

On the impact of citizen perceptions of pictures from intensive broiler fattening systems on animal welfare communication strategies

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Outline

- Introduction
- Aim of the study
- Methodology
- Results
- Conclusion

Introduction

- Former mixed family farms have developed into specialized production units (*Chavas 2001*)
- Broilers are often kept in units of 40.000 animals
- Rising citizen concerns about animal welfare in these systems can be observed (*Kayser et al. 2012; Kanis et al. 2003; Vanhonacker et al. 2010*)
- No change in consumption patterns due to these concerns

Introduction

- Mass media is main information source about agriculture for the public (*TNS Emnid 2012*)
- Mass media communication relies on pictures (*Kroeber-Riel/Esch 2011*)
- Pictures can be remembered faster (*Childers/Houston 1984*) and transmit emotive messages better (*Kroeber-Riel/Esch 2011*)
- Information from the agricultural sector is provided via text and less emotive pictures are shown

Aim of the study

- Little is known about how citizens perceive pictures from intensive animal husbandry systems
- Information about the perception could improve the communication process about production systems
- This study investigates German citizens' perceptions of pictures from an intensive broiler fattening system to give hint on improved communication

Methodology

- 415 German citizens were asked via an online survey in July 2013
- The sample follows the distribution in Germany in terms of age, sex and size of community

	Age of animals	Illumination level	Herd size/ Stocking density (animals/m ²)	n
Picture 1	Day 1	Light	ca. 39,800/ 22,1	63
Picture 2	Day 7	Dark	ca. 39,500/ 21,9	55
Picture 3	Day 7	Light	ca. 39,500/ 21,9	62
Picture 4	Day 34	Light	ca. 39,000/ 21,7	58
Picture 5	Day 34	Light	ca. 32,000/ 17,8	53
Picture 6	Day 40	Dark	ca. 32,000/ 17,8	69
Picture 7	Day 40	Light	ca. 32,000/ 17,8	55
n=Sample size				

