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Answer given by Ms Kyriakides
on behalf of the European Commission
(24.2.2020)

As mentioned by the Honourable Member, animal welfare indicators have been developed in the context of research programmes. The Commission is aware that labelling schemes including animal welfare exist through private or public initiatives in some Member States¹. The Commission has no information on the extent to which the outcomes of research programmes on animal welfare indicators have been used in certification schemes.

In the context of the European Green Deal², the Commission will present a Farm to Fork Strategy in spring 2020, which will also look at animal welfare. In this framework, the Commission will consider which measures could be envisaged in the future (including with regard to information to consumers), taking also into account the conclusions on animal welfare adopted by the Council in December 2019³ which invite the Commission to “assess the need for and impact of an EU regulatory framework with criteria for animal welfare labelling schemes taking into account national experience”.

This issue will be also considered in the framework of the current evaluation of the EU animal welfare strategy⁴. The outcomes of this evaluation is expected by the end of 2020.

Furthermore, where needed, additional research into indicators and their application into certification schemes could be considered under the forthcoming research & innovation framework programme for 2021-2027 Horizon Europe⁵.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/welfare/other_aspects/labelling_en

² COM/2019/640 final

³ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41863/st14975-en19.pdf>

⁴ COM(2012) 6 final/2

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/info/horizon-europe-next-research-and-innovation-framework-programme_en