

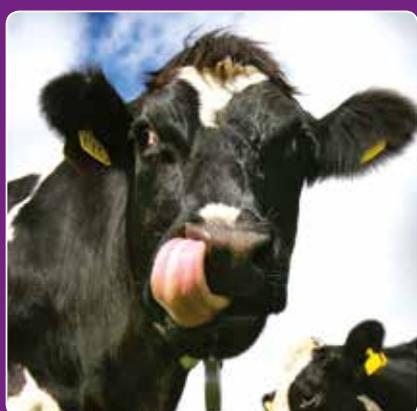


Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework

Achieving High Standards Together



Contents

Ministerial Foreword	3
Introduction	4
Our commitment	
Lifespan	
Scope	
Contingency planning	
Welsh language	
Section One: Vision and Principles	7
What is our vision?	
Principles	
Sustainable development	
Green growth	
Section Two: Ways of Working – An Outcomes Based Approach	11
Using an outcomes based approach	
Population accountability	
Programme and performance accountability	
The data development agenda	
Section Three: Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation	13
The Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group	
Monitoring the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework	
Partnership networks	
Planning and reporting cycle	
Section Four: How you can get involved	16
Annex One: Evidence Card Template	17

Ministerial Foreword



by Rebecca Evans, Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries

I welcome the launch of the **“Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework – Achieving High Standards Together”**. The Framework represents a significant opportunity to move to a different way of working. This will help us focus our delivery on the priorities for Wales.

The Framework has a vital role in supporting the Welsh Government in its commitment to create growth and jobs. I am looking forward to working closely with all

those with an interest in animal health and welfare to deliver the best long term outcomes for them and for Wales.

Fundamental to the success of the Framework is a strong partnership approach. We all have a stake in improving the national level of animal health and welfare. The way we treat animals is an important reflection of the values of our society. High standards of animal health and welfare inevitably mean less risk to human health and also help to sustain a profitable farming industry.

The Framework sets out our vision for animal health, described through five shared outcomes agreed through public consultation. Through these outcomes I am keen to explore how animal health and welfare issues can impact across a wider agenda, including links to other strategies such as the Rural Development Plan for Wales, and Delivering Growth: An Action Plan for the Food and Drinks Sector 2014-20 as well as links to the economy and public health.

We need evidence and a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to underpin this work. I fully encourage increased collaborative working with industry and other partners to collect, share and use data to agree priorities, identify solutions and make effective decisions which maximise impact and ensure best use of resources.

Section Four of this document describes various ways you can become involved and play an increasing role in helping to raise animal health and welfare standards together. I am keen to encourage your participation and support in taking this forward.

Rebecca Evans
July 2014

Introduction

1. We all have a stake in raising standards of animal health and welfare in Wales. The way that animals are bred, reared and cared for throughout their life, the health and welfare and policies introduced to manage disease risks can have major implications for the environment and society as a whole. Disease outbreaks and the measures to control them can carry wide and costly consequences for public health, the economy and the environment.
2. The **Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework** sets out our plan for continuing and lasting improvements in standards of animal health and welfare for kept animals, whilst also helping to protect public health and making a contribution to the economy and the environment.
3. The overarching objectives of the Framework are to build on the progress made in Wales to raise standards of animal health and welfare by:
 - using an approach focussed on delivery to achieve shared outcomes
 - working in partnership to develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework, underpinned by a strong evidence base.

Our commitment



4. If we want to make a difference in Wales and give ourselves the best chance of turning these outcomes into a future record of achievement, there needs to be a collective ownership of this Framework.
5. The Welsh Government has a role to play but this cannot be undertaken in isolation. Working in partnership will be critical to its success. There are likely to be challenges for all of us but to demonstrate our determination the following commitments are made by the Welsh Government:
 - To continue to apply the following principles to our ways of working:
 - working in partnership
 - promoting the benefits of animal health and welfare; prevention is better than cure
 - understanding and accepting roles and responsibilities
 - ensuring a clearer understanding and accepting roles and responsibilities
 - delivering and enforcing standards effectively.
 - To work with the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group and seek their advice and input into raising animal health and welfare standards in Wales and approach to tackling a range of animal diseases.



