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CONTEXT

The aims of controls in slaughterhouses are to ensure food safety and quality as well as to monitor animal health and welfare. Control efficiency can be guaranteed by a multidisciplinary approach. Indeed, thanks to their knowledge of process and product, the active participation of food business operators (FBOs) to poultry meat control has to be enhanced, in accordance with European regulations. Nevertheless, in the framework of the current discussion on the EU regulation on official controls, determination of sanitary actions depending on the associated risk has to be taken under either the responsibility or the supervision of official veterinary services (OVS).

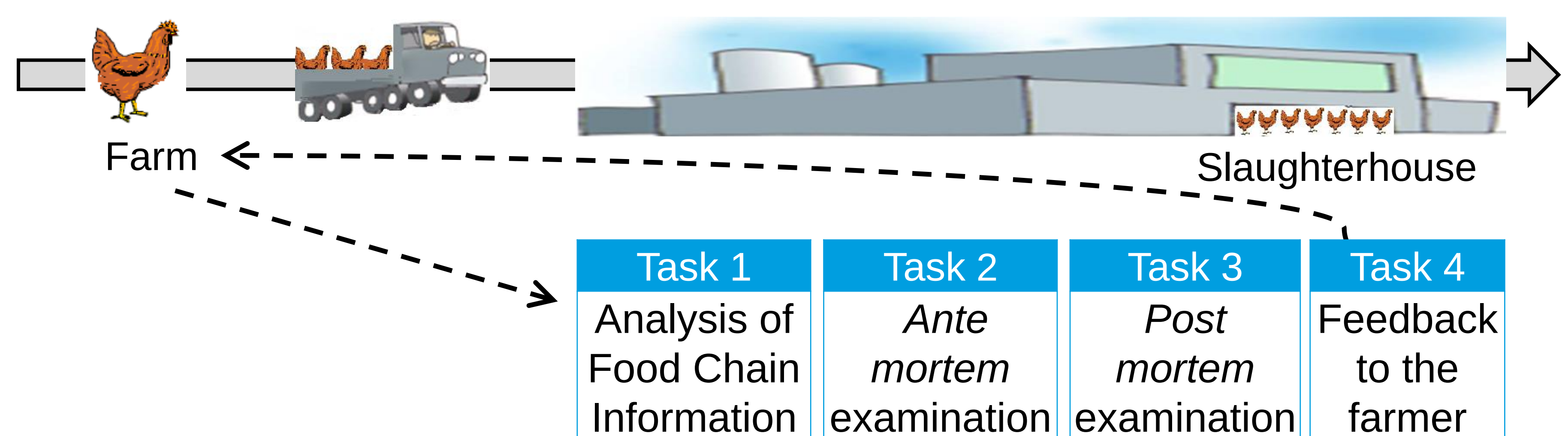
AIMS

In order to fit with this context, it is necessary to implement an adapted control system taking into account respective competences and organisational constraints of FBOs and OVS. A group of multidisciplinary experts therefore developed an innovative system to manage efficiently risks in slaughterhouses and provide decision-makers with useful methods and tools for a new approach of poultry meat inspection.

MATERIAL and METHODS

- The experts identified three main missions of health inspection: (i) food safety, (ii) animal disease surveillance and (iii) monitoring of rearing, transport and lairage conditions, which may affect animal welfare.

- To ensure these 3 missions, 4 tasks have to be performed



- For each task, the experts listed a set of 21 referenced indicators and assigned a “warning value” for each of them.

RESULTS

Our proposal of the organisation of control tasks between FBOs and OVS

Definition of indicators for each task

- ✓ set of indicators determined by the experts,
- ✓ “warning value” assigned for each indicator,

Health inspection process for each task (see Figure)

- ✓ the operators check all the indicators,
- ✓ when an alert is detected, the operators must request the expertise from the official services,
- ✓ the official services deal with the alert and implement adapted actions.

Indicator recording

- ✓ record sheets were developed to note the indicator values and the actions taken by operators and official services in order to provide evidence of the implementation of health inspection and to ensure data traceability.

Ante and post mortem controls

- ✓ based on a visual inspection to detect clinical signs or lesions
- ✓ in order to standardize these control and to identify all the anomalies visible in slaughterhouses, descriptive factsheets of anomalies were designed as scientific basis for a national reference frame in slaughterhouse.

