

Proposal for an alternative method for ageing sheep at slaughter

Status: Closed

Date launched: 19 September 2019

Closing date: 31 October 2019

About this consultation

This consultation will be of most interest to:

- farmers
- abattoirs and slaughterhouses
- enforcement authorities
- retailers

Subject of the consultation

We want views on our proposal to amend English and Welsh legislation on ageing sheep for the removal of certain body parts at slaughter. Sheep over 12 months of age need these parts to be removed to protect public health. The amendment would allow abattoirs to choose an alternative method for determining the ages of sheep. At present abattoirs count the number of a sheep's permanent teeth to decide its age.

Under the proposal, they would also have the option of a system based on the date. Sheep submitted for slaughter up to 30 June in the year after their birth would be considered to be under 12 months old.

Purpose of the consultation

Defra, the Welsh Government and the FSA are consulting jointly on a proposal to amend the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (England) Regulations 2018 and the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (Wales) Regulations 2018, so that English and Welsh sheep industries have the option of taking advantage of the EU's derogation, enabling the ageing of sheep at slaughter to be determined by a means other than dentition.

The proposal is to introduce a new optional ageing system under which sheep born in the previous calendar year and submitted for slaughter in the calendar year following their birth before the cut-off date of 30 June would be considered as aged under 12 months and would not require removal of the spinal cord, as not deemed to be SRM.

Consultation pack

[Read the consultation pack and find out how to respond. \(Opens in a new window\)](#)

Publication of response summary

Within three months of a consultation ending we aim to publish a summary of responses received and provide a link to it from this page.

You can find information on how we handle data provided in response to consultations in our [Consultations privacy notice](#).

Further information

This consultation has been prepared in accordance with [HM Government Consultation Principles](#). If an Impact Assessment has been produced, this is included in the consultation documents. If no Impact Assessment has been provided, the reason will be given in the consultation document.