- To ensure we protect against the incursion and spread of animal infectious diseases and maintain a state of preparedness to deal with any outbreak of notifiable animal disease that may occur in Wales.
- To ensure that robust contingency plans are in place to enable the effective and efficient response to an exotic animal disease outbreak.
- To ensure we tackle endemic notifiable animal disease, such as TB, in the most effective way through review, engagement, challenge and collection and analysis of evidence.
- To maximise the benefits from other current and future, initiatives, policies and programmes e.g. The Rural Development Plan for Wales and Delivering Growth: An Action Plan for the Food and Drinks Sector 2014-20, that can help positively influence animal health and welfare standards.
- To produce an annual action plan that identifies priority areas of work, milestones to measure achievement and helps to evaluate evidence and progress.
- To establish partnership networks that will be used to improve stakeholder engagement and promote a more inclusive way of working.
- To assist in the compilation of evidence on which to agree priorities and monitor progress.
- To undertake a mid-term review to evaluate achievements and progress against the Strategic Outcomes of the Framework.



Lifespan

6. The lifespan of the Framework is 10 years. However it is recognised that throughout this period, the Framework should be closely monitored and maintain its flexibility to respond to and take account of new developments and policy changes through out its lifespan.

Scope

7. The Framework has been developed to cover the health and welfare of:
 - farmed livestock
 - companion animals
 - working animals
 - kept animals involved in sport
 - aquaculture
8. Wildlife is also covered where our actions affect their health and welfare or where there is a risk of wildlife transmitting disease to other animals or humans.



Contingency planning

9. The Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework will support the regular review process and testing of contingency plans for dealing with an exotic animal disease outbreak.

Welsh language

10. Implementation of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework will comply with the Welsh Government's commitment towards the Welsh Language.
11. The Welsh and English languages are the working languages of the Welsh Government. In line with the Welsh Language Act 1993 and the Welsh Language Measure 2011, both Welsh and English languages are treated equally.
12. Further information regarding the Welsh Government's commitment towards the Welsh language and its vision of a bilingual nation can be accessed here:
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/welshlanguage/?lang=en>



Section One: Vision and Principles

13. This section sets out our vision for animal health and welfare in Wales, the principles which underpin the way we work towards achieving this vision and how animal health and welfare contributes to sustainable development and the green growth agenda.

What is our vision?

14. The long term vision for animal health and welfare in Wales can be described through five strategic outcomes. These have been split between those where animal health and welfare policy/interventions will have the most influence and greatest impact and those where animal health and welfare policy will have a lesser impact but still makes an important contribution towards their achievement.

Diagram One: Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework – Strategic Outcomes

Direct Impact – have the most influence & greatest impact

- Wales has healthy productive animals
- Animals in Wales have a good quality of life
- People trust and have confidence in the way food is produced and the way public health is protected

Indirect Impact – lesser impact but still makes an important contribution

- Wales has a thriving rural economy
- Wales has a high quality environment

15. Contributing towards the achievement of these strategic outcomes will be programme outcomes which reflect the Welsh Government and industry priorities. For example, the TB Eradication Programme or actions to tackle other diseases such as Bovine Viral Diarrhoea. The process for agreeing and monitoring these priorities is set out in **Section Three**.

Principles

16. The way we work towards achieving our vision for animal health and welfare in Wales is guided by five key principles. First developed as part of the Great Britain Animal Health and Welfare Strategy they remain fundamental to our new approach:
- **Promoting the benefits of animal health and welfare; prevention is better than cure** – through good husbandry practices, adoption of high welfare standards and disease prevention measures (biosecurity), we can minimise animal disease and welfare impacts and reduce the likelihood of livestock contracting or spreading disease. Benefits to industry and Government are clear, less cost and better productivity as well as to the improved well being of the animals themselves.

