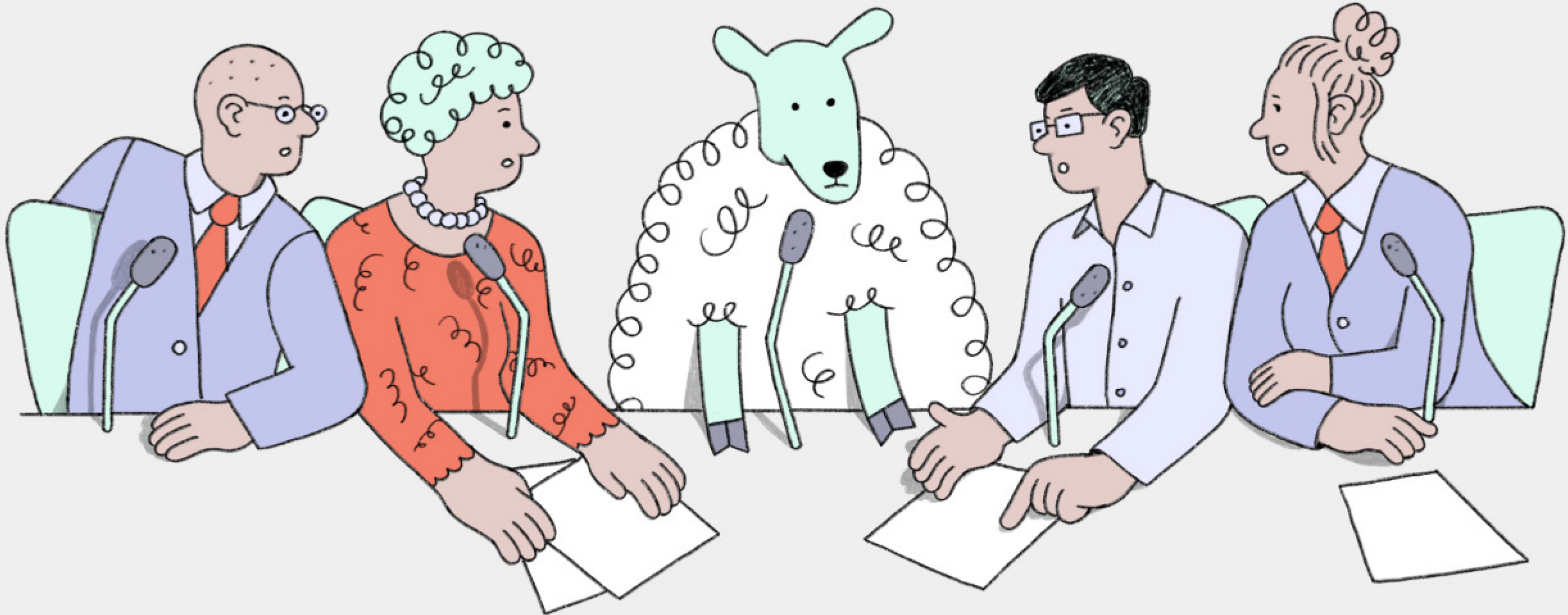


# Sustainable Food Production in the Netherlands: Citizens, consumers and the special case of animal welfare



**Frederik Vossenaar, Special Envoy, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality**

22-11-2023

Netherlands - Japan seminar Sustainable Food Production

## Sustainable Food Production in the Netherlands (1)

- **More and more city people without links to farming**
- **Cities always relatively nearby – recreation zone, landscape**
- **Outbreaks of animal diseases, culling of healthy animals and public health effects (FMD, ASF, BSE, AI, Q-Fever)**
- **Increasing unrest about fragmented policies and programs to mitigate environmental effects – mostly related to animal husbandry**



22-11-2023

## Sustainable Food Production in the Netherlands (2)

**‘Vision Paper’ Agriculture Minister (2018), underlining that food production needs to be in harmony with nature**

- **Reducing waste – crop residues, food waste, manure: re-use everything;**
- **Minimal emissions (GHG, Ammonia, Nitrogen);**
- **Disease prevention, reduction of antibiotics even more than before;**
- **Kept animals should have a life worth living, should be able to display natural behavior.**



## **Sustainable Food Production in the Netherlands (3)**

**The concrete policies needed for implementation have been subject to heated political debate among coalition parties. Action is overdue.**

**Legal obligations under international agreements about maintaining biodiversity, nature, public health – enforced by the courts – have made these discussions most intense.**



22-11-2023

# Animal welfare is a topic that has a long history in the Netherlands



**Party for Animals in Parliament since 2006 – strong influence ever since.  
Usually a majority in Parliament for animal welfare related issues;  
Sector needs a ‘civil license to produce’**



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**Affordable food security is the traditional perspective. Animal welfare usually is not part of mainstream definitions of ‘sustainability’.**

