

Costs and benefits of providing livestock with welfare enhancements

We are looking for farmers to take part in a Defra-funded research project to inform development of a future voluntary scheme to financially support farmers in delivering good animal welfare. ADAS is working with the University of Bristol and the Royal Agriculture University to collect farm-level data on the welfare and economic costs and benefits of various welfare enhancements.

What type of sheep farmers are we looking for?

We are looking for farmers that have welfare enhancements in place, are achieving good animal welfare and/or are part of a higher welfare or organic farm assurance scheme. In particular, we would like to speak to sheep farmers who are:

- Achieving low levels of lamb and/or ewe mortality
- Achieving low levels of lameness
- Achieve ewe good body condition (low levels of thin ewes)
- Rearing uncastrated and/or non-docked lambs
- Providing prolonged pain relief for castration and/or tail docking (i.e. NSAID's)

We will need farmers to be able to provide good welfare, performance and cost records and be willing to discuss their experience of implementing higher welfare enhancements.

What does participation in the project entail?

Online survey: Completing an online survey to collect background information on farming system and the animal welfare enhancements in place, as well as the results achieved. We expect that this will take between half an hour and one hour to complete.

Telephone/video call meeting: Following the online survey we will arrange a telephone or video call to gather more detailed information on the impact the enhancements on costs (upfront and ongoing), returns and welfare benefits. We expect this call will take between one and two hours.

Providing farm records: Where readily available we would like copies of supporting digital or scanned records relevant to animal welfare, animal health and enterprise performance related to the high welfare system.

Data collected will remain entirely confidential and contribute to an anonymous dataset for analysis. Neither the farm nor any individual associated with it will be identifiable in any of the results that will be published or stored

Why should farmers take part?

Taking part in this research will be an opportunity to contribute to the development of animal welfare policy, share learning and help shape a future voluntary Government payment by results (PbR) scheme for farms delivering higher animal welfare.

Additionally, to compensate for their time, each farmer will be paid **£100** for taking part.

How do I get more information?

We would be really grateful for your assistance with this importance piece of research. If you are interested in taking part, please get in contact with Hannah Baldwin:

Email: hannah.baldwin@adas.co.uk Phone: 07785 708545