- **Understanding and accepting roles and responsibilities** – to support partnership working it is essential that there is a recognition and acceptance of responsibility by all parties involved with animal health and welfare – among others, these include:
 - **animal owners and keepers** – who are responsible for providing for the physical and welfare needs of the animals within their care as well as the responsibility to report any suspicion of disease and take good disease prevention measures
 - **industry organisations** – who can **i.** support animal owners to adopt high standards of animal health and welfare **ii.** raise awareness of these standards to a wider audience **iii.** share and promote best practice
 - **veterinarians** – in addition to the traditional role of treatment of disease, vets can support animal owners to adopt high standards of animal health and welfare through advice, guidance and farm health planning and also have a vital role in combating and controlling animal disease
 - **Government** – who can intervene in order to **i.** protect human health **ii.** protect and promote the welfare of animals **iii.** protect the wider economy, environment and society **iv.** protect and represent interests in international trade
- **Working in partnership** – critical to the success is increased co-operation and collaboration between the Welsh Government, industry representatives, livestock keepers and other animal owners. There must also be a cross departmental approach within the Welsh Government as well as with other Administrations and delivery agencies.



- **Ensuring a clearer understanding of costs and benefits** – in addition to understanding the cost and benefit of Government intervention, it is appropriate to seek a balance between the taxpayer and the extent industry is held liable for the cost of animal health and welfare. This will require a high level of cross-Departmental cooperation working with the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group (see **Section Three**), as well as collective effort across industry, stakeholders and other representatives with both a direct and in-direct role.



- **Delivering and enforcing standards effectively** – while it remains important to reduce the regulatory burden and wherever possible look for the most appropriate delivery mechanism there are a range of obligatory requirements, particularly in relation to European Commission Regulation and Directives, that need to be complied with as a member state of the European Union. This ensures there is a recognised means of applying animal disease control measures and enforcement as required. It is standard policy to engage stakeholders and livestock owners on new measures or changes to existing measures.

Sustainable development



17. Sustainability lies at the heart of the Welsh Government's agenda for Wales and promotes the economic, social and environmental wellbeing and enhance people's quality of life. It is about defining the long term development path. It means healthy, productive people; vibrant and inclusive communities; a diverse and resilient environment, and an advanced and innovative economy.
18. Animal health and welfare makes a major contribution to the sustainability of the livestock sector, to the wider food and farming industry and more broadly to the countryside, the environment, rural communities and the rural economy.
19. With sustainable development as the central organising principle of the Welsh Government, the strategic outcomes for the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework have been developed in the context of the wider economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales. There has been an effort to reinforce links to wider outcomes such as protection of the food chain, contribution to the rural economy and enhancement of the natural environment.



Green growth

20. Green growth, in its simplest form, can be thought of as a path of economic growth which uses natural resources in a sustainable manner. It is a way of fostering economic growth and development, while ensuring that natural assets continue to provide the resources and environmental services on which our well-being relies.

21. Implementation of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework can make a direct contribution to the green growth agenda. Healthy livestock will help drive the green growth of our rural economies, improving both resource efficiency of production and resilience. The five strategic outcomes (**Diagram One**) reflect the scope of this contribution.
22. One example is the contribution made to the climate change agenda. Healthy animals help protect the productivity and production levels of farmers, reduce capital losses, minimise negative trade impacts as well as reducing pollution and CO₂ emissions.
23. For the economy, there are the direct economic effects of a disease outbreak. A much quoted example is the 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak where the economic impact on agriculture, the food industry and the public sector in the UK were estimated at £3.1 billion, with the following split:
 - agricultural producers: £355 million
 - food industry: £170 million
 - public Sector: £2585 million, and
 - consumers: £15 million
24. There are also the indirect costs to consider. Again using the example of the Foot and Mouth outbreak, the costs to tourism were also estimated as a loss of expenditure as between £2.7 and £3.2 billion. The indirect costs to industries that supply agriculture, the food industries and tourist related business were estimate at £1.9 billion to £2.3 billion, with losses to industries supplying agriculture and the food chain to be £85 million, and losses to industries supplying firms involved in tourism to be £1.8 billion to £2.2 billion.
25. There is also a link to food and improved consumer confidence. Healthy livestock raises standards and provides a marketing tool. Healthy livestock kept to high standards of welfare is a specific marketing opportunity, and provides farmers with business opportunities.
26. More information on green growth can be accessed through the link below:
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/environmentcountryside/consmanagement/green-growth-wales/?lang=en>



