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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government
Consultation Document

Introducing mandatory sheep carcass classification in Wales

Date of issue: 31 May 2018
Action required: Responses by 23 August 2018

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Overview	This consultation paper seeks views on the introduction of mandatory reporting of sheep carcass classification and pricing in Wales.
How to respond	Please use the consultation response form.
Further information and related documents	Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.
Contact details	For further information: Address: Agriculture – Sustainability and Development Division Cathays Park Cardiff CF10 3NQ email: ASDConsultationResponses@gov.wales
Data protection	How the views and information you give us will be used: Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations. The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

FOREWORD BY THE CABINET SECRETARY FOR ENERGY, PLANNING AND RURAL AFFAIRS, LESLEY GRIFFITHS AM

The sheep sector is a vital part of the agricultural industry in Wales. As we transition from the EU and beyond, we need to facilitate transparency in order to help create stronger and more resilient supply chains. It is important producers and processors have an interactive relationship where the sharing of information and data benefits both the individual businesses and the wider industry.

I'm aware there is an appetite for the introduction of mandatory sheep classification in Wales with our key stakeholders making representation to the Welsh Government to formally consult on this issue.

The results of Scotland's recent consultation and the recommendations of the recent review of the Groceries Code Adjudicator has added to the evidence base and further influenced my decision to undertake a formal consultation here in Wales. The process of leaving the European Union is complicated with a number of legislative changes needing to be made, particularly for agriculture. I want to be clear how the introduction of these changes might make a positive difference to our industry and not simply add an additional regulatory burden throughout the supply chain.

Through this consultation, I want to hear from the whole supply chain in terms of whether sheep carcass classification should be implemented here in Wales on a mandatory basis through amendments to current legislation.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Carcase classification and mandatory reporting is a devolved matter with the Welsh Government having responsibility for determining the policy in Wales.
- 1.2 EU Commission Regulation (EC) No 1249/2008 lays down detailed rules on the implementation of the Community scales for the classification of beef, pig and sheep carcasses and the reporting of prices thereof. Within this regulation the reporting of beef and pigs is mandatory; however, EU member states have the option to impose reporting for sheep on a voluntary basis.
- 1.3 Wales has its own legislation governing mandatory reporting for beef and pigs, *Beef and Pig Carcase Classification (Wales) Regulations 2011*. Within this legislation, abattoirs can report on sheep carcasses on a voluntary basis.
- 1.4 In October 2016, a UK wide “Call for Evidence” on the remit of the Groceries Code Adjudicator was undertaken. This consultation invited views and information on any unfair trading practices affecting the groceries supply chain, the need for further action and the form such action might take. The call for evidence closed in January 2017 and within the evaluation, there is a recommendation to introduce mandatory sheep carcase classification across the UK.
- 1.5 A separate consultation has already been undertaken in Scotland.
- 1.6 A consultation in England will be undertaken in parallel to this one for Wales.
- 1.7 This consultation paper further explains the Welsh Government policy and sets out proposals for arrangements for engaging with all stakeholders in the supply chain.
- 1.8 Consistency of reporting and transparency within the supply chain are vital to increasing producer knowledge and confidence of the processing sector. The arrangements for delivering these are discussed in this consultation paper.

Acronyms

AHDB – Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board
CMO – Common Market Organisation
FOIA – Freedom of Information Act
GCA – Groceries Code Adjudicator
HCC – Hybu Cig Cymru
RPA – Rural Payments Agency
MLCSL – Meat and Livestock Commercial Services Ltd.

2. Purpose of the consultation

2.1 The main purpose of this consultation is to seek your views on the introduction of mandatory sheep carcass classification in Wales and to build a picture of the method of classification and reporting which should be adopted.

2.2 It will also seek views on publishing schedules, communicating classification results to the customer and data reporting across carcass classification for all livestock.

Who will be affected by the proposal to introduce mandatory sheep carcass classification?

