



Transatlantic Animal Welfare Council

20 April 2012

TAWC Contribution to the Public Consultation on EU-US High Level Working Group on Jobs and Growth

1. The Transatlantic Animal Welfare Council (TAWC) was created in 2010 by leading organisations from the U.S. and EU dedicated to animal welfare. This platform was established with the objectives of strengthening the cooperation between Animal Welfare organisations, and achieving higher standards of animal welfare in Europe and the U.S.. The TAWC monitors transatlantic trade relations and reacts to the activities of the EU-US Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC).
2. The TAWC has taken note of the initiative of the EU and U.S. to investigate how increased EU/U.S. trade can stimulate growth and competitiveness. As NGOs representing millions of citizens in Europe and the US, we welcome the opportunity to contribute to the consultation and provide input to the Working Group. The TAWC offers sound and unique expertise on welfare issues related wildlife, farm animals, companion animals, and animals used in research and trade.
3. There are different ways in which animals are affected by trade; from welfare standards and regulations in farm production, risk management processes including animal testing, wildlife trade, to administrative simplification.
4. The TAWC believes that the pursuit of “*the reduction, elimination, or prevention of barriers to trade in goods, services and investment*” should not be to the detriment of societal values such as animal protection or undermine existing and future standards.
5. Trade policy and animal welfare can be mutually beneficial. Trade policy can be used to promote green growth, and environmental and animal protection, and improving animal welfare can increase market access, stimulate quality and innovation, and positively impact food safety and animal health.
6. The TAWC urges the Working Group when investigating different policy measures to consider the fact that animals are not considered as mere goods but as sentient beings which need specific attention and respect.
7. In relation to Third Countries and global trade rules, the EU and U.S. should support each other in the defence of domestic measures which protect animals such as the EU Seal product ban and the Tuna-Dolphin labelling measure, which are currently being challenged at the WTO.
8. The TAWC wishes to be actively involved not only at this early stage but throughout the whole process and urges the Working Group to consult widely with civil society groups both in the EU and U.S. and to provide for a transparent process with appropriate and timely communication to all stakeholders.