

ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE NEWS

March 2017

The Animal Health and Welfare Officers from Argyll and Bute Council work across the area inspecting farms and dealing with complaints and queries in relation to animal health and welfare.

Our service focuses on inspecting those farms which we have identified as high risk and as many medium risk farms as possible. This means that many livestock owners will not be visited by the Council's Animal Health Officers.

In the course of our routine work, we have identified a number of issues which may be common across the farming industry in Argyll and Bute. We want to make sure that the wider agricultural community is aware of the issues which we have identified. The information in this newsletter is provided so that you can take steps within your own business to address any issues which might have arisen.

We hope you find this information useful. If you require any further information you can visit www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/animal-health-and-welfare, email animalhealth@argyll-bute.gov.uk or telephone 01546 605519.



Caring for your poultry and reducing the risk of avian Influenza .

The restriction ban has been extended by the Scottish Government to the 30th April 2017 and the level of risk from Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza remains at 'high' for wild birds and 'low to medium' for domestic birds. All bird keepers must continue to ensure that their birds are protected from infection by practicing the highest levels of biosecurity. **The new Scottish Government guidance is focussed on enhancing biosecurity while allowing some relaxation of the previous requirement to in-house poultry.**

Further information can be obtained through the Scottish Governments website (<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/animal-welfare/Diseases/disease/avian>) or through contact with the Councils animal health and welfare team.

Avian Influenza Prevention Zone Guidance

Practical biosecurity for backyard poultry and captive birds from 28th February

From March 1st 2017 poultry keepers will be able to allow their birds to have access to the outdoors so long as they comply with the following requirements.

The essential principle is to observe good biosecurity. As the main risk to the health of your poultry is contact between wild and domestic birds either from direct contact or from contact with contamination.

- Don't let your birds drink or access water used by wild birds (fence off ponds)
- Inspect outdoor areas, removing obvious wild bird contaminants (like faeces and feathers)
- Protect your birds against contact with wild birds while flocks are outdoors
- Provide feed and water under cover so wild birds can't access
- Make your premises unattractive to wild birds
- Use dedicated clothing and footwear when feeding and cleaning the runs/housing. Do not use this clothing off premises.
- You must keep ducks/geese separate from other poultry
- Minimise movement of people, vehicles and equipment to and from bird areas
- Ensure pest control is effective
- If you are planning a gathering of birds e.g. pigeon racing or a bird show, check whether this is permitted
- Failure to comply with this guidance may be an offence

Make your birds' range unattractive to wild birds

- Net ponds and drain waterlogged areas of land. If this isn't possible, then can you fence them off from your birds so they cannot access it whilst ranging, or use an alternative paddock that doesn't have access to water
- Remove any feeders and water stations from the range, or ensure that they are covered to sufficiently restrict access by wild birds
- Consider using decoy predators or other livestock (such as sheep or cattle) on the range, or allowing dogs to accompany you on foot patrols around the range. You could also consider bird scarers if their use is appropriate for the area (see [NFU Code of Practice](#) on bird scarers)

TYPE 1 TRANSPORTER AUTHORISATIONS

Since 1st October 2016 the process for renewal of Type 1 Transporter Authorisations has changed and authorisations are no longer renewed automatically. Instead, transporters must submit an application for renewal of their Type 1 authorisations.

Type 1 Transporter Authorisations are required for those transporting animals, as part of an economic activity, on journeys over 65 km and up to eight hours in duration. This includes farmers, livestock and poultry hauliers, and those who move horses in connection with professional riding, livery and stabling. Type 1 transporter authorisation also applies to transporters of other vertebrate species for example cats, dogs and rabbits, provided they fall within the same journey criteria (over 65km and up to eight hours) and operate as part of an economic activity.

Transporter authorisations are valid for five years, and a significant number were renewed in 2012. This means that a very large number of authorisations are due for renewal in 2017 and transporters are urged to apply for renewal at the earliest possible opportunity, to ensure their continued authorisation.

ANIMAL BY-PRODUCTS

Animal by-products (ABPs) are entire animal bodies, parts of animals, products of animal origin or other products obtained from animals that are **not fit or intended for human consumption**. They must be dealt with in accordance with strict regulations designed to prevent harm to people, animals and the environment.

The EU Animal By-Product [Regulation 1069/2009](#) and its accompanying implementing [Commission Regulation 142/2011](#) came into force in Scotland on 4 March 2011 and among other measures prohibits the burial or burning of fallen stock on-farm. The EU Regulations are implemented by the [Animal By-Products \(Enforcement\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2013](#) and the [Animal By-Products \(Miscellaneous Amendments\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2015](#).

Guidance

The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) is responsible for inspecting animal by-product operators in Scotland, and can provide detailed guidance on the requirements they need to meet.

Guidance on the use, disposal, transport, handling and storage of animal by-products is available on the [animal by-products section of the Gov.uk website](#).

