




Sheep Toolkit

Resource 1: Scoring scales

Lameness scoring



Source: [AWIN Welfare Assessment Protocol For Sheep](#)

Lameness is scored on a four-point scale.

Not lame (0)		Movement is smooth, weight is borne equally on all four feet with no shortening of stride. Some minor head nodding is acceptable if walking on uneven ground.
Minor lameness (1)		Clear shortening of stride with obvious head nodding or flicking as the affected limb touches the ground.
Lame (2)		Very obvious head nodding and not weight-bearing on affected limb whilst moving, foot may be held up whilst standing, may be grazing on knees with front leg lameness.
Severe lameness (3)		Recumbency or reluctance to stand or move.

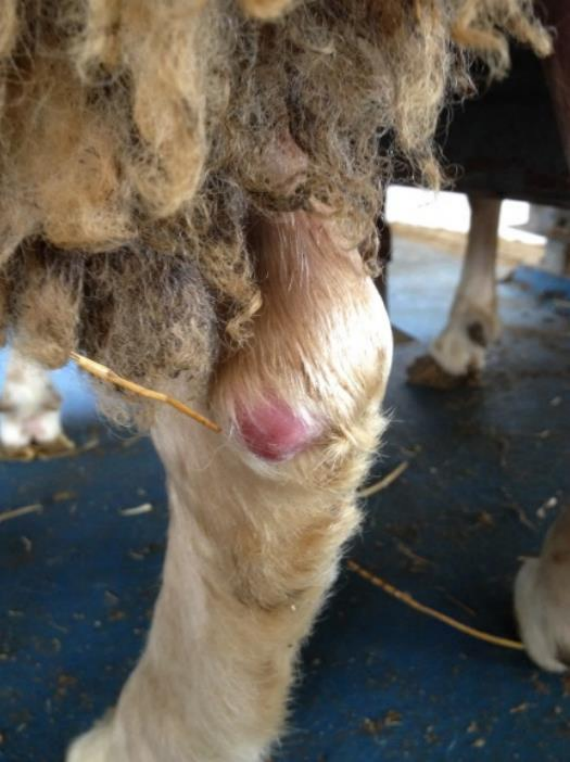

Feet scoring

Source: [AWIN Welfare Assessment Protocol For Sheep](#)

Overgrown Hooves are overgrown	Appropriate Hooves show an appropriate length/shape
	

Hair loss, swellings

Source: [AWIN: Welfare Assessment Protocol For Sheep](#)

Present Calluses/lesions present	Absent No lesions
	

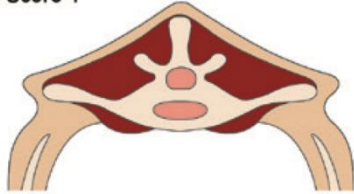
Body condition scoring

Source: [AHDB: Condition scoring of ewes](#)

Body condition is scored a five-point scale.

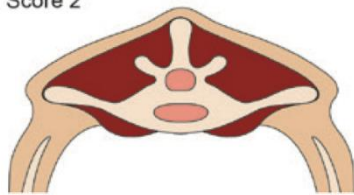
How to Condition Score

Score 1



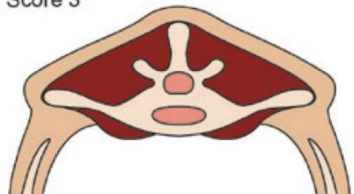
The vertical and horizontal processes are prominent and sharp. The fingers can be pushed easily below the transverse and each process can be felt. The loin is thin with no fat cover.

Score 2



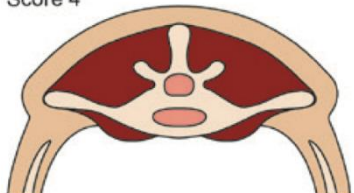
The vertical processes are prominent but smooth; individual processes being felt only as corrugations. The horizontal processes are smooth and rounded, but it is still possible to press fingers under. The loin muscle is a moderate depth but with little fat cover.