2.3 This consultation is directed at individuals who are involved in the production and processing of sheep carcasses; aimed principally at anyone with an interest in the regulation of the sheep sector. It will be of particular interest to you if you are;

- engaged in activities associated with the production, sale or processing of sheep;
- engaged in activities for the benefit of the sheep industry; or
- engaged in activities related to carcass classification, for all livestock (of which beef and pig classification is already mandatory).

Timing of the consultation

2.4 This consultation will run for 12 weeks from 31/05/2018 and close on 23/08/2018. We will not consider responses received after that date.

2.5 We have been engaging with industry stakeholders and have made them aware of both the purpose and schedule of this consultation.

Responding to this consultation

2.6 Please respond to this consultation using the formal template provided at Document 1.

You can return the completed documentation by email to:
ASDConsultationResponses@gov.wales

Or by writing to;

Welsh Government
Agriculture- Sustainability and Development
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3 NQ

Following the consultation

- 2.7 After the consultation process is completed, a summary of the responses will be published and placed on the Welsh Government website at:
<https://beta.gov.wales/consultations>
- 2.8 The summary will include a list of names and organisations who responded but not personal names, addresses or other contact details. However, information provided in response to this consultation document, including personal information, may be subject to publication or release to other parties or to disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes e.g. Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the General Data Protection Regulation(GDPR).
- 2.9 If you want information, including personal data that you provide to be treated as confidential, please state clearly in writing, when you submit your response to the consultation, why you need to keep these details confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure under the FOIA, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot provide an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as a confidentiality request.
- 2.10 This consultation is being conducted in line with the “Consultation Principles” as set out in the Better Regulation Executive guidance which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance> and coherent to the ‘National Principles for Public Engagement’ which can be found at <https://participation.cymru/en/principles/>

3. Proposal

Mandatory sheep carcass classification – what is this consultation about?

- 3.1 European Regulations (the Common Market Organisation (CMO) Regulation 1308/2013, Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No. 2017/1182 and Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No. 2017/1184) provide a voluntary rule which allows Member States to apply a Union scale for the classification of sheep carcasses. Where a Member State chooses to apply sheep carcass classification, they must follow the relevant classification rules laid down in those Regulations. As a consequence, any mandatory classification scheme introduced by the relevant competent authority in the UK, whilst we remain subject to EU rules, must conform to the European SEUROP classification grid system.
- 3.2 This means, classification of sheep carcasses under the CMO Regulation is currently non-mandatory; the proposal of this consultation would be to make the classification mandatory through an amendment to the existing Beef and Pig Classification Regulations (Wales) 2011.
- 3.3 To remain consistent with current classification systems used by slaughter houses in Wales, we wish to seek views on making the European grid system mandatory. More information on the detail of the SEUROP grid can be found at Annex A.¹

Where are we now?

- 3.4 We have been in discussion with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in England in relation to launching a parallel consultation. Given the GCA Review was a UK wide consultation a decision was taken to undertake a synchronised consultation. Proposals have been developed for how mandatory classification in Wales could be implemented; to bring the requirements into effect an amendment to Welsh secondary legislation would be needed. If the outcome of the consultation is for an amendment to be made to the legislation, this is likely to be implemented in early 2019.
- 3.5 The necessary impact assessments considered the potential impacts on businesses in Wales with the evidence suggesting no additional slaughter houses in Wales would be affected by the proposed legislative change (due to the throughput threshold proposed). Four slaughterhouses in Wales account for over 90% of throughput of sheep, two of which are already reporting.

Regulation 1308/2013: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1522932628696&uri=CELEX:32013R1308>
Regulation 2017/1182: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2017/1182/oj
Regulation 2017/1184: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1524750620461&uri=CELEX:32017R1184>

¹Annex A provides more information on the EU's SEUROP carcass classification system.

