

## EC Increases Pressure to Enforce Group Housing of Sows

22 February 2013

**EU - The European Commission, via a letter of formal notice, called on Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Poland and Portugal to take action to address deficiencies in the implementation of EU legislation concerning the welfare of animals, and specifically to implement Directive 2008/120/EC which requires that sows are kept in groups during part of their pregnancy.**

The political decision to switch from individual sow stalls to group housing was taken in 2001. Member States have had twelve years to ensure a smooth transition to the new system and to implement the Directive. However, so far, and despite repeated calls by the Commission, the above mentioned Member States have failed to adequately comply with EU law.

In order to improve their welfare, Directive 2008/120/EC requires that, as from 1 January 2013, pregnant sows are kept in groups instead of individual stalls during part of their pregnancy.

Member States who do not fulfil their legal obligations in this area undermine animal welfare and cause market distortions to the detriment of businesses that have invested for complying with this requirement.

Following the step taken today by the Commission, the concerned Member States have two months to respond to the letter of formal notice. If they fail to react in a satisfactory manner, the Commission will send a "Reasoned Opinion" requesting that they take the necessary measures to comply with the Directive within two months.

For more information on the Animal Welfare – sow stalls, please [click here](#).

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- See more at: <http://www.thepigsite.com/swinenews/32390/ec-increases-pressure-to-enforce-group-housing-of-sows#sthash.ZWj3N8oT.dpuf>