

Animal Health and Welfare Board for England

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE POLICY AND DELIVERY IN ENGLAND

Author: AHWBE Secretariat

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For the first time, independent people with relevant knowledge and skills; together with Government officials are, through The Animal Health and Welfare Board for England, making direct recommendations to Ministers on animal health and welfare. Public health must be protected from animal related threats (such as disease, food contaminants and anti-microbial resistance) and animal welfare must be assured. There is also a need to manage overall risk, and costs of animal disease to industry, taxpayers and the wider economy.

We must make sure that investment in disease prevention and management is effective and delivers value for money. Roles and responsibilities for animal health and welfare must be agreed, understood, transparent and acted upon by all, including animal keepers, Government and others.

These guiding principles have been prepared in consultation with the Board, animal keepers, those involved in food production, those who provide support to companion and competition animals and other interested parties. This document clearly sets out the principles we must apply and the outcomes we will jointly achieve, committing us all to specific actions, but retains essential flexibility for new challenges to be met as progress is made.

Purpose

In developing and delivering animal health and welfare policies in England we must be guided by a clear statement of purpose which will guide our actions and decision making.

The purpose of acting on animal health and welfare is to:

- *support sustainable food production and the competitiveness of the livestock industry;*
- *protect public health from animal related threats; and*
- *promote good health and welfare for all kept animals.*

Principles

Through the work of the Animal Health and Welfare Board for England, we will be guided by the following principles:-

1. Roles and responsibilities of animal keepers and Government agreed and a fair balance of costs achieved.

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2. Animal keepers to develop greater self-reliance and Government to provide strategic support where needed.
3. Actions are transparent, evidence based and achieve maximum value for money.
4. Encourage innovation and adoption of alternative approaches.
5. Government, animal keepers and relevant bodies working together to ensure that legal obligations on animal health and welfare are effectively achieved.
6. Risk based and targeted inspections; rewarding greater professionalism and higher standards from animal keepers.

Outcomes

Through the application of these principles we will achieve the following outcomes:-

1. The risks of incursions of exotic diseases should be reduced; but when they occur they must be quickly eradicated. Endemic diseases must be tackled, brought under control and eradicated where appropriate.
2. Best practice on disease prevention and animal welfare embedded across all sectors. Good animal health and welfare of all kept animals which in turn can improve the competitiveness of livestock keepers and benefits the wider industry and society.
3. Bovine Tb to be eradicated in England.
4. Sustained consumer confidence in food we produce from livestock.