

RSPCA sheep Standards Technical Advisory Group meeting

On Wednesday 25th of September 2019

Meeting summary notes

Actions of the last meeting

Action points from the previous meeting were discussed, with a particular focus on the use of pain relief for castration and tail docking in lambs.

Food and water

Issues related to the testing of water and quality testing parameters in sheep have been discussed by the members.

Environment

Members discussed space allowances and bedded lying areas as well as the reasoning behind these values. In addition, grazing management and parasite control have also been discussed.

Management

Training of staff and shearing standards have been mentioned during the meeting. Among others, members have suggested including more details regarding acceptable training certification. The group also discussed unexplained sheep losses and the necessity of recording such losses within the annual review and acting upon the findings where necessary.

Health

The group discussed the frequency and timing of veterinary surgeon visits and required outcomes of those visits. Members also discussed best timings for welfare assessments and weaning of lambs. In addition, the group widely discussed the requirement for pain relief and associated methods for castration and tail docking of lambs. Finally, management of casualty animals has also been discussed as part of the health section of the standards.

Transport

The question of erratic driving and the potential to advise on certifications has been discussed. EC advised that work related to livestock markets and collection centers was ongoing. The transport of injured animals and the need for more clarity have been mentioned.