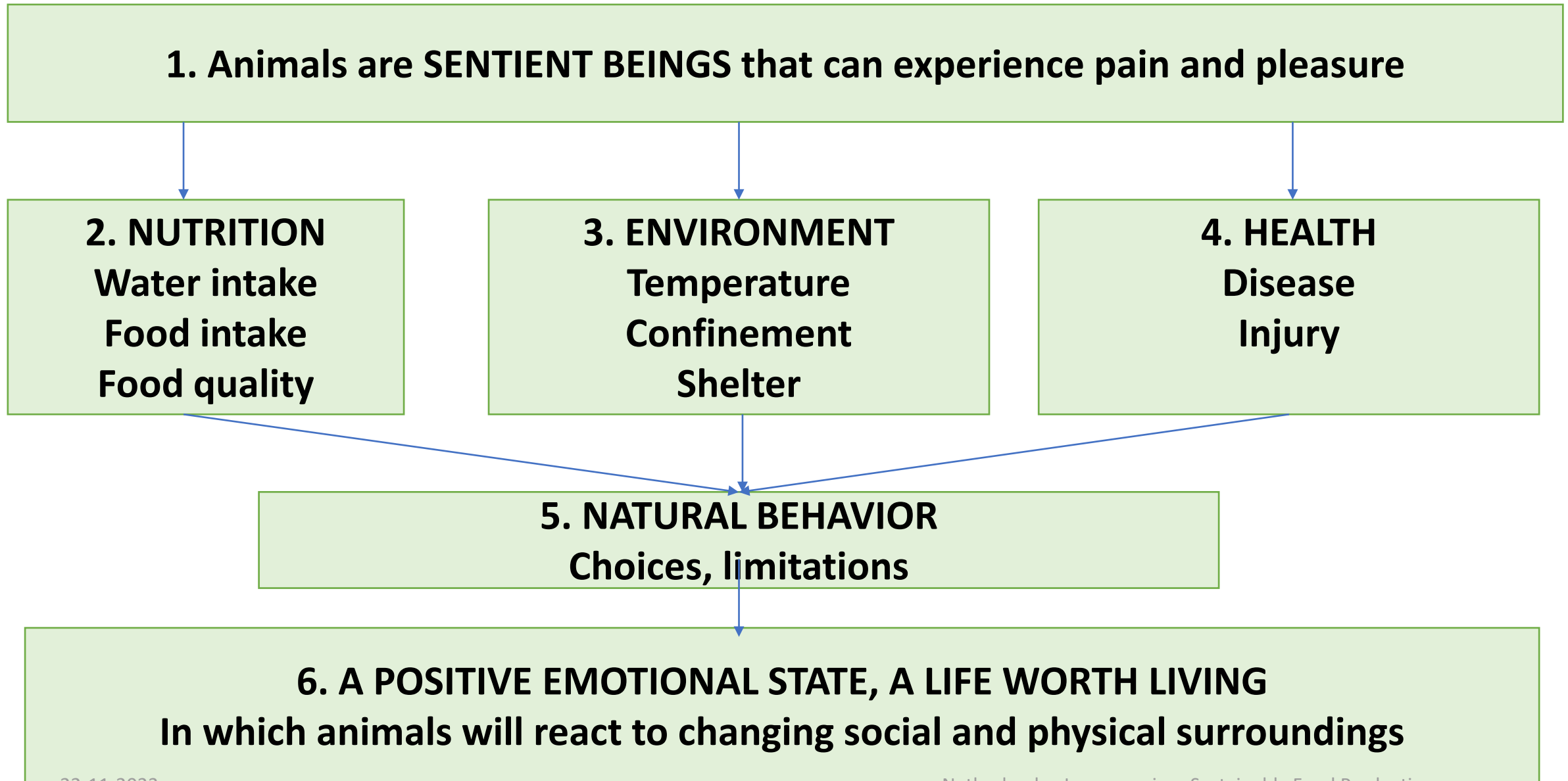
**In EU attention to animal welfare is much more divisive, as other EU Member States have different views. The EU did conclude in 2009: animals are sentient beings. The 2020 Farm to Fork Strategy said regulations will have to be aligned with latest scientific evidence, ensuring a higher level of animal welfare.**

**Now principally based on ‘five freedoms’:**

- Freedom from hunger and thirst**
- Freedom from discomfort**
- Freedom from pain, injury, disease.**

**Debate in the Netherlands: what about a positive state of welfare?**

# SIX PRINCIPLES OF AN ANIMAL WORTHY KEEPING SYSTEM:







- Although there is no ultimate regulation about Sustainable Animal Husbandry, farmers are very much aware of the debate in society and in politics.
- Almost all working to bring their farm to higher levels of sustainability: less emissions, locally produced feed, more animal welfare.
- Marketing schemes needed to reap benefits of the investments.

**Innovation continues, based on ‘harmony with nature’, like the “Kipster” concept that produces CO2 neutral eggs, already adopted in USA**



- **Government needs to set long term goals – and not tell farmers HOW to get here;**
- **Consumers should prepare to pay more for their food**
- **Farmers and citizens should find ways to connect and to meet**



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# Thank you for your attention!

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