Research in to proposals

3.6 Carcase classification has been mandatory in commercial-scale abattoirs in the beef and pig sectors for many years.

Q1) *Are you in favour of mandatory sheep carcase classification in Wales?*

- I. Yes
- II. No
- III. Comments

Q2) *If you are an abattoir do you currently use a sheep carcase classification system?*

- I. Yes, SEUROP.
- II. Yes, another system (please specify in “comments”)
- III. No
- IV. Comments

Throughput Thresholds

3.7 Research has been undertaken to look at the premises which currently have significant sheep throughput on a weekly basis. In 2017, there were 22 abattoirs registered to slaughter sheep. Of these, four abattoirs account for over 90% of all throughputs. We are proposing an exemption to mandatory classification and price reporting for abattoirs slaughtering fewer than 1,000 sheep per week as an annual average. Under this system, we anticipate that mandatory classification and price reporting would cover close to 90% of the annual throughput in Wales. More information is provided in Annex C.

Q3) *We propose an exemption for abattoirs with a throughput of fewer than 1,000 sheep per week as an annual average. Do you have any comments on this threshold?*

- I. Comments

Licensing and Assessment

3.8 We propose carcase classification would be carried out by qualified classifiers who have obtained a licence for manual classification of carcasses. Classifiers would be required to undergo an assessment before being eligible for a licence. The licensing and testing of the classifier is proposed to be carried out by the Rural Payments Agency, as is currently carried out for beef classification.

3.9 The licensing and assessment requirement will apply to all authorised grading techniques including automated, semi-automated and manual. Conditions may be imposed on any licences granted, as with beef carcase classifier licences. Where a licence has been issued, it is intended the following will apply:

- A licence or any condition can be varied;
- A licence can be revoked where a significant number of incorrect classifications, presentations or identifications take place;

- A licence can be suspended or revoked if the person has broken the terms or conditions of the licence or where it is no longer appropriate for the licence holder to carry out classifications;
- A licence can be suspended or revoked if any automated grading equipment approved in future no longer meets the standards required, whether this is due to the equipment or the operator's use of the equipment.

Please note these are the same rules that apply presently to the beef carcass classifiers licences.

Enforcement

3.10 This guidance is based on the enforcement of the Beef and Pig Carcass Classification Regulations (Wales) 2011, under which breach of certain provisions are offences. It is proposed that similarly for sheep carcass classification failure to comply with certain requirements of the classification system will be offences. It is likely that the proposed offences will be similar regardless of the nature of the classification system selected, although there may be some additional offences under a future bespoke system to be determined by RPA.

Compliance offences

3.11 The proposed offences will relate to failing to comply with the requirements as to:

- Presentation
- Classification (conformation & fat cover);
- Weighing;
- Identification of carcasses (marks and labelling);
- Record keeping; and
- Allowing access (no obstruction).

There may be additional offences developed if a bespoke system is developed.

The proposed penalty for such offences on summary conviction is an unlimited fine not exceeding the statutory maximum for the offence of misleading marks.

Notification and licence offences

3.12 In line with the regulations for beef and pig carcass classification, it is proposed where an abattoir used for slaughtering sheep is required to notify registration details or to report information on prices to RPA failure to comply with the notification or observe either of these requirements will be an offence. It is also proposed offences and penalties in line with those relating to licences for beef carcass classification will apply to sheep carcass classification. The regulations for beef carcass classification provide:

- If classification is carried out at an approved abattoir (manually or by means of automated grading equipment), without a licence granted, or in breach of any term or condition of such a licence, both the person who carries out the classification and the operator of that abattoir are each guilty of an offence.

- Any person who makes an alteration to a licence granted is guilty of an offence.

3.13 The penalty for such offences on summary conviction, is an unlimited fine in addition to revoking of individuals' licences.

3.14 As with the legislation for beef carcass classification, inspections will be unannounced, take place at regular intervals or on a risk basis and the powers of entry will be as it stands at present.