Score 3



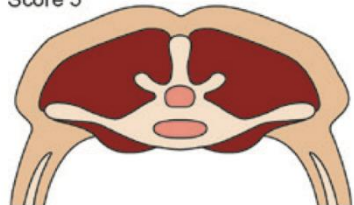
The vertical processes are smooth and rounded; the bone is only felt with pressure. The horizontal processes are also smooth and well covered; hard pressure is required with the fingers to find the ends. The loin muscle is full and with a moderate fat cover.

Score 4



The vertical processes are only detectable as a line. The ends of the horizontal processes cannot be felt. The loin muscles are full and rounded, and have a thick covering of fat.

Score 5



The vertical and transverse processes cannot be detected even with pressure; there is a dimple in the fat layers where the processes should be. The loin muscles are very full and covered with very thick fat.

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EBLEX is a division of the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB).

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Information taken from the lifetimewool.com.au scoring card.



Recommended body condition scores at different parts of the sheep cycle (RSPCA)


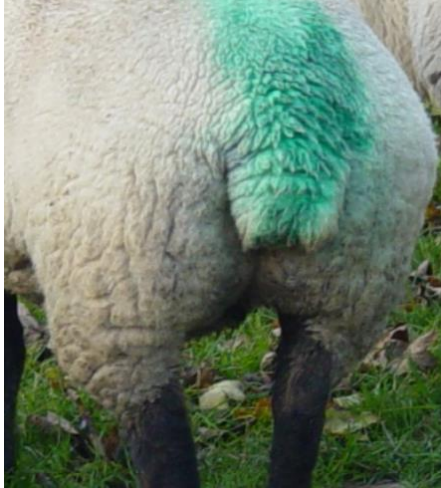
Source: [RSPCA Welfare Standards for Sheep June 2020](#)

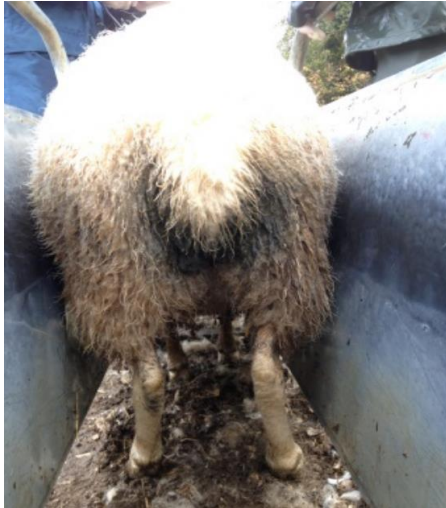
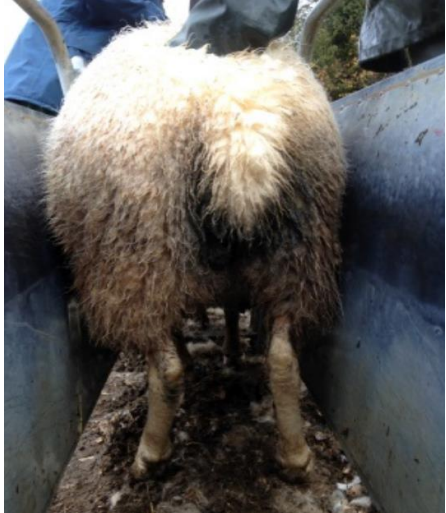

Timing	Small breeds of ewes (hill breeds)	Medium breeds of ewes (upland breeds)	Large breeds of ewes (lowland breeds)
Weaning	2.0	2.0	2.5
Mating	2.5	3.0	3.5
Mid pregnancy	2.0	2.5	3.0
Late pregnancy	2.0	2.5	3.0
Lambing	2.0	2.5	3.0
Eight weeks after lambing	2.0	2.0-2.5	2.5-3.0

Faecal soiling scoring

Source: [AWIN: Welfare Assessment Protocol For Sheep](#)

Faecal soiling is scored a five-point scale.





Not present (0)		No faecal soiling: the wool around the breech area and under the tail is clean.
Very light soiling (1)		A small quantity of faecal matter in the wool around the anus.