Stakeholders' training and ex post control of the system

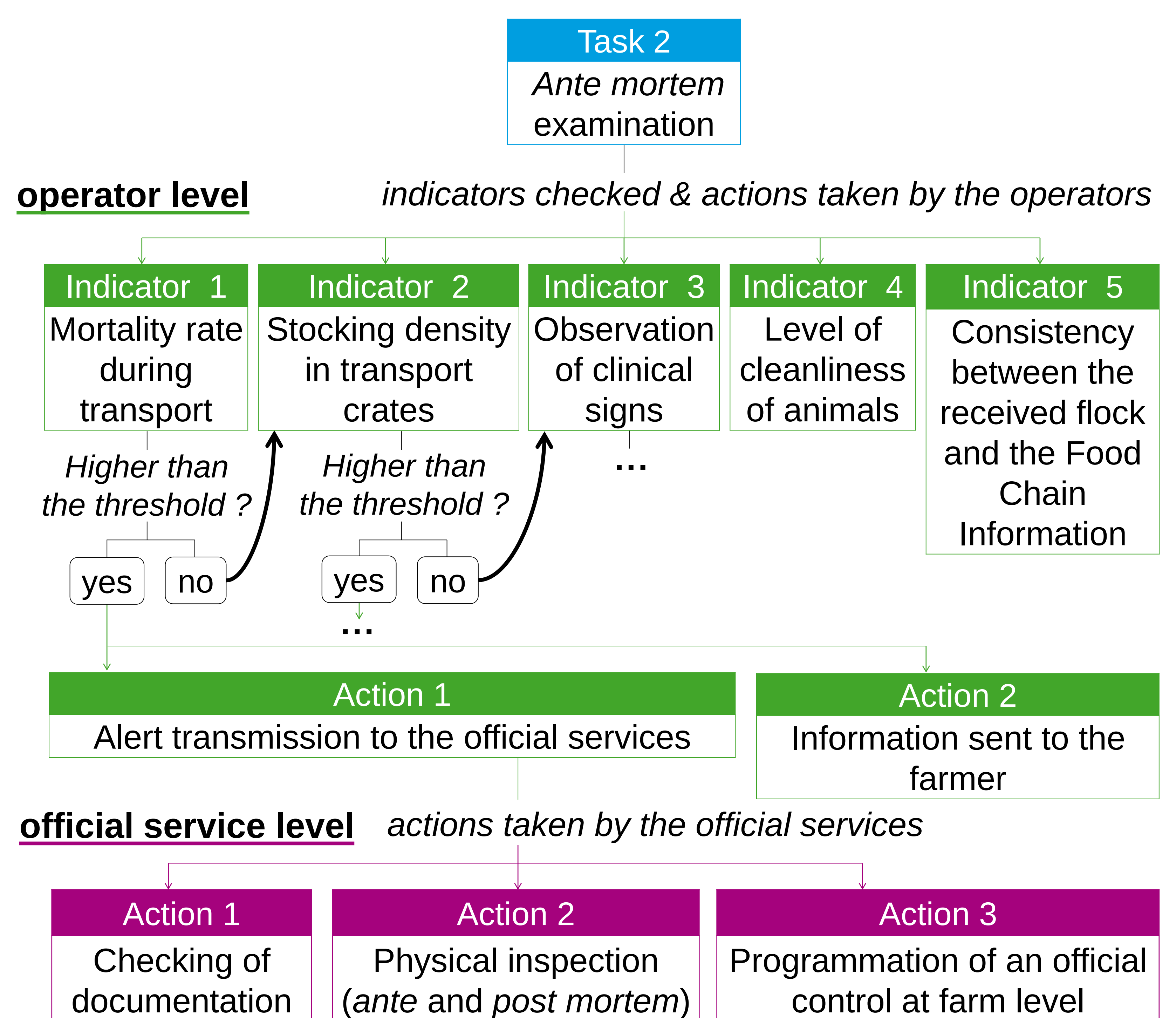


Figure: Example of the respective intervention and the organisation between FBOs and OVS, with a detection of an alert during the ante mortem control.

CONCLUSION

An innovative control system was developed, based on the assessment of the risk presented by the flock and the implementation of methods adapted to the level of risk, involving all stakeholders in a sustainable interaction. The system was then tested in 11 voluntary slaughterhouses for one year. Results of this study will enable to assess the efficacy and the feasibility of the system and, if necessary, to adapt it.