Methodology

Day 1



Day 40



Methodology

Day 34, 39 kg/m²

Day 34, 32 kg/m²

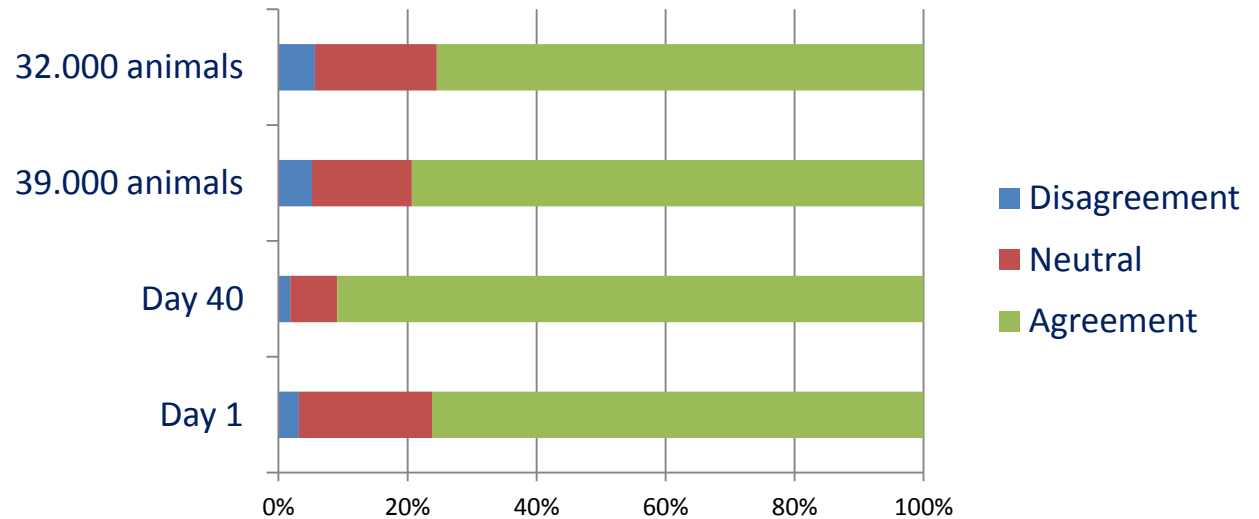


Results I

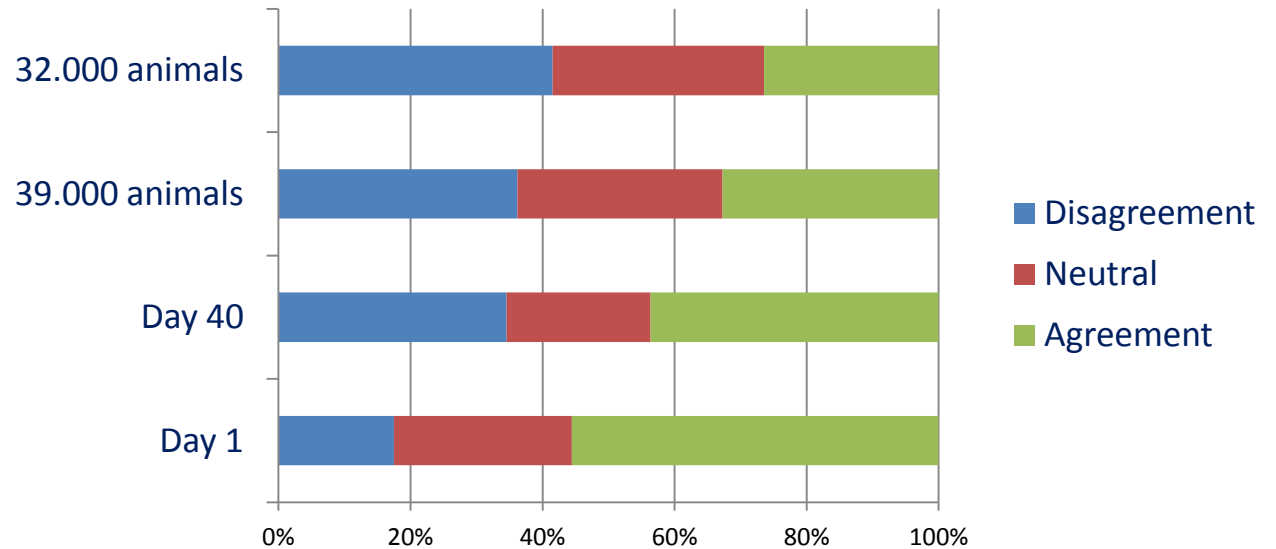
- Women are more critical than men.
- 55% think, that even in a large barn the well-being of the animals could be high.
- In contrast 63% think, that in a stable of 40.000 animals, animal welfare can never be achieved.
- First associations with the pictures were negative and include words like „factory farming“, „tightness“, „cruelty to animals“.

Results II

I think a lot of broiler barns look like this today.