<p>Light soiling and dags (2)</p>		<p>Some soiling around the anus and dags (matted areas of faecal matter adhering to the wool) in this area only.</p>
<p>Soiling and dags (3)</p>		<p>Soiling and dags extending beyond the anus to the tail and onto the upper part of the legs.</p>
<p>Extensive soiling & dags (4)</p>		<p>Wider area of soiling with dags extending down the legs as far as the hocks.</p>

Fleece cleanliness scoring

Source: [AWIN: Welfare Assessment Protocol For Sheep](#)

Fleece cleanliness is scored a five-point scale.

Score 0		Clean and dry. Fleece shows no sign of dirt or contamination.
Score 1		Dry or slightly damp due to current weather conditions. Slight mud/dirt on body attributed to handling or pen from that day (handled animals).
Score 2		Very damp or wet. Coat contaminated with dung or mud from fields/hill.
Score 3		Very wet. Very heavily soiled with mud or dung.

Score 4		Filthy, animal is very wet and covered in mud or dung which may be on face and back as well as belly, flanks and legs.
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Mastitis scoring

Source: [AWIN: Welfare Assessment Protocol For Sheep](#)




Mastitis and udder lesions are scored on a three-point scale.

No mastitis or lesions present		Udder is soft and pliable at palpation, no redness or hardness is detected.
Mild mastitis and/or minor lesions		One or two small lumps felt, or an area of hardness in one half of the udder, small lesions (<10 cm at widest part) may be present.
Mastitis and/or severe lesions		Lumps or hardness on both sides, or larger lump on a single side, lumps or lesions >10 cm at widest part.

Tail length scoring

Source: [AWIN: Welfare Assessment Protocol For Sheep](#)

Evaluate the length of tails on a three-point scale.

<p>Undocked tail</p>		<p>Tail appears complete and extends to approximately the hocks or below.</p>
<p>Docked</p>		<p>Tail is shorter than a full tail but an acceptable length: the vulva is covered by the tail when held down.</p>
<p>Short docked</p>		<p>Tail is over-shortened or almost not present, the vulva and anus cannot be covered by the remaining tail.</p>

Resource 2: Examples of animal abuse

Beat, strike or kick animals; ill-treat; exhaust; overload; torture; excessively frighten; apply pressure to any particularly sensitive part of the body in such a way as to cause unnecessary pain or suffering; suspend the animals themselves by mechanical means; lift or drag the animals by head, ears, horns, legs, tail or fleece, or handle in such a way as to cause unnecessary pain or suffering; use prods or other implements with pointed ends; tie by the horns, antlers, nose rings or by legs tied together. Unnecessary or cruel use of instruments which administer electric shocks.

Resource 3: Glossary

<p>LENGTH 1ft = 0.305m</p>	<p>LENGTH 1m = 3.281ft</p>	<p>AREA 1m² = 10.764ft²</p>
<p>AREA 1ft² = 0.0929m²</p>	<p>WEIGHT 1lb = 0.454kg</p>	<p>WEIGHT 1kg = 2.205lb</p>
<p>LIGHT 20 Lux = 1.858ft candle</p>	<p>LIGHT 0.25ft candle = 2.691 Lux</p>	<p>LIGHT 1ft candle = 10.764 Lux</p>

Resource 4: Air quality score scale

- 3 Air quality: odour and dust distinctly present; observer experiences watery eyes and/or coughing.
- 2 Weak odour and dust noticeable; observer can breathe without effort.
- 1 No odour or dust; not noticeable.

Resource 5: Medicine purchase and use records

Medicine purchase records to include: identity of medicine; quantity of medicine; date of purchase; name and address of supplier; batch number(s); and expiry date(s). For any medicated feed, a written prescription is required.

Medicine use records to include: the name of the vaccine, drug or other substance; lot and batch number; quantity of medicine administered; date of treatment; identification of the individual (or group of sheep) to which administered; age of treated animals; number of animals treated; date of administration; date treatment finished; name of administrator; name of vet issuing prescription; reason for treatment; route of administration; length of treatment; withdrawal times for meat and milk if appropriate; and date of safe slaughter if appropriate.