LIVESTOCK IDENTIFICATION AND TRACEABILITY

To try to prevent the spread of animal diseases there are strict rules controlling the movements of farm animals.

This section explains how we identify animals and how they are tracked when they are moved.

- [Cattle](#)
- [Sheep and Goats](#)
- [Pigs](#)
- [Horses](#)
- [Electronic Identification](#)
- [Tagging](#)
- [ScotMoves](#)

SHEEP WORRYING



WHAT TO DO IF YOUR SHEEP ARE WORRIED BY DOGS

Once you've checked your fencing, thought carefully about which land to graze at different times of year and put up hardwearing signs asking dog owners to keep their pets on leads, you can't do much more to prevent sheep worrying happening. But what should you do if your sheep are worried?

Stay safe: It can be very difficult to stop a dog which is chasing your sheep and dogs have been known to turn on people who get too close while they are attacking, so it is important to be careful. Dog trainer Keith Fallon suggests that throwing a toy or other distraction for the dog can draw its attention away from the sheep, so it may be worth trying this tactic to stop a dog worrying your sheep without getting too close.

Stay legal: Sometimes it is necessary to shoot a dog that is attacking your flock, but the law around this is complex and shooting should always be the last resort – see below for more information.

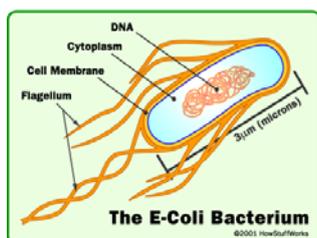
Collect evidence: A lot of mobile phones are capable of taking photographs and/or video so, if possible, video the attack or record it through photographs. This prevents dog owners denying that their dog attacked your flock and means they are more likely to listen to you if you talk to them about it. Video or photographic evidence will also be very useful if the matter ends up in court. There is also a chance that it will be possible to identify a dog owner from photos or video if you are unable to find out whose dog it is at the time.

Document the aftermath of the attack: If you intend to press charges (or agree a damages payment with the dog owner after the full costs of the attack are known), it is a good idea to document the aftermath of the attack. Take photographs of injuries to sheep. If ewes prolapse or abort get photographic evidence of this too. It's often too expensive to call the vet out to bear witness to every abortion, but it might be worth calling your vet to notify them of each one.

Contact the police: You should call the police if your sheep are worried, even if you are not sure what sort of response you will get. NSA's 2014 dog worrying survey saw

the response of the police rated as everything from 'no response' to 'very helpful' depending on where in the country the farm is, so it can be worthwhile to contact them. It is important to report incidents of sheep worrying to the police, as the higher the official number of instances the more seriously the issue will be taken. The NSA survey found that the police were called in only 73% of cases. This means that sheep worrying is a much bigger problem than is officially recorded. A simple talking to from a police officer holds some weight and may persuade the dog owner to take the matter seriously and keep control of their dog in future. Police can also initiate criminal proceedings (see above) and if you struggle to get your local police to take the issue seriously, it may be that they are unaware of the legalities of sheep worrying detailed at the top of this page.

Contact the dog warden: Some farmers have found involving the local dog warden when their sheep are attacked very helpful. The dog warden may make more of an impression on a dog owner than you will, even if they do not take any action beyond speaking to the dog owner.



FARM SAFETY – E.COLI O157

When humans come into contact with *E. coli* O157, bacteria found in the guts of animals, it produces toxins that can cause illness ranging from diarrhoea to kidney failure. In some cases the illness can be fatal.

An increase in the numbers of outbreaks of *E. coli* O157 in the last few years has prompted a review of guidance for visitor attractions where members of the public might come into contact with animals. New guidance is now available and has been endorsed by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

- ✓ **If you invite visitors such as school groups or the public onto your farm, you must follow the Code of Practice - Preventing or controlling ill-health from animal contact at visitor attractions - which can be obtained online at www.face-online.org.uk/CodeofPractice.**

Preventing or controlling ill-health from animal contact is just as important on farms which don't have visitors, especially those where children or the elderly are present as they are at greatest risk if they contract *E. coli*. To reduce the risks of illness from *E. coli* O157, and other bacteria, you must ensure that hands are washed thoroughly after contact with animals or animal faeces and before eating, drinking or smoking. Remember, if you let holiday cottages or have a B&B at your property these visitors are also at risk. We would recommend that the enclosed information note is displayed for visitors to read.

- ✓ **Ensure workers and visitors practice good personal hygiene at all times.**

ANIMAL FEED REGISTRATION

It is a requirement under the Feed (Hygiene and Enforcement) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 that all businesses which

- manufacture, grow or raise;
- sell;
- store;
- transport; or
- mix

animal feed are registered with Trading Standards. Records show that a significant number of premises may not be registered. Registration is free. If you have not already registered you should do so by return.

✓ **Make sure your business is registered, if required, and update your details if necessary**

Should you require any further advice/information please email Animal.health@argyll-bute.gov.uk or telephone 01546 605519