

Animal Health and Welfare Board for England
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To: Minister of State for Agriculture and Food
Date: 28 February 2012

Approach to updating farm animal welfare codes

1. On 7 February 2012, the Animal Health and Welfare Board for England was invited to give a steer on the future approach to updating farm animal welfare codes.
2. The Board considered the options and recommended that Defra should not update the statutory codes but should move to non-statutory guidance in future. It also recommended that industry and government should work in partnership to develop the new guidance.
3. The Board raised the following points in discussion:
 - It cautioned against excessive detail in the guidance as this rapidly becomes out of date.
 - It suggested that existing farm assurance scheme material could be used in the guidance and it highlighted the potential role of the sector councils and animal welfare organisations in developing the guidance.
 - It noted the need for the policy team to consider whether to adopt the same approach for updating companion animal welfare codes in due course.
4. The Board invites you to accept its recommendation on the principle of moving to non-statutory guidance in future. If accepted, the policy team will develop detailed proposals for implementation.

**Animal Health and Welfare Board for England Secretariat on behalf of
Michael Seals, Chair of Animal Health and Welfare Board for England**