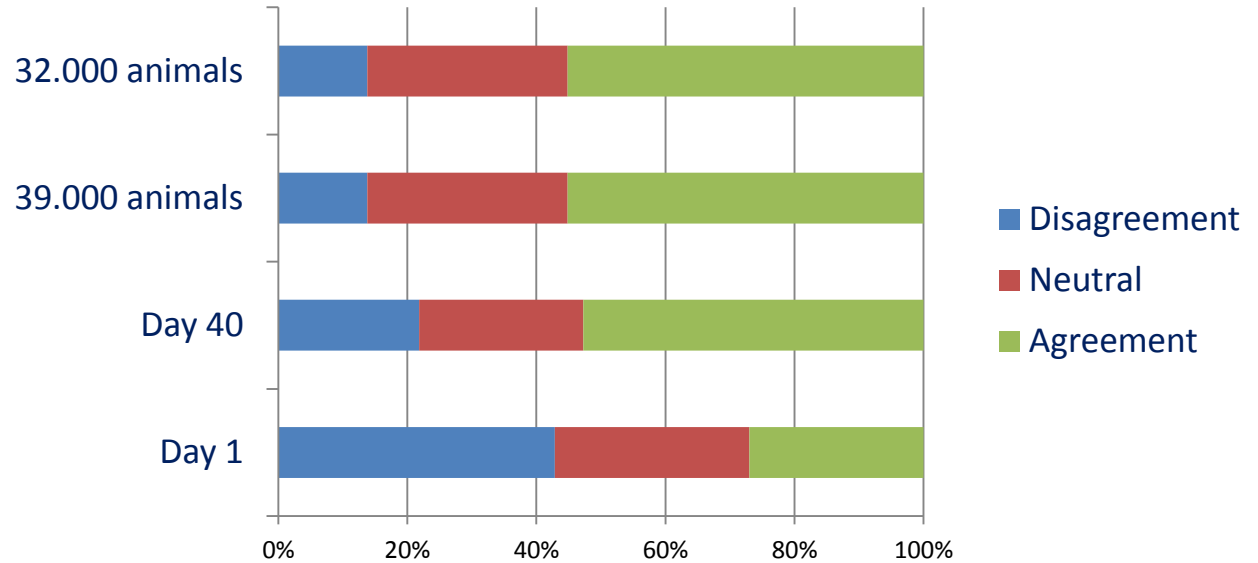


The legal requirements for animal welfare are fulfilled.

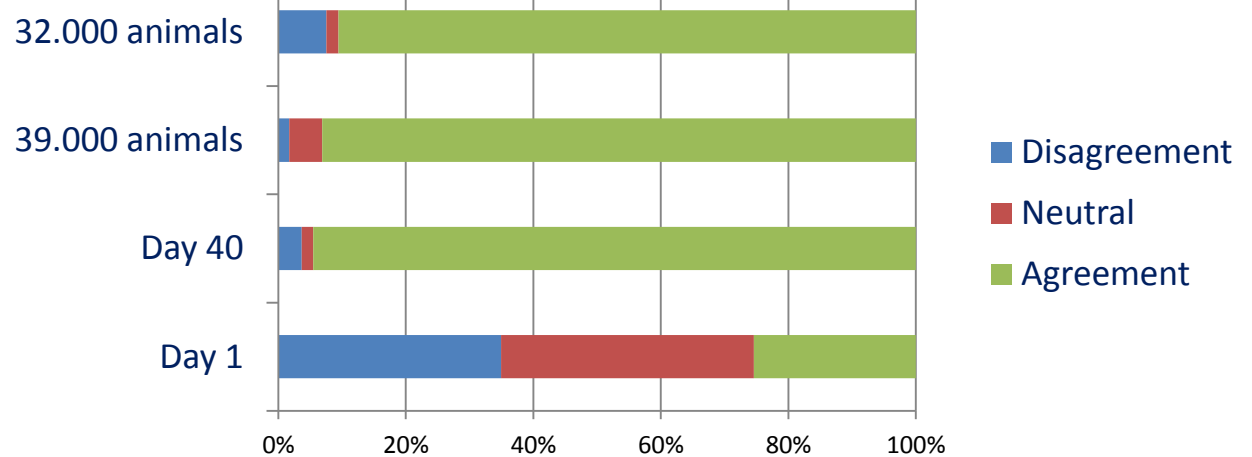


Results IV

I do not want to eat meat from the barn.

