

Welfare of farmed animals (SMR 13)

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Introduction

The aim of these rules is to protect the welfare of farmed animals by setting minimum standards for their care and husbandry. They apply to any species kept for farming purposes.

You must:

Staffing

1. make sure that your animals are looked after by enough staff who have the correct skills and knowledge

Inspection

2. make sure your animals are inspected thoroughly at least once a day if your husbandry system depends on frequent human attention and in other systems as often as necessary to avoid suffering
3. make sure that there is enough lighting so that you can carry out a thorough inspection of the animals at any time
4. make sure that you care for ill or injured animals immediately, and if they do not respond to this care then seek veterinary advice
5. isolate sick or injured animals in suitable accommodation with dry comfortable bedding, if necessary

Record keeping

6. maintain a record of any medicinal treatment given to your animals, and keep these records for at least three years from the date of the treatment and make these records available to any authorised person at inspection (or when otherwise asked for)
7. maintain a record of the number of deaths found when the animals are inspected, and keep these records for at least three years from the date of the relevant inspection and make these records available to any authorised person at inspection (or when otherwise asked for)

Freedom of movement

8. give your animals enough space to avoid necessary stress, if they are continuously or regularly tethered or confined, and also allow them to show their normal behaviour in line with established experience and scientific knowledge

Buildings and accommodation

9. use materials for animal accommodation that can be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected
10. build and maintain accommodation so that there are no sharp edges or protrusions which could injure your animals
11. keep air circulation, dust levels, temperature, relative air humidity and gas concentrations within limits that will not harm your animals
12. provide artificial lighting if there is not sufficient natural light in a building

Animals not kept in buildings

13. give your animals that are not kept in buildings access to a well-drained lying area at all times and, if necessary, protection from adverse weather conditions, predators and other risks to their health

Automatic or mechanical equipment

14. check automated and/or mechanical equipment that is essential for the health and well-being of your animals at least once a day and put right any faults immediately (or take appropriate steps to protect the health and well-being of your animals until you can get the fault put right)

15. provide an appropriate back-up to the main system if your animals health and well-being depends upon artificial ventilation and an alarm to warn you if the ventilation system fails. Inspect and test these at least once every seven days

Feed, water and other substances

16. feed your animals a wholesome diet in sufficient quantities and making sure that they have access to feed at intervals appropriate to their needs (and, in any case, at least once a day)

17. give all animals access to a suitable water supply and enough fresh drinking water or other fluid

18. minimise any contamination of food and water and the harmful effects of competition between animals for food and water through the design and location of feeding and watering equipment

You must not:

Freedom of movement

1. restrict your animals freedom of movement if this causes them unnecessary suffering or injury

Buildings and accommodation

2. use materials and/or equipment for accommodation purposes that is harmful to your animals

3. keep animals in permanent darkness or without an appropriate rest period from artificial lighting

Feed, water and other substances

4. give your animals food or liquid in any way, or containing any substance, that could cause unnecessary harm

5. administer any substance to your animals which is harmful to their health or welfare

Mutilations

6. carry out any mutilation or intervention on your animals, unless the action is classed as a prohibited procedure exemption (see Annex 1). (Many exemptions have conditions attached, including the need to be reasonably justified and be a measure of 'last resort'.)

In general -

- any prohibited procedure exemption must be carried out in hygienic conditions, in a manner to minimise pain and suffering, and according to good practice
- any castration or tail docking must be carried out by a person over the age of 18 years, or 17 years if under formal instruction

Breeding procedures



7. carry out breeding procedures (either natural or artificial) that cause, or are likely to cause, harm to your animals

8. keep animals for farming purposes unless it can be reasonably expected that the normal breed characteristics (genetic and physical) mean that they can be kept without harm to their health and welfare

Further Information

* Mutilations are procedures which involve interference with the sensitive tissues or bone structure of the animal.

Further information on the conditions attached to prohibited procedure exemptions can be found in the Animal Welfare codes of Recommendation / Practice

Annex 1

Please be aware that there may be additional conditions attached to the prohibited procedure exemptions. You must comply with these if you are carrying out any of the procedures listed in the tables below.

The conditions can be found in the [Animal Welfare codes of Recommendation / Practice](#).

SMR 13 - Bovine animals

Procedure	Purpose
Freeze branding	Identification
Tattooing	Identification
Ear tagging	Identification; Screening or routine or random testing for disease; or genetic analysis
Micro chipping	Identification
Vasectomy	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Castration	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Implantation of a subcutaneous contraceptive into a non-farmed bovine	Controlling reproduction or general animal management, as part of a conservation programme
Embryo and ovum transfer	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Nose ringing	Handler safety or herd welfare
Dehorning	Handler safety or herd welfare
Disbudding	Handler safety or herd welfare
Supernumerary teat removal	Animal health

SMR 13 - Sheep

Procedure	Purpose
Tattooing	Identification
Ear tagging	Identification or sampling or routine or random testing for disease
Ear notching	Identification
Micro chipping	Identification
Vasectomy	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Castration Condition - Surgical castration may only be carried out by a veterinary surgeon	Controlling reproduction or general animal management

Laparoscopic insemination	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Embryo and ovum transfer	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Implantation of a subcutaneous contraceptive into a non-farmed sheep	Controlling reproduction or general animal management, as part of a conservation programme
Dehorning	Handler safety or flock welfare
Disbudding	Handler safety or flock welfare
Docking of farmed sheep kept on agricultural land Conditions - 1) docking of sheep over three months of age can only be carried out by a veterinary surgeon 2) Surgical docking may only be carried out by a veterinary surgeon	Animal health

SMR 13 - Goats

Procedure	Purpose
Tattooing	Identification
Ear tagging	Identification or screening or routine or random testing for disease
Ear notching	Identification
Micro chipping	Identification
Vasectomy	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Castration	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Laparoscopic insemination	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Implantation of a subcutaneous contraceptive into a non-farmed goat	Controlling reproduction or general animal management, as part of a conservation programme
Embryo and ovum transfer	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Dehorning	Handler safety or herd welfare
Disbudding	Handler safety or herd welfare

SMR 13 - Pigs

Procedure	Purpose
Tattooing	Identification
Ear tagging	Identification or screening or routine or random testing for disease
Ear notching	Identification
Micro chipping	Identification
Vasectomy	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Implantation of a subcutaneous contraceptive into a non-farmed pig	Controlling reproduction or general animal management, as part of a conservation programme
Embryo and ovum transfer	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Tusk trimming	Handler safety or herd welfare
Docking of farmed pigs on agricultural land Conditions - 1) The procedure may only be performed— (a) where there is evidence that injuries to the tails of other pigs have occurred and where other measures to improve environmental conditions or	Handler safety or herd welfare

management systems have been taken in order to prevent tailbiting; and (b) by the quick and complete severance of the part of the tail to be removed. 2) Where pigs are older than 7 days of age the procedure must be performed under anaesthetic and additional prolonged analgesia and only by a veterinary surgeon.	
Uniform reduction of the corner teeth of farmed piglets kept on agricultural land aged 7 days or less by grinding or clipping to leave an intact smooth surface Condition - The procedure may only be performed where there is evidence of injuries to sows' teats or to other pigs' ears or tails and when other measures have been taken to prevent tailbiting and other vices have been exhausted.	Herd welfare
Nose ringing Condition - Nose rings must not be put in animals kept continuously in indoor husbandry systems.	General animal management
Castration Conditions - 1) Castration may only be performed by means other than the tearing of tissues. 2) Where pigs are older than 7 days of age the procedure must be performed under anaesthetic and additional prolonged analgesia and only by a veterinary surgeon.	Controlling reproduction or general animal management

SMR 13 - Birds

Procedure	Purpose
Micro chipping	Identification
Beak trimming of poultry Conditions - 1) Beak trimming of poultry may only be performed to prevent feather pecking and cannibalism and, in relation to laying hens kept on holdings of 350 or more and meat chickens kept on holdings of 500 or more, when the animals are less than 10 days old. 2) Beak trimming of laying hens kept on holdings of 350 or more may only be performed using the infra-red procedure. 3) In an emergency, to control an outbreak of feather pecking or cannibalism in laying hens, conditions 1 and 2 do not apply. 4) Beak trimming of meat chickens may only be carried out, after consultation with and on the advice of a veterinary surgeon, by qualified staff, and where other measures to prevent feather pecking and cannibalism are exhausted.	Flock welfare
De-snooding	General animal management
Cutting of the toes of poultry other than laying hens and meat chickens	General animal management
Dubbing of domestic fowl other than laying hens and meat chickens	General animal management
Pinioning of birds other than poultry	General animal management
Laparoscopy	General animal management
Castration, ovidectomy and vasectomy of a bird other than poultry	Controlling reproduction or general animal management, as part of a conservation programme
Implantation of a subcutaneous contraceptive into a bird other than poultry	Controlling reproduction or general animal management, as part of a conservation programme

Wing tagging	Identification of – 1) poultry in connection with breeding or testing for the presence of disease; or 2) a bird other than poultry in connection with conservation or research
Web tagging	Identification of – 1) poultry in connection with breeding or testing for the presence of disease or 2) a bird other than poultry in connection with conservation or research

SMR 13 - Equine Horses

Procedure	Purpose
Freeze branding	Identification
Tattooing	Identification
Micro chipping	Identification
Vasectomy	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Castration	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Implantation of a subcutaneous contraceptive	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Embryo and ovum transfer	Controlling reproduction or general animal management

SMR 13 - Deer

Procedure	Purpose
Tattooing	Identification
Ear tagging	Identification or screening or routine or random testing for disease
Ear notching	Identification
Micro chipping	Identification
Vasectomy	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Castration	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Implantation of a subcutaneous contraceptive into a non-farmed deer	Controlling reproduction or general animal management, as part of a conservation programme
Embryo and ovum transfer	Controlling reproduction or general animal management
Removal of antlers	Handler safety or herd welfare

SMR 13 - Any other type of animal

Procedure	Purpose
Micro chipping	Identification
Tattooing	Identification
Vasectomy	Controlling reproduction
Castration	Controlling reproduction
Spaying	Controlling reproduction
Embryo and ovum transfer	Controlling reproduction
Implantation of a subcutaneous contraceptive	Controlling reproduction or general animal management

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