Resource 6 Health and welfare (H&W) plan

1. Infectious disease control and vaccinations used and planned
2. Parasite control (including, where applicable: gastro-intestinal worms, liver fluke, blowfly (flystrike), scab mites)
3. Management of non-infectious (management-induced) disease and injury
4. Management of metabolic disorders (pregnancy toxaemia/ketosis and hypocalcaemia)
5. Management of problems at lambing (vaginal prolapse, dystocia, 'ringwomb')
6. Management of foot care and lameness management; mastitis, injuries, metabolic disorders, body condition scores
7. Management of hospital pens
8. Breeding management plan that details the health and welfare needs of the ewes, lambs and rams
9. Lambing procedures
10. Lamb management (colostrum protocols, mutilations)
11. Pain relief procedures (for example, a traumatic lambing, or if an animal is suffering from a condition likely to be painful, such as severe lameness)
12. Health and disease incidence record-keeping
13. Written plan to respond to sudden increases in disease incidence
14. Monitoring of KPIs and KWIs, and actions planned to deal with increases in KWI or KPI levels
15. Corrective Action Plan within the health and welfare plan, to bring performance in line with good practice
16. Methods and records of euthanasia

Resource 7: Biosecurity plan

1. Emergency contact list
2. Named biosecurity person(s)
3. Employee training in biosecurity
4. Lines of separation (LOS) including fences and separate areas, and how they are used to protect animals and people
5. Biosecurity entry procedures
6. Biosecurity exit procedures
7. Biosecurity requirements for visitors (visitor book, PPE)
8. Biosecurity requirements for feed and other deliveries (recording entry, PPE, disinfection)
9. Cleaning and disinfection operating procedures
10. Disinfectant chemicals used (approvals, safe use, dilutions, replenishment)
11. Animal movements (new animals in, movement of animals out)
12. Dealing with sick and dead animals (safe, hygienic disposal)
13. Vermin, vector and wildlife control

Resource 8: Links to assurance standard organisations

[RSPCA \(UK\) Assured Standards](#)

[RSPCA \(Australia\) Standards](#)

[Global Gap Animal Welfare Standards](#)

[Red Tractor Standards](#)

[Beter Leven Controls](#)