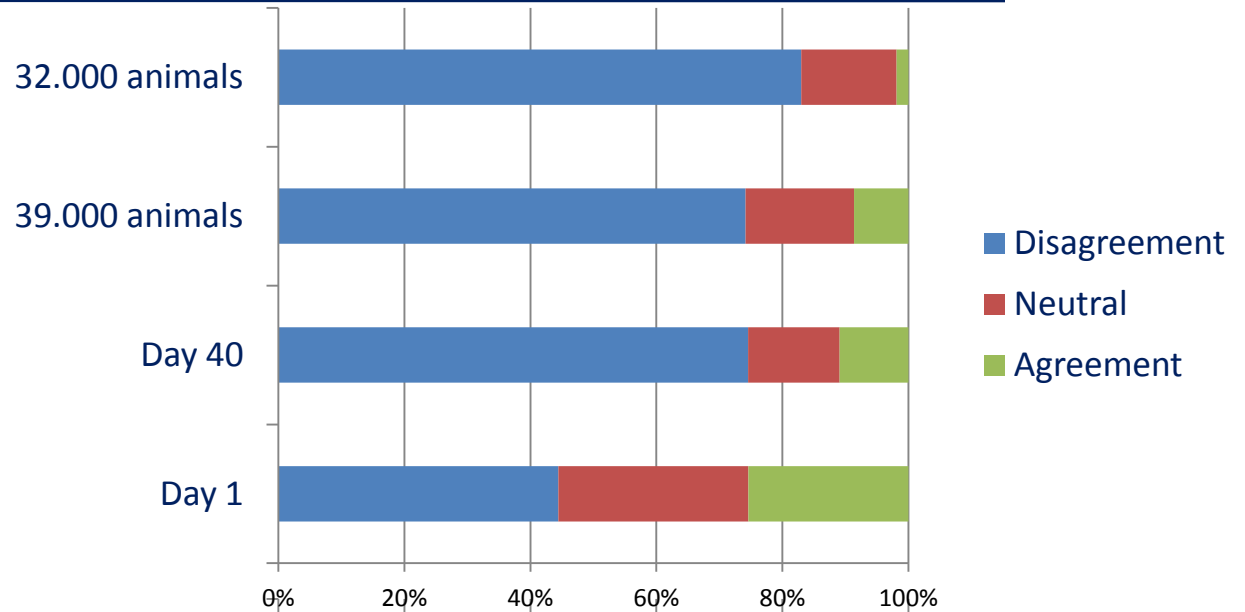


The animal are crowded together.

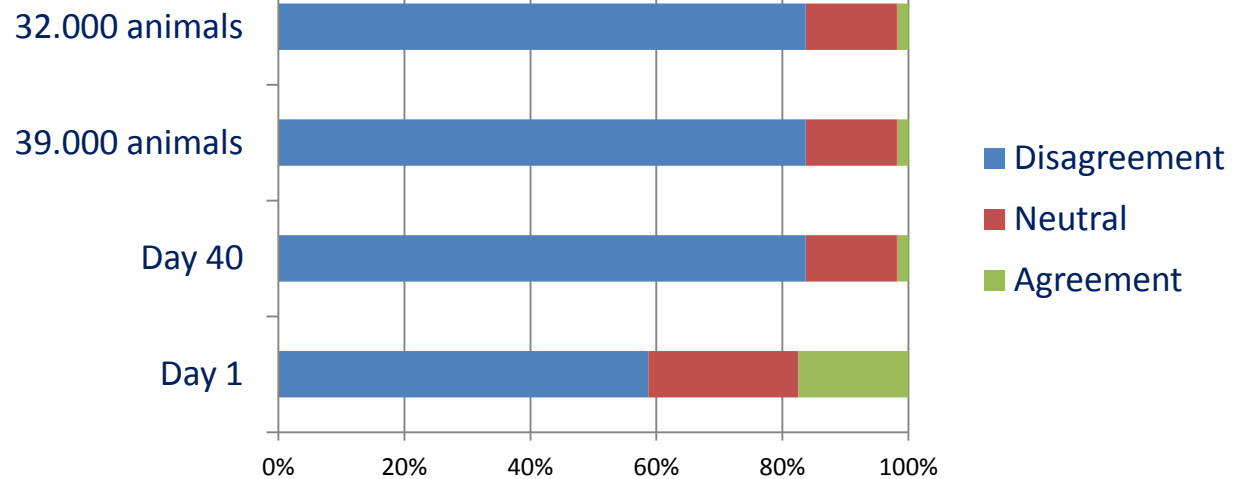


Results III

The barn is bright and friendly.



This picture enhances my trust in animal husbandry.



Conclusions

- Pictures from the broiler housing system are perceived negatively in lots of attributes.
- Trust cannot be enhanced by showing these pictures.
- A reduction of stocking densities to 32 kg/m² do not fulfill citizen perceptions.
- The definition of „large units“ differs between citizens and experts

Thank you very much for your attention.



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