



Telephone: 08459 33 55 77 (Defra Helpline)

Email: animalwelfare.consultations@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Date: 27 June 2013

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs>

Dear Consultee

Consultation on the reform of the farm animal welfare codes

1. I am writing to invite views on a proposal to reform the existing system of guidance on farm animal welfare. This consultation focuses on the principle of moving from statutory farm animal welfare codes to industry-led drafted, non-statutory guidance.

The objective of the proposal is to ensure that guidance on how keepers comply with farm animal welfare legislation is able to reflect the latest scientific and veterinary knowledge and is presented in the most relevant way for farmers.

2. The consultation's aim is to check that the preferred option meets both the Government's commitment to improved standards of animal welfare and the practical needs of farmers.
3. Defra is launching its public consultation on the principle of reforming its farm animal welfare codes. This will run in parallel with one organised by the British Poultry Council on a draft example of guidance in the proposed new format for meat chickens and breeding birds (see www.britishpoultry.org.uk for further details).
4. The existing Defra farm animal welfare codes of which there are 10 (excluding game birds) are statutory and thus any changes require the provision of Parliamentary time and legislative preparation. As a consequence, all are now out-of-date, many over 20 years old and with some not even including significant legislative changes that have occurred in the interim.

5. In line with the conclusions of the Macdonald Task Force Report, we are proposing the replacement of these codes with guidance jointly owned and drafted by the relevant industry sector and Defra. One of the benefits of such guidance is that it can be updated more easily than statutory codes to reflect the latest scientific and technical developments in animal husbandry.
6. The following documents relating to this consultation are available on the Defra website at:
https://consult.defra.gov.uk/farming/farm_animal_welfare_codes
 - A copy of this letter
 - The consultation document
 - List of consultees

Responses

7. This consultation started on 27 June 2013. We would prefer you to respond to the consultation questions using the online survey which can be found at https://consult.defra.gov.uk/farming/farm_animal_welfare_codes.

However, responses can be sent to the Animal Welfare Team by email or post.

Enquiries and responses should be directed / sent to:

The Animal Welfare Team
Area 5D
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

or email: animalwelfare.consultations@defra.gsi.gov.uk.

Alternatively, if you would like to receive hard copies of the consultation documents, you may contact the Animal Welfare Team at the above email address. Any comments on the draft meat chickens and breeding birds guidance should be directed to the British Poultry Council (see www.britishpoultry.org.uk).

8. Responses should be received by **8 August 2013**.

Consultation Criteria

i). This is a six-week consultation and is in line with the Cabinet Office's guidance on Consultation Principles.

This guidance can be found at <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/resource-library/consultation-principles-guidance>.

ii). When this consultation ends, responses will be available from Defra's Animal Welfare Team. This is so that the public can review them. If you wish to see the responses, contact the team at animalwelfare.consultations@defra.gsi.gov.uk. Also, members of the public may ask for a copy of the responses under Freedom of Information legislation. There is a charge for photocopying and postage.

iii). If you do not want your response - including your name, contact details and any other personal information - to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation. Please note, if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer that will not count as a confidentiality request.

iv). Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for this information under Freedom of Information legislation. However, because of the law, we cannot promise that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

v). We will summarise all responses and place this summary on our website at: https://consult.defra.gov.uk/farming/farm_animal_welfare_codes.

This summary will include a list of names of organisations that responded but not people's personal names, addresses or other contact details.

vi). If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please address them to Defra's Consultation Co-ordinator, Area 629, 9 Millbank, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR, or email consultation.coordinator@defra.gsi.gov.uk.

vii). Thank you for your help in this matter. If you have any queries please contact us as above.

Yours Faithfully

Emma Jones

Farm Animal Welfare Policy Adviser