Powers of entry

3.15 It is proposed the powers of entry which apply to beef and pig carcass classification will also apply to sheep carcass classification. This means an authorised officer may at any reasonable hour enter an approved abattoir and any associated premises in which carcasses may be handled or records relating to those carcasses may be kept, for the purpose of checking whether:

- any offence under these Regulations is being or has been committed on the premises; or
- there is on the premises any evidence of any such offence.

3.16 The officer may be accompanied, including by any representative of the European Commission or Welsh Government (whichever is most relevant according to the nature of the classification system enacted). If there are reasonable grounds, or a need for urgency a warrant may be authorised allowing an officer to enter the premises, if need be by reasonable force.

3.17 The 'Powers of Entry' is proposed to be exercised by RPA as is with current beef carcass classification.

Inspections

3.18 It is proposed inspections shall be carried out by RPA, unannounced, at regular intervals or on a risk basis with varying frequency and relative to the volume of sheep production. It is intended the powers of authorised officers who enter premises regarding beef and pig carcass classification will also apply in respect of sheep carcass classification. These allow authorised RPA officers to:

- Inspect carcasses on the premises;
- Examine records which the operator is required to keep;
- Require copies or extracts of records to be produced;
- Retain records which the officer believes may be required as evidence.

Communication of classification results to the customer

3.19 Key industry stakeholders have approached Welsh Government and asked for a commitment to explore with industry how the collection and dissemination of market data can be improved in the longer-term to drive greater transparency. The industry believes greater transparency can lead to productivity improvements.

3.20 Therefore, it is proposed commercial scale abattoirs undertaking carcass classification should report information relating to the classification in a timely manner. This information will help farmers better understand the value of their production systems, thereby helping them to improve productivity. This information should be reported to the supplier in a usable and understandable format.

3.21 Feedback is welcomed on how such a system would operate.

Q4) What information should abattoirs report to their suppliers with regards to carcass classification and in what timeframe?

I. Comments

Price reporting

3.22 Having good information on prices which is up to date is beneficial to the sector in helping it to plan and improve. It is proposed abattoirs should report prices weekly to Hybu Cig Cymru – Meat Promotion Wales (HCC) in an approved format for subsequent publication in an aggregated format that preserves commercial confidentiality. It is proposed that price reporting for sheep be monitored by the RPA as is currently the case for beef.

3.23 Feedback is welcomed on how such a system would operate.

Q5) What aggregated information should HCC be publishing?

I. Comments

Publication of schedule of charges and prices

3.24 In the interests of improving fairness in the supply chain, the Welsh Government is considering requiring commercial scale abattoirs to publish their schedule of charges for services connected with slaughtering of livestock (beef, pigs and sheep) e.g. the cost of cleaning animals, classification charges and insurance.

3.25 In addition, all abattoirs must provide customers with a breakdown of the price paid for each animal, including charges deducted, when requested.

3.26 Feedback is welcomed on how such a system would operate.

Q6) Do you agree with our proposal for publication of a schedule of charges and prices?

I. Yes

II. No

III. What elements should be covered?

IV. Comments

Q7) What impact, in terms of administration and other costs, do you expect this regulation would have on your business? Please provide reasons and evidence where possible for your answer.

I. Comments

4. Impacts of Consultation

Mandatory sheep carcass classification will facilitate the transmission of information through the supply chain. It is expected this will lead to fairer and more economically efficient transactions.

To deliver these benefits, the regulation may introduce some administrative and resource costs on affected abattoir businesses, who will be required to perform classification and record and report results and prices. We anticipate that the main costs to affected abattoirs will come in terms of staff training and the limited time costs from mandatory inspections.

As part of the policy development process, Welsh Government, in conjunction with Defra, have conducted an initial assessment of these impacts, which suggests the additional costs are likely to be small.

The significant factors which contribute to this assessment are the inclusion of the throughput exemption, such that only abattoirs processing over 1,000 sheep per week (as an annual average) are affected; and initial evidence that at least the majority of the abattoirs affected currently have systems, or readily adaptable systems, to enable them to fulfil the classification regulation.

