farms for *GAP* farms

Walk-through Audit - Farmers use a simple checklist to self-assess before inspection.

Continuous Improvement – focus how good animal welfare reduces medication costs and increases weight gain to drive financial incentives.



Summary

- **Animal-based criteria reflect an animal's actual welfare state more accurately than resource-based criteria.**
- **While combining these measures with resource- and management-based measures likely improves the accuracy of the welfare assessment, reliability and validity may remain a concern.**
- **Needs to be valid, reliable and feasible; especially as animal-based criteria are often collected on-site by the “first-line” (e.g. farmers, vets, auditors)**



Summary

- **The combined implementation of GAP and animal welfare standards, supported by targeted training for auditors and farmers, strengthens consistency, compliance, and measurable welfare outcomes. Continuous capacity building and progressive farmer engagement will support the long-term goal of nationwide GAP-compliant and welfare-oriented pig production.**



References

- Broom DM, 1986. Indicators of poor welfare. *The British Veterinary Journal*, 142, 524–526.
- EFSA (European Food Safety Authority), 2012. Statement on the use of animal-based measures to assess the welfare of animals. *The EFSA Journal*, volume 10, issue 6, 2767.



Thank you

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