



[Back](#)

Agricultural and Food Science - abstract



Vol. 11 (2002), No. 1, p. 25-35

AHOLA, LEENA, HARRI, MIKKO, MONONEN, JAAKKO, PYYKÖNEN, TEIJA, KASANEN, SARI,
Effects of group size and early handling on some behavioural and physiological welfare parameters in farmed blue

Keywords *Alopex lagopus*, early handling, group size, animal welfare,

Abstract

The present study included two procedures, both aimed at improving animal welfare: early handling and changing the social conditions of the animals. Production and welfare related parameters as well as behaviour were assessed in blue fox (*Alopex lagopus*) cubs who were either handled or not before weaning, and housed after weaning either in pairs or in six-animal groups. The effect of the larger group size was observed in the larger number of bite scars in the female cubs housed in six-animal groups. Furthermore, the group size seemed to affect the performance of foxes most clearly in the late autumn when intra-litter aggression was observed during the feeding test. On the other hand, early handling had only short-term positive effects on the performance of the foxes but later transpired to have a negative impact on the stress profile of these animals.

Contact leena.ahola@uku.fi

[\[Full text\]](#) (PDF 55 kt)

Update 3. 6. 2002.

Source: MTT's Publications database [Afsf](#)

[Sitemap](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Legal Disclaimer](#)

© MTT 2009