Annex A- SEUROP Classification system

The (S)EUROP classification basis is as shown below.

The union scales for the classification of sheep carcasses are as follows:

Conformation classes – (S), E, U, R, O and P

Fat classes – 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 (sub-classes L & H on fat classes 3 & 4)

The 15 point scale can be utilised if desired

The definitions of "carcase" and "half-carcase":

- "carcase" means the whole body of a slaughtered animal as presented after bleeding, evisceration and skinning;
- "half-carcase" means the product obtained by separating the carcase symmetrically through the middle of each cervical, dorsal, lumbar and sacral vertebra and through the middle of the sternum and the ischiopubic symphysis.

Categories

The carcasses shall be divided into the following categories (covering all sheep):

- a. Carcasses of sheep under 12 months old
- b. Carcasses of other sheep.

Communication on the results of the classification should be done for all sheep.

Price reporting

The recording of market prices will be for sheep aged less than 12 months. They shall be broken down into weight categories:

- a. Carcasses of light lambs weighing less than 13 kg carcase weight
- b. Carcasses of heavy lambs weighing 13kg carcase weight or more.

Classification

The carcasses shall be classified by successive assessment of:

Conformation, defined as follows:

- Development of carcase profiles, in particular the essential parts (hindquarter, back, shoulder)

Conformation class and Description

S Superior – All profiles extremely convex; exceptional muscle development (double muscled carcase type).

E Excellent – All profiles convex to super-convex; exceptional muscle development.

U Very good – Profiles on the whole convex, very good muscle development.

R Good – Profiles on the whole straight; good muscle development.

O Fair – Profiles straight to concave; average muscle development.

P Poor – All profiles concave to very concave; poor muscle development.

Fat cover

1 Low – None up to low fat cover.

2 Slight – Slight fat cover, flesh visible almost everywhere.

3 Average – Flesh with the exception of the hindquarter and shoulder, almost everywhere covered with fat, slight deposits of fat in the thoracic cavity.

4 High – Flesh covered with fat, but on the hindquarter and shoulder still partly visible, some distinctive fat deposits in the thoracic cavity.

5 Very high – Entire carcass covered with fat; heavy deposits in the thoracic cavity.

EU Presentation

Carcasses and half-carcasses shall be presented without the head (severed at the atlantooccipital joint), the feet (severed at the carpometacarpal or tarso-metatarsal joints), the tail (severed between the sixth and seventh caudal vertebrae), without the udder/cod fat, genitalia, the liver and the pluck. Kidneys and kidney fat are included in the carcass.

Weighing

The animal must be weighed according to the specification above to the nearest 100g. The cold weight price should be reported which shall correspond to the warm weight of the carcass corrected to take account of the weight loss on chilling. This is the weight that should be paid to the supplier.

Identification of carcasses

Classified carcasses and half-carcasses shall be identified by marking or labelling.

Annex B – Details of the EU mandatory requirements for sheep carcass classification

Please note that the EU sheep carcass classification system will be undergoing changes, and so this is a description of the system that will exist from July 2018. As we are considering the possibility of mandating this system in early 2019, these are the requirements that would be in place, if we were to do that.