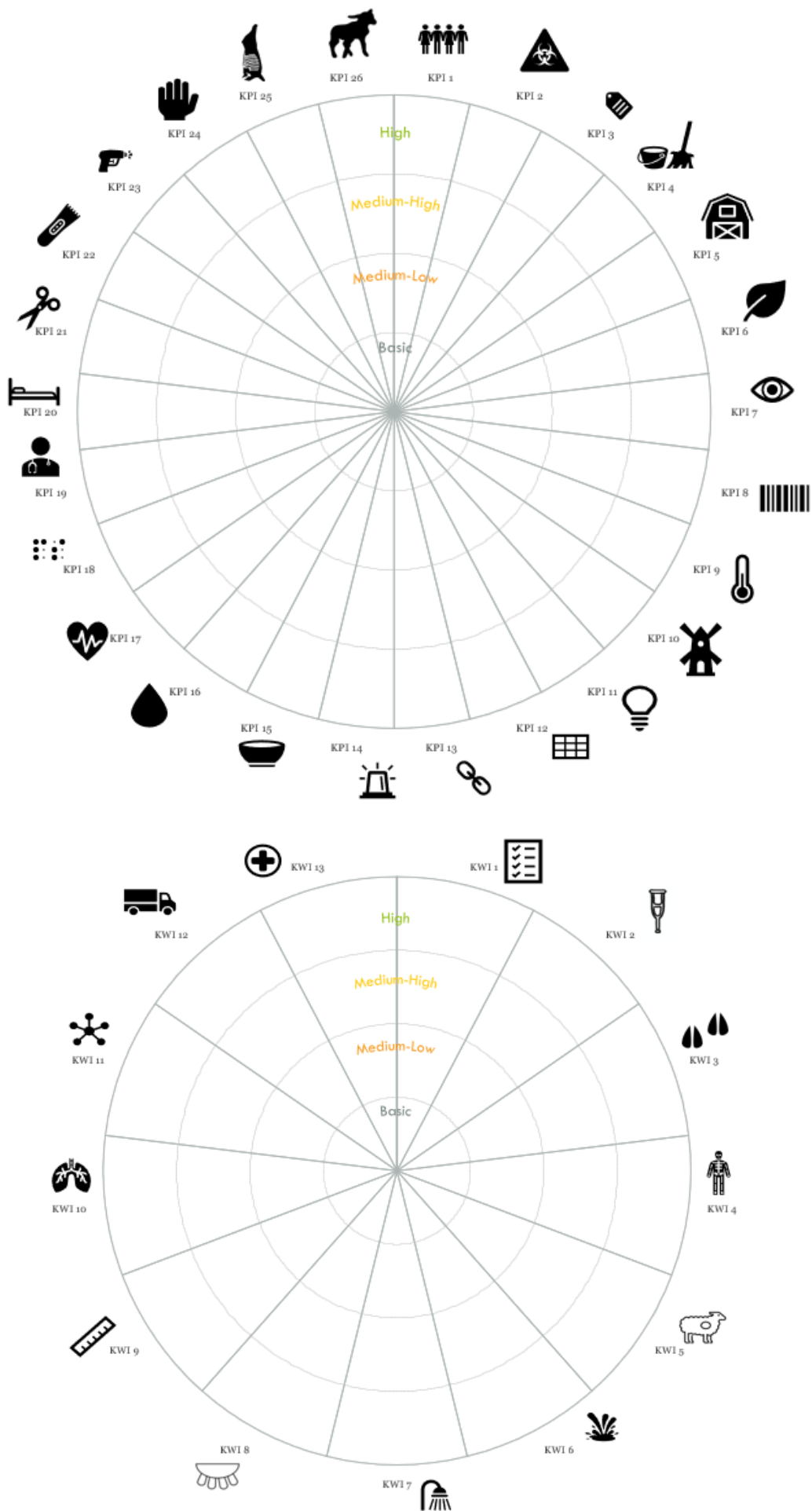
[German Animal Welfare Federation](#)

[Four Paws](#)

[AssureWel](#)

[Welfare Quality Network - Assessment Protocols](#)

Resource 9: Blank sector charts



Resource 10 Space allowances, farm and transport

Space allowance (straw or other bedded yards)

		Space allowance (m ²)
Ewes 60 to 90kg liveweight	Ewe only	1.2 to 1.4 per ewe
	Ewe and lamb	2.0 to 2.2 per ewe and lambs
Ewes 45 to 64 kg liveweight	Ewe only	1.0 to 1.2 per ewe
	Ewe and lamb	1.8 to 2.0 per ewe and lambs
Lambs	Up to 3 months of age	0.5 to 0.6 per lamb
	3 months to 12 months	0.75 to 0.9 per lamb
Rams		1.5 to 2.0 per ram

Feeder space

Growing sheep (<50kg)	35cm/head
Small ewes (50 to 70 kg)	45cm/head
Large ewes (>70kg)	50cm/head
Rams/castrated male sheep	50cm/head

Drinker space

- At least one drinking space per 20 animals must be provided.
- A drinking space is defined as the amount of space required by a single sheep whilst drinking, or as an individual bowl/bucket. Where troughs are used, a linear space allowance of approximately 5 to 10cm per animal should be provided.

Transport densities

Lambs of less than 7 days of age are not transported for more than 100km unless accompanied by their mother.