Section Two: Ways of Working – An Outcomes Based Approach

Using an outcomes based approach

27. As set out in the introduction of this document, the overarching objectives of the Framework are to build on the progress made in Wales to raise standards of animal health and welfare by:

- using an approach focussed on delivery to achieve shared outcomes
- working in partnership to develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework, underpinned by a strong evidence base.

28. Using an outcomes based approach provides a method of thinking and taking action together that is simple and common sense. It is a process that gets from talk to action quickly. It is about demonstrating that actions taken and resources applied are making a difference.

29. The key benefits of using this approach are that it will:

- Clearly define strategic outcomes for animal health and welfare in Wales which will be clear about how animal health and welfare policy and delivery affects the people and communities of Wales.
- Address a major weakness of the previous Great Britain Animal Health and Welfare Strategy in that there is no robust monitoring framework in place to measure the impact of activities in Wales.
- Embed a way of partnership working that gets from discussion to action quickly.
- Provide an evidence base to address the other drivers for change identified in the previous section such as being able to respond to the financial climate, changes in Europe, a focus on Wales' priorities.
- Ensure an approach which is consistent with general Welsh Government policy development across portfolios.

30. To provide a structure for the approach it should be considered as having two key components. These are population accountability and programme and performance accountability.



Population accountability

31. Population accountability is about a geographic area, for example all people in Wales. In summary, a group of partners will take on responsibility for the well-being of a population in a geographic area. This approach requires partnership working with stakeholders taking collective responsibility for progress towards better outcomes.

32. For the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework the five strategic outcomes (set out in **Section One**) are in effect the population outcomes which articulate the long term vision for animal health and welfare in Wales. These have been agreed through public consultation to help embed the principle of partnership working from the outset.

Programme and performance accountability

33. The second component is about how specific interventions are making a difference and performing for beneficiaries. For the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework, this will be the agreed policy/project priorities in place to contribute towards achievement of the strategic outcomes.
34. To structure discussions and ensure key information is captured, the following questions should be worked through when considering priorities:
 - What are the outcomes for animal health and welfare that we want to improve?
 - How would we know this if we could see it? How could it be measured?
 - What data exists to measure outcomes? Are there any data gaps?
 - What are the current trends on the most important of those measures?
 - What partners are important?
 - What would it take to do better? This should include no or low-cost ideas. What do we propose to do?
35. The information can be logged on to an evidence card (**Annex One**). This can then be reviewed and updated regularly to assess progress, provide an evidence trail and aid decision making on future actions. It is acknowledged that the evidence card may not be able to record everything related to a specific priority but it should provide the key information readily.
36. Further information on using the outcomes based approach (text book name Results Based Accountability) can be accessed through the attached link: www.raguide.org

The data development agenda

37. There needs to be a robust evidence base to support the outcomes based approach. We rarely have all the data we need at the beginning, but we can start with the best data we have, and get better data.
38. The fundamental questions considered when applying the outcomes based approach are:

What data exists to measure outcomes? Are there any data gaps?
39. When considering this question, there will inevitably be situations where the data required to evidence progress is not readily available or just does not exist. An important part of the process will be to record these requirements as a prioritised list of where we need new or improved data, the data development agenda.
40. The data development agenda will be kept centrally by the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Monitoring Team and reviewed quarterly (see **Section Three**). Decisions regarding the commissioning of new data can be considered jointly by the Welsh Government and the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group. In addition, interested parties are encouraged to gather data if they wish to do so.

Section Three: Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

41. This section outlines the mechanisms in place to monitor and evaluate progress made through the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework.

The Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group

42. The Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group has been established to support the implementation of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework. The Group will help strengthen the link between the Welsh Government, livestock keepers, other animal owners and industry representatives, covering the whole spectrum of animal health and welfare issues.

