



Codes of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock: Animal Health and Biosecurity

Also, guidance for official visitors to farm properties and recreational users of farmland



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Making it work together

Codes of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock

Animal Health and Biosecurity

Also, guidance for official visitors to farm properties and recreational users of farmland

November 2002

CODES OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WELFARE OF LIVESTOCK:

ANIMAL HEALTH AND BIOSECURITY

NOTES

This publication is in three parts. The first is a Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock: Animal Health and Biosecurity. This has been prepared following consultation and is issued with the authority of the Scottish Parliament under section 3 of the Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968. The second and third are not part of the Code. They are guidance for official visitors to farm properties and recreational users of farmland, pending the planned introduction of a Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

Section 3 of the Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968 allows “the Ministers” to produce codes of recommendations for the welfare of livestock and to issue such codes once they have been approved in draft by the Scottish Parliament. In relation to Scotland, the powers of “the Ministers” had previously been transferred to the Scottish Ministers by section 53 of the Scotland Act 1998 (1998 c.46).

These recommendations have been notified to the European Commission in accordance with Directive 83/189/EEC (1983 O.J. L109/8, as amended).

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PREFACE

This Code is intended to promote heightened animal disease surveillance and biosecurity measures on farms, the need for which was identified in the Royal Society's Report on Infectious Diseases in Livestock, published in July 2002, and Dr Iain Anderson's Report, also of July 2002, on the Lessons to be Learned Inquiry into Foot and Mouth Disease in 2001.

This preface is not part of the Code but is intended to explain the legal considerations upon which it is based. The legislation quoted in Annex A is also not part of the Code but highlights some of the legal requirements.

The law relevant to parts of the Code is that in force on the date of publication or reprinting of the Code (please turn to the back cover for this information). Any of the legal requirements quoted might be subject to change – readers should seek confirmation before assuming that these are an accurate statement of the law currently in force.

To cause unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress to any livestock on agricultural land is an offence under section 1(1) of the Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1968. The breach of a Code provision is not an offence in itself, but it can be used in evidence as tending to establish the guilt of anyone accused of causing the offence of causing unnecessary pain or distress under the Act (section 3(4)).

This Code extends to Scotland only.

THIS WELFARE CODE WAS APPROVED ON 7 NOVEMBER 2002.

Introduction

1.

Biosecurity is the responsibility of everybody – it means ways in which farmers, other owners of farm animals, and people who live, work, visit and enjoy the countryside can significantly reduce the risk of disease occurring or spreading to other animals.

Biosecurity is more than cleansing and disinfecting; it includes, for example, the prudent sourcing of stock, quarantine, testing and vaccination.

2.

Animal disease:

- * harms the welfare of animals;
- * disrupts farming and rural businesses;
- * costs livestock owners' money;
- * prevents produce going to market in peak condition;
- * can cause disease in humans, such as *Salmonella*;
- * can lead to the loss of export markets;
- * causes stress and anxiety to animal owners and others; and
- * has the potential to affect the quality of the environment as a consequence of the disposal of wastes.

3.

Everybody gains by following good biosecurity precautions – farmers, related farming and rural industries and Scotland as a whole.

4.

Biosecurity precautions are needed by all those who keep animals whether as a commercial livestock farmer or as someone who keeps a farm animal as a pet. Advice in this Code will not apply to all situations, but the principles of good biosecurity apply everywhere.

Notifiable disease

5.

At the first sign or suspicion of a notifiable disease (see Annex B) contact your vet immediately and isolate the sick animal(s), with the dam(s) if appropriate. There is a legal duty to contact the duty vet at the local Animal Health Divisional Office. An on-call 24-hour service is provided for notifiable disease reporting (see Annex C). Biosecurity advice can be obtained from your local vet or Animal Health Divisional Office. Further information about the Code itself can be obtained from the Scottish Executive's Animal Health and Welfare Division on 0131 244 6553.

How disease is spread

6.

Most animal diseases are caused by bacteria, viruses or parasites that are spread by:

- * mother to offspring;
- * direct or indirect contact with infected animals;
- * eating or drinking contaminated food or water. Watercourses can introduce disease from other farms;
- * grazing on contaminated pastures;
- * breathing air contaminated by infected animals;
- * vermin, encouraged by vegetation and sources of food around farm buildings; and
- * animals to humans and/or their vehicles that then spread infection to other animals.

Planning to avoid disease: health plan

7.

Any disease in a herd/flock is unwelcome. Affected animals suffer welfare problems and productivity is lost. However, the existence of disease can be reduced, and the losses and suffering minimised, by careful planning. An animal health plan can be created to reduce the risk of introducing disease and to recognise, treat and control existing conditions. The prevention and control of disease should not be left to chance. The local vet will be able to advise on the biosecurity measures most appropriate for your herd/flock health plan. Such a plan should be updated annually.

8.

Farm Assured Schemes recognise the benefits of these health plans, and have included them in their standards.

Reducing risks

9.

To reduce the risk of disease requires constant effort by all who deal with farm animals, rear gamebirds or come across wild game. The following are key elements:

Farm management

- * train staff in the principles of hygiene and disease security;
- * provide cleansing and disinfectant materials (brush, hose, water, disinfectant and, if possible, a pressure washer) for all visitors/workers on arrival and departure or provide protective clothing/footwear/disposable gloves for on-farm use;



- * have stock-proof boundaries;



Remember that cattle born after 1 January 1998 are legally required to be double tagged. Note that the cattle in this picture are older animals.

- * check and maintain boundaries regularly;
- * minimise nose-to-nose contact with neighbouring stock;
- * prevent animals from straying onto roads (1 – Annex A);
- * if common grazings are used try to isolate incoming stock before turning them onto common grazings;
- * dispose of bedding and prevent livestock access for 6 weeks;
- * newly-born animals are particularly susceptible to disease so make sure that designated calving and lambing areas are regularly cleansed and disinfected; and
- * dispose of fallen stock in accordance with the legislation (2 – Annex A).

Vehicles

Dirty transport vehicles of all types pose a high risk of introducing infection. Therefore:

- * avoid unnecessary contact between vehicles and livestock;
- * clean and disinfect vehicles of all types, including trailers and quad bikes, if exposed to other farms' animals. It is important to remember areas which may not be immediately visible, for example wheel arches, mudguards and mudflaps; and



- * vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected after transporting animals (3 – Annex A). The rules are slightly different depending on whether or not transport is within the farm business. Different diseases require different disinfectants at different strengths. Telephone your local Animal Health Divisional Office (see Annex C) for advice on approved disinfectants. Remember that disinfectant is ineffective if dirt is present, therefore thorough cleaning is necessary before disinfectant is applied.

Buildings and equipment

- * clean and disinfect buildings after use by livestock; and
- * clean and disinfect all shared and hired equipment after use and before moving off farm.

People

- * dissuade callers from having contact with livestock. Display notices directing callers to the farmhouse or farm office. Without good cause, do not let visitors enter buildings where animals are kept, or touch livestock or feedstuffs;
- * reduce the number of vehicles entering your farm; consider having a post box at the end of your farm road;



- * avoid wearing dirty work clothes or footwear off the farm, particularly when going to a market;
- * wash hands after close contact with any farm animal and, ideally, provide permanent facilities for this; and
- * signpost the farm. This can be important if a disease outbreak occurs.

New animals to farm/returning animals

10.

It is advisable to know the health status of animals you are buying, moving or bringing on. The entry of any animal onto a farm is a disease risk. This includes animals which have been purchased at market or animals for seasonal grazing/housing or wintering. The risk is reduced by breeding your own replacements. However, where it is necessary to add new stock:

- * keep new livestock coming onto farm separate for 20 days in an isolation facility. Before moving animals off your farm, check that you have complied with current Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department rules;
- * buy your stock from as small a number of sources as possible;
- * make sure stock replacements come with some degree of accreditation and/or a high, proved, health status;
- * consult and agree a testing programme with your vet;
- * obtain information on the recent history of the flock/herd and what treatments/vaccinations the animals have received. Questions to ask, for example, are: when was the animal last tested for TB or brucellosis? Are they registered under the National Scrapie Plan?; and
- * treat for internal and external parasites.

11.

The use of hired bulls/rams/billy goats and the introduction of foster animals from another farm are high risk activities. These animals should be isolated and checked by a vet.

Records and traceability

12.

There are legal requirements for the registration of all livestock and premises, animal identification, breeding and movement records. Rapid traceability is important for effective disease control.

13.

Keepers of cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, poultry and farmed deer must be registered and their animals identified in accordance with the law, even if only one animal is kept (4 – Annex A).

14.

Vehicles and people can spread disease. Veterinary investigations into notifiable disease would be greatly assisted by records of visitors and deliveries.

Animal medicines

15.

Sharing injecting and dosing equipment is a very high-risk activity. If it cannot be avoided, cleanse and disinfect thoroughly.

16.

Farmers or keepers of farm animals are required to keep a record of veterinary medicines used in accordance with the Regulations (5 – Annex A).

17.

The use of unauthorised veterinary medicines is not permitted (6 – Annex A). Such products may endanger animal and/or consumer health, if used.

Slurry and manure

18.

Infections can survive in slurry and manure. To reduce the risk:

- * spread on arable land rather than grass for silage making or stock grazing. If this is not possible, allow a 6-week gap between spreading and access by livestock;
- * spread slurry using an inverted spreading plate; and
- * avoid using hired/shared spreaders if possible. However, if sharing is unavoidable ensure spreaders are thoroughly cleansed before coming on your farm and again before leaving.

19.

The PEPFAA Code (Prevention of Environmental Pollution from Agricultural Activity) is the acknowledged source of information on spreading of farm wastes. Legislation regulates spreading of sewage sludge (7 – Annex A).

Wildlife

20.

Wild animals and birds can spread disease. To reduce this risk:

- * discourage vermin by keeping farmyard and surroundings clean and tidy;
- * prevent wildlife gaining access by keeping feedstock buildings in good repair;
- * keep doors and windows shut if there is no need for ventilation;
- * net windows, baffles and drains and monitor these areas regularly; and
- * have an active rodent control system.

Feed and water

21.

Various diseases can be spread by contaminated feed and water. This risk is reduced by:

- * using mains water wherever possible. There is evidence that private supplies are at a higher risk of becoming infected;
- * have water bowls or drinkers above the level for faecal contamination (8 – Annex A);
- * avoid contamination of watercourses;
- * clean feed and water troughs regularly;
- * keep feed in a clean, dry store;
- * keep feed stores covered and shut to ensure no access by dogs, cats, vermin and wildlife; and
- * dispose of old or soiled feed safely.

22.

Swill feeding is banned (9 – Annex A).

Dogs and cats

23.

Dogs should be regularly treated for tapeworms, particularly newly acquired animals, before they have access to pasture. Cats (particularly young ones) must not get into food stores (cat faeces may contain *Toxoplasma* oocysts which can cause abortion storms in sheep).

24.

Do what you can to stop dogs and cats from walking in feed troughs.

PART 2:

ADVICE FOR OFFICIAL VISITORS TO FARM PROPERTIES

Visitors to farm properties and/or buildings where farm animals are kept, for example **contractors, business visitors and utility workers**, need to be aware of their role in helping the community combat the transmission of animal diseases.

- * Business visitors and contractors should contact the farmer or representative first to arrange the visit.
- * If you are visiting the farm as a representative of any organisation, you should ensure that your clothes are not muddy and that your shoes/boots have been cleaned and disinfected (on each occasion, if visiting a number of farms), where this is possible. Telephone your local Animal Health Divisional Office (see Annex C) for advice on approved disinfectants.
- * Agricultural contractors should ensure that all vehicles, trailers, machinery and equipment have been cleansed and disinfected before going onto and on leaving farm properties. Follow a contractor's code of conduct where available.
- * Park sensibly to avoid potential contact with enclosed farm livestock, or those areas where livestock have recently been held.
- * Follow biosecurity advice given to you by individual farmers.

PART 3: ADVICE FOR RECREATIONAL USERS OF FARMLAND

1.

Walkers, cyclists and horse-riders are encouraged to follow the advice below, to help reduce the risk of future disease outbreaks. This advice is interim prior to the planned introduction of the Scottish Outdoor Access Code,¹ expected to come into effect in late 2003. In the event of a disease outbreak more detailed advice on taking and managing access responsibly will be disseminated to all relevant parties.

2.

Recreational users should follow these precautions:

- * never feed animals or leave food around where animals can eat it;
- * take all litter with you;
- * respect any official signposting in the event of a disease outbreak;
- * ensure gates are left as they are found;
- * avoid contact with farm animals;
- * keep dogs under control; and
- * use disinfectant footpads or baths where provided, particularly in the event of a disease outbreak.

3.

Particular risks, such as from *E. coli*, can arise when people picnic or camp in fields that are being, or have recently been used for grazing. Try to avoid picnicking or camping in these areas. Make sure that you wash your hands after leaving the area and before touching food.

¹Further information on the Access Code can be obtained from Scottish Natural Heritage

ANNEX A

The following statutes relate to reference numbers appearing in the Code.

Reference 1: It is an offence to allow an animal to stray onto roads under Part VIII, section 98 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

Reference 2: Dispose of fallen stock in accordance with Part II, article 5(1) of The Animal By-Products Order 1999 (S.I. 1999/646).

Reference 3: Vehicles must be cleansed and disinfected after transporting animals as stated in schedule 1, articles 1 to 4 inclusive of The Transport of Animals (Cleansing and Disinfection) (Scotland) Regulations 2000 (S.S.I. 2000/167). The Diseases of Animals (Approved Disinfectants) Order 1978 (S.I. 1978/32) (as amended) details disinfectants that have been approved for veterinary use.

Reference 4: Keepers of cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, poultry and farmed deer must be registered and their animals identified in accordance with the law, even if only one animal is kept. Further information on these requirements, including sources of Explanatory Booklets can be obtained from your local Agricultural Office or Animal Health Divisional Office (see Annex C).

Cattle

Identification and movement records must be kept in accordance with the requirements of:
The Cattle Identification Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/871) (as amended);
The Cattle Database Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/1796);
The Cattle (Identification of Older Animals) (Scotland) Regulations 2001 (S.S.I. 2001/1);
The Cattle Identification (Notification of Movement) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2002 (S.S.I. 2002/22).

Pigs and Wild Boar

Identification and movement records must be kept in accordance with the requirements of:
The Pigs (Records, Identification and Movement) Order 1995 (S.I. 1995/11) (as amended);
The Disease Control (Interim Measures) (Scotland) Order 2002 (S.S.I. 2002/34).

Sheep and Goats

Identification and movement records must be kept in accordance with the requirements of:
The Sheep and Goats Identification (Scotland) Regulations 2000 (S.S.I. 2000/418);
The Sheep and Goats Identification (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2002 (S.S.I. 2002/39);
The Sheep and Goats Movement (Interim Measures) (Scotland) Order 2002 (S.S.I. 2002/38).

Deer

Deer must be identified as required by The Tuberculosis (Deer) Order 1989 (S.I. 1989/878).

Poultry

Breeding flocks must be registered in accordance with the requirements of The Poultry Breeding Flocks and Hatcheries Order 1993 (S.I. 1993/1898).

Breeding flocks and hatcheries must be registered in accordance with the requirements of:

Council Regulation (EEC) No 2782/75 (as amended) on the production and marketing of eggs for hatching and of farmyard poultry chicks.

Each month, all hatcheries must send to the Scottish Executive details of the number of eggs set and the number of hatched chicks intended for actual sale as implemented by The Eggs (Marketing Standards) Regulations 1995 (S.I. 1995/1544) (as amended).

Hatcheries must keep records in accordance with the requirements of Commission Regulation (EEC) No 1868/77 (as amended) and as implemented by The Eggs (Marketing Standards) Regulations 1995 (S.I. 1995/1544) (as amended).

Up to date records must be kept regarding disease as stated by The Diseases of Poultry Order 1994 (S.I. 1994/3141).

Establishments keeping laying hens must be registered in accordance with Directive 2002/4/EC.

Egg producers must keep up to date records in accordance with the requirements of: The Commission Regulation 1274/91 (EEC) as implemented by The Eggs (Marketing Standards) (Amendment) Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/1665) (as amended).

Eggs for human consumption shall be given a distinguishing number for traceability in accordance with the requirements of The Eggs (Marketing Standards) (Amendment) Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/1665) and Council Directive 1999/74/EC which will be updated by Directive 2002/4/EC from 2004 on the registration of establishments keeping laying hens.

The registered number of the slaughter house or cutting plant is required to be indicated on the packaging of poultry for meat in accordance with Council Regulation 1906/90/EC.

Reference 5: Farmers or keepers of farm animals are required to keep a record of veterinary medicines used in accordance with part V, regulation 32 of The Animals and Animal Products (Examination for Residues and Maximum Residue Limits) Regulations 1997 (S.I. 1997/1729); regulation 20 of The Animals, Meat and Meat Products (Examination for Residues and Maximum Limits) Regulations 1991 (S.I.1991/2843) and additional paragraphs from regulation 4A(11) of The Animals, Meat and Meat Products (Examination for Residues and Maximum Residue Limits) (Amendment) Regulations 1994 (1994/2465).

Reference 6: The restrictions and exemptions regarding the use of unauthorised veterinary medicines are stated in regulations 3, 4 and 5 of The Medicines (Restrictions on the Administration of Veterinary Medicinal Products) Regulations 1994 (S.I. 1994/2987).

Reference 7: The spreading of sewage sludge should be in accordance with regulation 3 of The Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations 1989 (S.I. 1989/1263).

Reference 8: Have water bowls or drinkers above the level for faecal contamination as stated in schedule 1, paragraph 26 of The Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Regulations 2000 (S.S.I. 2000/442).

Reference 9: Swill feeding is banned in accordance with articles 19 and 20 of The Animal By-Products Order 1999 (1999/646) as amended by The Animal By-Products Amendment (Scotland) Order 2001 (S.S.I. 2001/171).

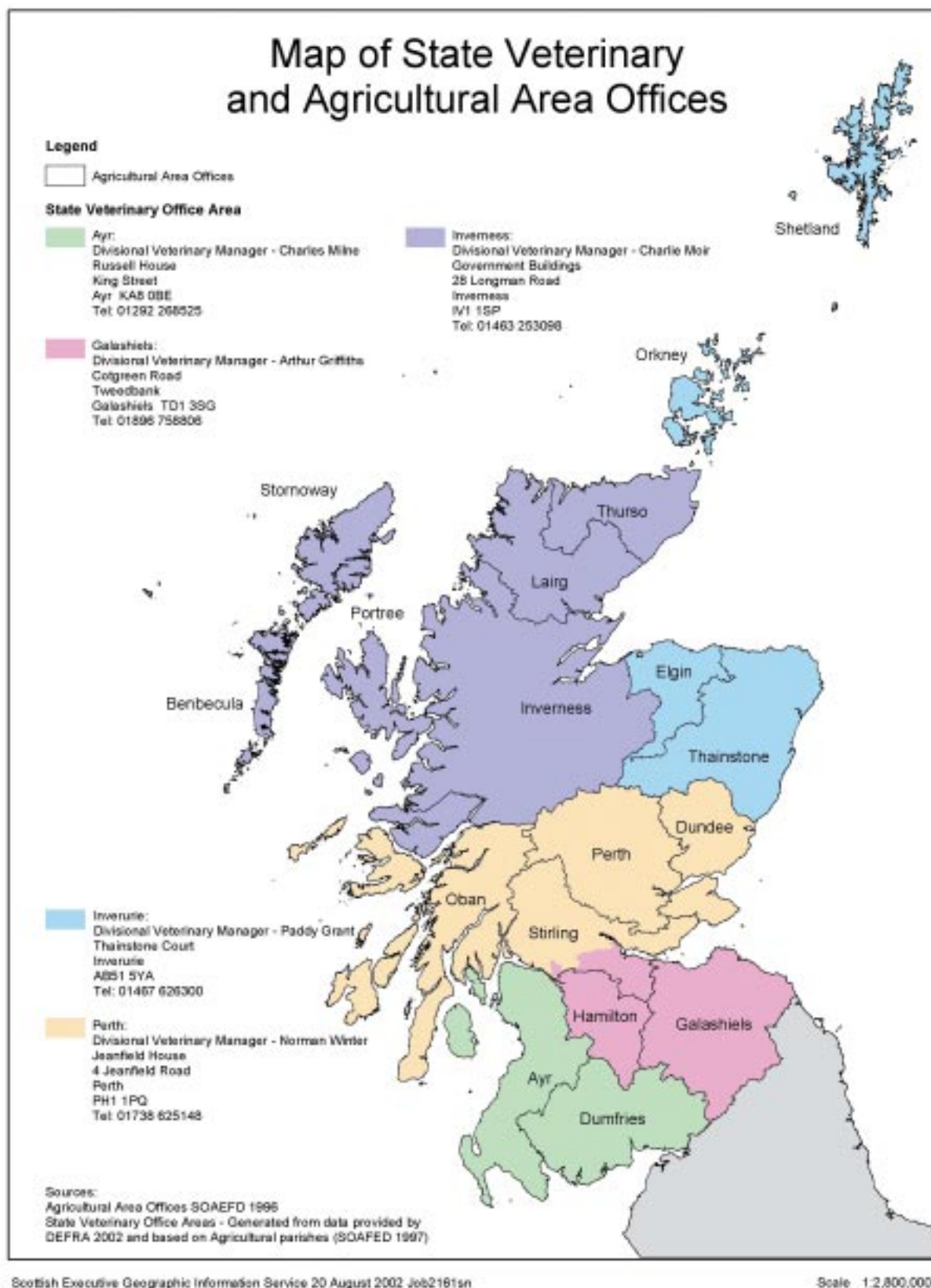
ANNEX B

List of Notifiable Disease and Year of Last Occurrence in Great Britain

Notifiable disease	Species affected	Last occurred in GB
African Horse Sickness	Horses	Never
African Swine Fever	Pigs	Never
Anthrax	Cattle and other mammals	1997
Aujeszky's Disease	Pigs and other mammals	1989
Avian Influenza (Fowl plague)	Poultry	1992
Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy	Cattle	Present
Bluetongue	Sheep and Goats	Never
Brucellosis (<i>Brucella abortus</i>)	Cattle	1993
Brucellosis (<i>Brucella melitensis</i>)	Sheep and Goats	1956
Classical Swine Fever	Pigs	2000
Contagious agalactia	Sheep and Goats	Never
Contagious Bovine Pleuro-pneumonia	Cattle	1898
Contagious Epididymitis (<i>Brucella ovis</i>)	Sheep and Goats	Never
Contagious Equine Metritis	Horses	1997
Dourine	Horses	Never
Enzootic Bovine Leukosis	Cattle	1996
Epizootic Haemorrhagic Virus Disease	Deer	Never
Epizootic Lymphangitis	Horses	1906
Equine Viral Arteritis	Horses	1998
Equine Viral Encephalomyelitis	Horses	Never
Equine Infectious Anaemia	Horses	1976
Foot and Mouth Disease	Cattle, sheep, pigs and other cloven hoofed animals	2001
Glanders and Farcy	Horses	1928
Goat Pox	Goats	Never
Lumpy Skin Disease	Cattle	Never
Newcastle Disease	Poultry	1997
Paramyxovirus of pigeons	Pigeons	Present
Peste des Petits Ruminants	Sheep and Goats	Never
Rabies	Dogs and other mammals	1970
Rift Valley Fever	Cattle, Sheep and Goats	Never
Rinderpest (Cattle Plague)	Cattle	1877
Scrapie	Sheep and goats	Present
Sheep Pox	Sheep	1866
Swine Vesicular Disease	Pigs	1982
Teschen Disease (Porcine enterovirus encephalomyelitis)	Pigs	Never
Tuberculosis (Bovine TB)	Cattle and deer	Present
Vesicular Stomatitis	Cattle, pigs and horses	Never
Warble fly	Cattle, (also deer and horses)	1990

ANNEX C

Map of Animal Health Divisional Offices in Scotland with contact details





BIOSECURITY CODE PROTECT SCOTLAND'S LIVESTOCK

Biosecurity is a set of management practices which, when followed, together reduce the possibility for the introduction or spread of disease-causing organisms onto and between farms.

BENEFITS

- * Keeps lethal, highly contagious diseases out of farms (e.g. FMD, Newcastle Disease)
- * Reduces the threat of organisms known to reduce productivity (e.g. *E. coli*, Coccidiosis)
- * Reduces contamination with organisms of public health significance (e.g. *Salmonella*)

HYGIENE

- * Cleanse and disinfect vehicles, machinery, footwear, clothing and hands after handling stock or before moving between farms
- * Control vermin

SEPARATION AND ISOLATION

- * Maintain stock-proof boundaries
- * Prevent nose-to-nose contact with neighbouring stock
- * Isolate incoming stock
- * Minimise the number of sources of stock
- * Keep visitors and their vehicles well away from animals
- * Prevent animals straying

RECORDS AND TRACEABILITY

- * Keep all records up to date
- * Identify all animals in the approved manner

SLURRY AND MANURE

- * Store slurry for at least 4 months
- * Keep livestock away from manure and slurry stores
- * Allow 6 weeks between slurry spreading and livestock grazing

FEED AND WATER

- * Keep feed dry and clean
- * Keep feedstores shut
- * Use mains water wherever possible

REGULARLY UPDATE YOUR HERD/FLOCK HEALTH AND BIOSECURITY PLAN



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