	Liveweight (kg)	Area m ² per animal
Short sheep and lambs \geq 26kg	<55kg	0.20 to 0.30
	>55kg	>0.30
Unshorn sheep	<55kg	0.30 to 0.40
	>55kg	>0.40
Heavily pregnant ewes	<55kg	0.40 to 0.50
	>55kg	>0.50

Source: COUNCIL REGULATION (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) No 1255/97

Resource 11: Mutilations

Mutilation	When?	Who by?
Castration: elastration/rubber ring	24 hours to first week of life only	Competent stock person
Castration: bloodless castration (Burdizzo)	24 hours up to 2 months	Competent stock person With Anaesthetic/analgesic
Castration: when the animal is over 3 months of age, or any other method than above	Over 3 months of age	Vet only With anaesthetic
Tail docking: rubber ring	First week of life only	Competent stock person
Tail docking: hot iron or clamp	Up to 2 months	Competent stock person With anaesthetic/post-procedure analgesic
Tail docking: surgical	Any age	Vet only With anaesthetic/post-procedure analgesic
Trimming of the insensitive tip of the horn	Any age	Competent stock person
Dehorning/horn disbudding: all other cases	Any age	Vet only With anaesthetic

Resource 12: Published resources and further reading

AHDB (2015): [Condition Scoring of Ewes](#)

AssureWel: [Sheep](#)

AssureWel: [The AssureWel Approach to Improving Farm Animal Welfare: The Development and Use of Welfare Outcome Assessments in Farm Assurance](#)

AWIN: [Welfare assessment protocol for sheep](#)

BBFAW Investor Briefing (August 2015): [How are Investors Using the Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare?](#)

BBAFW Investor Briefing (November 2017): [How Companies Are Using the Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare](#)

BBFAW: [The Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare Report 2019](#)

British Veterinary Association: [Farm Assurance Schemes Infographic](#)

[Compassion in World Farming, Strategic Plan 2013–2017, For Kinder, Fairer Farming Worldwide](#)

COUNCIL DIRECTIVE (EC) 1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing

COUNCIL DIRECTIVE (EC) 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives EEC 64/432/EEC and 93/119/EC and Regulation (EC) 1255/97

COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes

[COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 98/58/EC of 20 July 1998 concerning the protection of animals kept for farming purposes](#)

Council of Europe No.087: [European Convention for the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes](#)

FAO: [Water Quality for Livestock and Poultry](#)

[FAWC advice on animal sentience \(10 June 2019\)](#)

[FAWC: Evidence and the welfare of farmed animals - part 2: evidence based decision making \(19 July 2018\)](#)

[FAWC advice on space and headroom allowances for transport of farm animals \(17 September 2013\)](#)

[FAWC report on farm animal welfare: health and disease \(29 November 2012\)](#)

[FAWC opinion on contingency planning for farm animal welfare in disasters and emergencies \(15 March 2012\)](#)

[FAWC advice on sustainable intensification of livestock agriculture \(3 February 2012\)](#)

[FAWC report on education about farm animal welfare \(15 December 2011\)](#)

[FAWC report on economics and farm animal welfare \(7 December 2011\)](#)

[FAWC opinion on the welfare of animals killed on-farm \(29 March 2018\)](#)

[FAWC opinion on CCTV in slaughterhouses \(3 February 2015\)](#)

Gov UK: [The Welfare of Farmed Animals \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)

Gov UK: [Animal Welfare Act 2006](#)

Gov UK: [Welfare of Animals at the Time of Killing \(England\) Regulations 2015](#)

IFC (2014): [Good Practice Note: Improving Animal Welfare in Livestock Operations \(2014\)](#)

OIE: [Terrestrial Animal Health Code \(2019\)](#)

OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code (2019): [Chapter 7.5, Slaughter of Animals](#)

OIE: [The OIE Strategy on Antimicrobial Resistance and the Prudent Use of Antimicrobials \(2016\)](#)

[Red Tractor Beef & Lamb Standards \(2018\) Version 4.1](#)

RSPCA (2020) [Welfare Standards for Sheep](#)

Share Action: [What we do](#)

Vet Sustain (2019): [The Veterinary Sustainability Goals](#)

Welfare Quality Network: [Assessment Protocols](#)

WHO: [Water Safety and Drinking Water Quality Guidelines](#)

World Bank Group: [General Environmental, Health and Safety \(EHS\) Guidelines, \(April 2007\)](#)

[World Vet Antimicrobial Stewardship: McDonald's Corporation – Vision for Antimicrobial Stewardship in Food Animals \(March 2015\)](#)