



Welcome to Ruminant Health & Welfare

Welcome to the latest newsletter from Ruminant Health & Welfare. As we head into April, I, like many people, am in the thick of lambing and calving but I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took the time to fill in our survey - we had over 600 responses from across the country.

It has been so valuable to hear from the grassroots of the industry; the analysis has been completed so we will be releasing some very interesting results towards the end of April, in the form of a report - I'm looking forward to talking about that next month.

In today's newsletter we will tell you about our work on low prevalence, high impact diseases, our first four nations meeting and news from the industry. We also introduce you to more of our steering group members.

Please follow us on [Twitter](#) - to keep up to date with the latest news.

In the meantime, please contact us or send feedback to secretary@ruminanthw.org.uk and let us know if there are issues or stories you feel we should cover in the next update. Look forward to hearing from you.

Nigel Miller
Chair
RH&W



Time to tackle low prevalence diseases

RH&W believes sustained efforts to tackle priority production diseases in ruminants must continue. But the farming and veterinary industry should also focus on tackling low prevalence diseases – which have a high impact on individual herds and flocks.

[Read more about low prevalence diseases here.](#)

Meet the steering group



Sophie Prater, scientific officer at RSPCA Farm Animals Department

Sophie has taken over RSPCA membership from John Avizienius, who worked tirelessly to enhance farm animal welfare for over 35 years, and hopes to continue the progress he made in improving the lives of farm animals in the UK and beyond.

"I'm looking forward to working with RH&W to identify how best to bring about tangible animal health and welfare benefits through science based schemes. I'm keen to work with the industry to tackle some of the biggest issues such as lameness, high priority diseases and welfare during transport and slaughter, and I hope RH&W will be seen as the driving force of health and welfare within the industry."

"I graduated from the University of Edinburgh with an MSc in Applied Animal Behaviour and Welfare, during which I focused on improving lamb welfare during castration. I also enjoy spending time on a mixed beef and sheep farm on the Welsh Borders and talking to farmers to find out their views on how to improve welfare throughout the supply chain."

[See the rest of our steering group members here...](#)

Feedback from our first Four Nations meeting

Training, engagement and health planning were two key areas of discussion at the first RH&W Four Nations meeting held on 24 March, hosted online by stakeholders from Wales. The aim of these quarterly meetings is to share intelligence, priorities and approaches.

Stephen James, Pembrokeshire dairy farmer and chair of the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group, says the meeting was very positive and that it is clear those within RH&W share common goals. "While animal health and animal welfare are devolved responsibilities, good animal health looks the same, wherever the animal is kept," he explains.

"The four nations don't need to follow identical approaches to ensure their livestock are as healthy as possible, and there is value in piloting novel approaches. But the new Group enables us to learn from experiences across the UK – what works and what doesn't."

Nick Perkins, president of the Goat Veterinary Society, is pleased that goats were included in initial discussions. "It is much easier to consider where goat health planning can be included at the outset than to ignore goats only to find out later they prove to be a weak link in a larger scheme for cattle or sheep."



It is also extremely useful to adopt a regionally joined up approach, according to David McClure, policy officer for Animal Health & Welfare at the Ulster Farmers' Union. "As time goes on, it will be critical to see how NI can re-establish historic trade routes which are currently bound by regulations on movement of animals," he says.

"This presents a real threat to NI farmers who not only breed top quality pedigree animals for sale on the mainland, but also rely on GB sourced animals to ensure new bloodlines into our gene pool."

Read more [here](#).



Farmers urged to protect livestock from lead poisoning

Food Standards Scotland (FSS) is urging farmers to be aware of lead sources on-farm, after a surge in lead poisoning incidents.

The move follows the number of lead poisoning incidents reported to the organisation in 2020, amounting to more than those in 2018 and 2019 combined. Read the booklet on lead poisoning [here](#).



New Livestock Information Service needs your help

The new Livestock Information Service is building a new multi-species livestock traceability service for England, based on good quality input and feedback from farmers and the livestock industry. The new service will incrementally replace ARAMS, CTS Online and eAML2 - the current systems for sheep, cattle and pigs.

It is for feedback from; farmers, farm secretaries, auctioneers, abattoir managers and smallholders through to larger farmers. Respecting that time is valuable, any input would be to suit those who would like to help. [If you would like to get involved please get in touch here.](#)

News from the industry

- APHA has published its quarterly report on animal disease surveillance. [See the latest reports here](#) and visit the dashboards for the latest data [here](#).
- Are you a farm vet champion? Apply to be a part of the new RCVS Knowledge collaborative project. [For more information click here.](#)

- Cull cow prices continue to strengthen amid tight supplies, says AHDB. [See more information here.](#)
-

We are an independent, industry-based body tasked with helping farmers and stock managers tackle sheep and cattle disease, and build the health and welfare status, resilience and production efficiency of our national flock and herd.

Our Aims

- **Prevent, manage or eradicate** - those diseases with the greatest impact on health, welfare and productivity.
- **Identify opportunities** - for practical and effective farm-level interventions that support the four nations ambition of being among world leaders in animal welfare.
- **Address** - inherent challenges in current and future farming systems that could lead to health and welfare or reputational challenges.
- **Champion** - high health and welfare standards, and other priorities relating to domestic or overseas markets for the four nations.





Copyright © 2021 Ruminant Health & Welfare, All rights reserved.

[Forward to a friend](#) or [subscribe and get RH&W news straight to your inbox.](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list.](#)