Requirement of EU system	Implementation requirements that would apply (and likely delivery bodies)
All sheep carcass classifiers to be licensed by the competent authority; there must also be a competent authority process for withdrawing the licence and for appeals.	Currently conducted by RPA for beef; RPA's responsibilities will be extended to cover mandatory sheep classification.
Abattoirs must ensure that sheep are presented for classification in line with the detailed requirements for presentation set out in the Regulation (adhering to the dressing specifications, offal removed etc.).	Responsibility of abattoir, verified by RPA in on-the-spot checks.
Classification for fat and conformation must be carried out and the animal graded according to the (S) EUROP grid.	Responsibility of classifier, verified by RPA in on-the-spot checks.
The recorded market price must be that paid to the supplier, net of VAT and expressed per 100g of carcass weight. It must be the cold weight and where necessary, the specified corrective factors should be applied to calculate the price.	Responsibility of abattoir.
On-the-spot checks must be carried out by an independent party (or the competent authority) to verify that classification is being carried out correctly. There is a minimum throughput threshold for these checks and for sheep they are required to take place at abattoirs where 1000 sheep per week or more are slaughtered (based on an annual average).	Conducted by RPA.
Video Imaging Analysis (VIA) machines – where these are used they must be authorised by the competent authority following an authorisation test.	Responsibility of abattoir, verified by RPA during testing, installation and ongoing checks. No sheep VIA machine has been approved for use in UK, any machine would initially need to undergo Commission certification in the period whilst the UK remains subject to EU rules before could be adopted for use in UK.
During the period that the UK remains subject to EU rules, should the EU Commission's Inspection Committee wish to verify that classification is being carried out properly, the Member State must provide access to facilitate this.	Responsibility of the abattoir to allow access and of the competent authority.
Classification and price reporting - the classification results and prices must be	Responsibility of abattoir to report classification results and prices, verified by

Requirement of EU system	Implementation requirements that would apply (and likely delivery bodies)
reported by the abattoirs subject to on-the-spot checks to the central competent authority.	RPA.
The competent authority must provide the Commission with a list of the abattoirs subject to price reporting requirements.	Responsibility of competent authority.
The central competent authority must report the representative prices to the Commission by noon (Brussels time) every Wednesday.	Responsibility of AHDB, monitored by RPA.

Annex C – Thresholds and impact of sheep carcass classification

This is based on 2016 figures reported to HCC

Average weekly throughput threshold	Number of abattoirs	% of annual Welsh throughput
<500	14	2.8%
501-1,000	1	1.0%
1,001-5,000	0	0.0%
>5,001	4	96.2%

Annex D – Legal details of sheep carcase classification scheme

We would aim to mirror the beef carcase classification scheme wherever possible.

Licensing and Assessment

We propose that carcase classification would be carried out by qualified classifiers who have obtained a licence for the manual classification of carcasses. Classifiers would be required to undergo an assessment before being eligible for a licence. The testing, licensing and checking of ongoing proficiency of the classifier will be carried out by the RPA. The licensing and assessment requirement will apply to all authorised grading techniques including automated, semi-automated and manual. Conditions may be imposed on any licences granted, as with beef carcase classifier licences. Where a licence has been issued it is intended the following will apply:

- A licence or any condition can be varied;
- A licence can be revoked where a significant number of incorrect classifications, presentations or identifications take place;
- A licence can be suspended or revoked if the person has broken the terms or conditions of the licence or where it is no longer appropriate for the licence holder to carry out classifications;
- A licence can be suspended or revoked if any automated grading equipment approved in future no longer meets the standards required, whether this is due to the equipment or the operator's use of the equipment.

Please note that these are the same rules that apply presently to beef carcase classifiers licences.

Enforcement

This guidance is based on the enforcement of the Beef and Pig Carcase Classification Regulations², under which the breach of certain provisions are offences. It is proposed that similarly for sheep carcase classification failure to comply with certain requirements of the classification system will be offences.

It is likely that the proposed offences will be similar regardless of the nature of the classification system selected, although there may be some differences under a future bespoke system.

Compliance offences:

The proposed offences will relate to failing to comply with the requirements as to:

- Presentation
- Classification (conformation & fat cover);
- Weighing;
- Identification of carcasses (marks and labelling);
- Record keeping; and
- Allowing access (no obstruction).

There may be additional offences developed if a bespoke system is developed.

² The Beef and Pig Carcase Classification (England) Regulations 2010 (note that these are being updated to take into account the new EU regulations (2017/1182 and 2017/1184): <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1090/contents/made>

The proposed penalty for such offences on summary conviction is an unlimited fine not exceeding the statutory maximum for the offence of misleading marks.