43. The key functions of the Group are to:

- Raise and consider new issues which could potentially impact on achieving the strategic outcomes within the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework.
- Consider delivery of outcomes and priorities, especially important in current (and future) climate of pressurised resources.
- Challenge new and emerging policy.
- Liaise with industry and help gather information to better inform decisions.
- Ensure continuous reviews of progress, identify, deliver and where required facilitate improvements and projects.
- Facilitate and streamline communication of key messages and flow of information as part of a broader communications strategy.
- Establish and maintain links to industry organisations and representative groups, the wider agricultural and rural economy as well as to areas such as human health, education, tackling poverty etc.
- Perform a representative role – members can act as spokespeople on animal health and welfare issues.

44. The Group **does not** have the autonomy to make decisions on how funding will be allocated, sign off Service Level Agreements with delivery bodies, approve contingency plans or approve submissions.



45. The Group is supported by networks of expertise which can contribute as necessary to on-going or new/ emerging issues.

Section Four explains how you can register to join the partnership networks.

46. In parallel with the planning and reporting cycles (**Diagram Two**), the Group will meet formally on a quarterly basis.

47. Full details on the membership and work of the Group can be accessed here www.wales.gov.uk/ahwframework

Monitoring the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework

48. The Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Monitoring Team is based within the Welsh Government as part of the Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer. The team has responsibility for the following tasks:

- Providing secretariat support to the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group.
- Co-ordinating key aspects relating to the implementation and monitoring of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework, including the annual implementation plan, progress updates, end of year review.
- Maintaining a central record of the data development agenda.
- Co-ordinating the communications strategy, including the website, promotional material, events etc.
- Managing correspondence and queries relating to the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework.



Partnership networks

49. Critical to the implementation of the Framework is increased collaborative working with industry and other partners to collect, share and use data to agree priorities, identify solutions and make effective decisions which maximise impact and ensure best use of resources.



50. To support the implementation of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework and the work of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group, there will be a central database for stakeholders to register their interests. Details of how to register can be found in **Section Four**.

51. One of the questions used in the outcomes based approach is "which partners need to be involved?". The database will be a tool to help get the right people together as quickly as possible to consider way forward and actions to take on agreed priorities.

Planning and reporting cycle

52. The Welsh Government and the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group will agree and publish each year an annual implementation plan covering the period April to March.

53. The plan will outline priorities for the year, how these contribute to the strategic outcomes, lead responsibilities and key actions for delivery. The plan will be kept under review and updated throughout the year. In line with the outcomes based approach, an evidence card will be produced and maintained for each priority.

54. If necessary, new priorities can be included in-year to reflect situations which may occur. It is expected that some priorities will remain in place over a number of years whilst others may have a much shorter lifespan but nevertheless can have considerable impact.

55. An outline of the planning and reporting cycle is set out below;

Diagram Two: Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Planning and Reporting Cycle



Section Four: How you can get involved

56. We all have a stake in improving standards of animal health and welfare and you are encouraged to get involved in the following ways.

Join our partnership networks

57. As set out earlier in this document, partnership working and increased collaboration with stakeholders is a fundamental element to the implementation of the Framework. To receive latest news and information directly on opportunities to get involved then you can register your interest on our stakeholder database.

58. Please complete the registration form at: **www.wales.gov.uk/ahwframework**

59. If you would like a hard copy of the registration form then please contact us using the details below.

Visit our website

Find the latest information on the Framework and the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group at: **www.wales.gov.uk/ahwframework**

Follow us on Twitter

 @CVOWales

Contact us

Email us at **WAHFG@Wales.gsi.gov.uk**

Or write to us at:

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CF10 3NQ



Annex One: Evidence Card Template

Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Evidence Card Template	Population
What are the outcomes for animal health and welfare that we want to improve?	What other data do we need?
Key Performance Indicators – What data exists to measure outcomes?	Partners who can help
Story behind the baseline – Why is there a problem? What are current trends?	
Actions – What would it take to do better?	