Notification and licence offences

In line with the regulations for beef and pig carcass classification, it is proposed that where an abattoir used for slaughtering sheep is required to notify registration details or to report information on prices to RPA failure to comply with either of these requirements will be an offence.

It is also proposed that offences and penalties in line with those relating to licences for beef carcass classification will apply to sheep carcass classification. The regulations for beef carcass classification provide:

- If classification is carried out at an approved abattoir (manually or by means of automated grading equipment), without a licence granted, or in breach of any term or condition of such a licence, both the person who carries out the classification and the operator of that abattoir are each guilty of an offence.
- Any person who makes an alteration to a licence granted is guilty of an offence.
- The penalties for such offences on summary conviction is an unlimited fine in addition to revoking of individuals licences.

As with the legislation for beef carcass classification inspections will be unannounced, take place at regular intervals or on a risk basis, and the powers of entry will be as it stands at present.

Powers of entry

It is proposed that the powers of entry that apply to beef and pig carcass classification will also apply to sheep carcass classification.

These provide that an authorised officer may at any reasonable hour enter an approved abattoir and any associated premises in which carcasses may be handled or records relating to those carcasses may be kept, for the purpose of checking whether:

- Any offence under these Regulations is being or has been committed on the premises; or
- There is on the premises any evidence of any such offence.

The officer may be accompanied, including by any representative of the European Commission (whilst the UK remains subject to EU rules) or the government (whichever is most relevant according to the nature of the classification system enacted).

If there are reasonable grounds, or a need for urgency, a warrant may be authorised allowing an officer to enter the premises, if need be, by reasonable force.

Inspections

It is proposed that inspections shall be carried out unannounced, at regular intervals or on a risk basis with varying frequency and relative to the volume of sheep production. It is intended that the powers of authorised officers who enter premises regarding beef and pig carcass classification will also apply in respect of sheep carcass classification. These allow authorised officers to:

- Inspect carcasses on the premises;
- Examine records which the operator is required to keep;

- Require copies or extracts of records to be produced;
- Retain records which the officer believes may be required as evidence.

Consultation Response Form

Your name:

Organisation (if applicable):

email / telephone number:

Your address:

General Questions

Please choose which of these best represent you:

- I. A livestock farmer
- II. A livestock market
- III. An abattoir
- IV. A cutting plant not connected to an abattoir
- V. A trader in livestock or meat not covered by (i) to (iii)
- VI. Other (please specify)

Question 1

Are you in favour of mandatory sheep carcass classification in Wales?

- I. Yes
- II. No
- III. Comments

Question 2

If you are an abattoir do you currently use a sheep carcass classification system?

- I. Yes, SEUROP.
- II. Yes, another system (please specify in "comments")
- III. No
- IV. Comments

Question 3

We propose an exemption for abattoirs with a throughput of fewer than 1,000 sheep per week as an annual average. Do you believe this threshold is set at the correct level?

- I. Yes
- II. No
- III. Comments

Question 4

What information should abattoirs report to their suppliers with regards to carcass classification and in what timeframe?

- I. Comments

Question 5

What aggregated information should HCC be publishing??

- I. Comments

Question 6

Q6 Do you agree with our proposal for the publication of the schedule of charges and prices?

- I. Yes
- II. No
- III. What elements should be covered?
- IV. Comments

Question 7

What impact, in terms of administration and other costs, do you expect this regulation would have on your business? Please provide reasons and evidence where possible for your answer.

I. Comments

Further Questions

Question 8: We would like to know your views on the effects of introducing mandatory sheep carcass classification in Wales would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.

What effects do you think there would be? How positive effects could be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Question 9: Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy '*Introduction of mandatory sheep carcass classification in Wales*' could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Question 10: We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:

Please enter here:

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: