



WELSH LAMB & BEEF PRODUCERS LTD

NEWSletter

SPRING 2022



Updated FAWL standards

Every three years, Welsh Lamb and Beef Producers Ltd (WLBP) reviews the standards for the Farm Assured Welsh Livestock (FAWL) scheme in collaboration with other stakeholders, including beef and lamb assurance schemes in the rest of the UK. The new FAWL standards (which will come into effect from 1st May 2022) have just been published. They can be found at <https://www.wlbp.co.uk/>. **Changes from the previous standards are noted in the enclosed pamphlet.**

There are a number of changes from the 2018 version, some of which reflect the need to maintain good environmental standards and consideration for developing environmental regulation, others to meet evolving consumer demands. Probably the main change though is the request that all FAWL members work with their vet to estimate the use of antibiotics on farm, (including the use of Highest Priority Critically Important Antibiotics (HP-CIAs), if any) using WLBP's Farm Records website, calculating and recording the outcome in milligrams per kilogram of animal (mg per kg), the industry's agreed standard parameter. This web-based recording tool is accessed by vets on a farmer's behalf and has been developed specifically for the purpose of calculating antibiotic use. It requires no additional recording requirement for farmers but does require discussion with the farm vet, which can take place online or on the phone, if necessary.

This is an incredibly important initiative. Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) especially antibiotic resistance is a very worrying development that has led to the death of many people as some very important antibiotics become increasingly ineffective. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared that AMR is one of the top 10 global public health threats facing humanity. The UK's Health Security Agency's chief medical adviser Dr Susan Hopkins said recently that AMR was a "hidden pandemic" while a report in The Lancet published in January pointed out that more than 1.2 million people had died worldwide in 2019 from infections caused by bacteria resistant to antibiotics. Both UK and Welsh Government have plans to deal with AMR in animals and the environment: a copy of the Welsh Government's plan can be found at: <https://gov.wales/antimicrobial-resistance-animals-and-environment-implementation-plan>

One of its five key aims is to try and find ways to

"Collect/measure farm-level, species-specific antibiotic usage information for each major farmed animal species in Wales." This initiative will do just that for beef, lamb, and milk producers.

The reasons for AMR are many and varied and include the overuse by humans and over-prescribing by doctors, across the globe. One contributory factor given is overuse in farming, especially intensive production systems. In discussions with the meat supply chain and government, WLBP has always argued that Welsh livestock farmers use minimal amounts of antibiotics and do so responsibly. Unfortunately, there's no answer to the retort, "Prove it": the data is not immediately available across the industry. We and other farming organisations need to have this information to provide evidence for consumers, the supply chain and government to show that meat and milk producers use antibiotics safely and responsibly. If we can't do that, detractors will chip away at consumer confidence while government will decide to stop farmers having access to antibiotics that are essential for livestock production.

This initiative therefore is very important, probably the most important initiative by FAWL since its inception. We need farmers to buy-in to this new standard to get the data on responsible antibiotic use. It's imperative that all members join in, even if they hardly use any antibiotics (if at all), because we need to provide the full picture. No data on any antibiotic use by individual farmers will be released but we will combine data to calculate average overall use and average use by different types or areas of farming which will be a valuable benchmarking tool.

We appreciate that this may be an additional burden but the cost to the industry of (a) losing access to important drugs (b) losing consumers of meat and milk will be high and we need to be proactive to avoid that. We have a positive story to tell. Please help us to tell it.

Further information on AMR:

If you'd like further information about antimicrobial resistance and how farming is tackling the issue, visit the Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture (RUMA) Alliance's website at <https://www.ruma.org.uk/>

More information about the global scale of the challenge can be found on the WHO's website at <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/antimicrobial-resistance>

For more information about the Farm Records facility please contact healthplan@wlbp.co.uk or (01970) 636688
<https://farmrecords.wlbp.co.uk/WLBP/Default.aspx>



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Compliance Tips

Electronic records/Paper work:

- So that you can keep the required records in one place, please use our templates which are available in the FAWL Management Record and Medicine book.
- Alternatively, you can take advantage of the Farm Records facility which allows you to input any FAWL records online.
- Ensure policies such as the Annual Health and Welfare Review & Health Plan are reviewed within the last 12 months.

Fuel storage :

Your fuel tank should comply with the requirements of The Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Oil Storage) (Wales) Regulations 2016. For further guidance please visit <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/oil-storage-regulations.pdf>

Housing and feed:

As livestock are housed, it's worth checking if there are any hazards that could cause harm to stock. Check that feed storage and feeding areas are clean, tidy and no sign of contamination.

Identification

Are the livestock on the holding tagged according to the relevant legislation?

Livestock handling and transport:

To ensure the safety of yourselves and the animals check that the livestock handling facilities and trailers are fit for purpose and pose no risk of injury.

If there are any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us: info@fawl.co.uk (01970) 636688

Three new staff members

Three new members of staff have begun their roles for WAOS, working within the Arwain DGC project.

Grace Rees Jones lives on a family Beef and Sheep farm near Llanidloes, Powys. She will be working full time on the Arwain DGC project as the Antibiotic Usage Project Coordinator for Mid Wales. She studied at Aberystwyth University where she graduated with a degree in Agriculture with Business Studies.

Marged Simons is a dairy farmer's daughter from Pembrokeshire. She will be working part time on the Arwain DGC project as the Antibiotic Usage Project

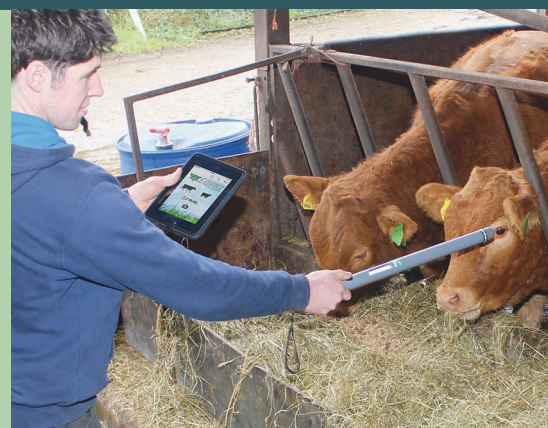
Coordinator for South Wales. In her spare time, Marged enjoys competing with her Welsh ponies and cobs and is actively involved with both the Young Farmers in Pembrokeshire and the Pembrokeshire Agricultural Society.

Sion Ifans is a beef and sheep farmer from Llanymawddwy, mid Wales and will be working part time on the Arwain DGC project as the Antibiotic Usage Project Coordinator for North Wales. Sion has previously been involved with WLBP on the Farm Records facility and will remain as a point of contact for the programme.

Online Farm Records Software available to all WLBP members (FAWL, Dairy, and Welsh Organic scheme)



- Linked to BCMS and EID Cymru
- Movements automatically inputted into Flock and Herd registers
- Medicine purchases and treatments (including collation of antibiotic usage)
 - Automatic updates
 - Reduces paper work
- FAWL Management Record Book
 - Health Plan
- Ongoing free support



Register at: www.farmrecords.wlbp.co.uk

For further information contact:

01970 636688

healthplan@wlbp.co.uk

Antimicrobial resistance in animals and the environment

Welsh Lamb and Beef Producers Ltd (WLBP) is playing a major part in the drive to combat antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in animals and the environment in Wales.

Along with its partner organisations, WLBP launched the Arwain DGC (Defnydd Gwrthfaicrobaidd Cyfrifol Cymru) project last month.

Arwain DGC builds on the pioneering work of an earlier project - Arwain Vet Cymru (AVC). This project focused on improving antibiotic prescribing in cattle and sheep through a Wales-wide network of Veterinary Prescribing Champions which has subsequently become the blueprint for similar schemes in the UK and across the world.

AMR is classed as a global 'One Health' challenge, and there are calls for urgent multisectoral action. The World Health Organisation has described AMR as an issue where "without urgent action, we are heading for a post-antibiotic era, in which common infections and minor injuries can once again kill."

Arwain DGC brings together experienced collaborators to deliver a programme addressing AMR in animals and the environment.

Included are key Welsh agricultural stakeholders (Menter a Busnes, Welsh Lamb and Beef Producers Ltd and Welsh Agricultural Organisation Society), academic institutions (University of Bristol and Aberystwyth University School of Veterinary Science) and veterinary delivery partners (Iechyd Da and Milfeddygon Gogledd Cymru).

Arwain DGC is closely aligned to the Welsh Government's five-year *AMR in Animals and the Environment Implementation Plan (2019–2024)*. The project has received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014–2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.



Arwain DGC

Defnydd Gwrthficrobaidd Cyfrifol
Responsible Antimicrobial Use

The overall Arwain DGC project is led by Menter a Busnes (MaB), with each partner responsible for specialist elements of the project and workstreams, which include:

- Extending the Veterinary Prescribing Champions Network previously developed by the Arwain
- Vet Cymru project.
- Delivering a voluntary code of conduct for antimicrobial prescribing across farm practices.
- Using novel technology on farm to reduce the need for antimicrobials
- Understanding associations between antimicrobial use and resistance
- Understanding patterns of Antimicrobial use in the equine industry.
- Providing factual information to farmers and vets.

In particular, WLBP is employing a bespoke Antimicrobial Usage (AMU) Calculator to collect data on the use of antimicrobials on Welsh sheep, beef and dairy farms.

This technology supports farmers and vets in collecting data on animals and the environment to improve productivity and welfare and reduce the use of antimicrobials. The AMU data of up to 4,500 farms will be used to produce accurate (individual) usage reports. The data will help detect subclinical disease enabling farm management amendments, prevention of outbreaks, or allowing treatment without antibiotics.





Welsh Lamb & Beef Producers Ltd - Farm Assured Welsh Livestock Scheme (FAWL), 2022 FAWL Standards – the new standards will come into effect from the 1st May 2022 and assess against from 1st July 2022.

Ref	Standard	Amendment	Explanation
	General	All references to EU legislation in the standards have been deleted	The UK is no longer part of the EU
1g	Assurance Status	Addition – “If livestock travel via a collection centre, the collection centre must be assured.”	To maintain the integrity of the whole meat supply chain
3g	Stock feed	Addition – “[Feed] must be readily identifiable with different feeds stored separately from each other feed to minimise the risk of cross contamination. It is particularly important that any medicated feed is kept separate and clearly labelled.”	To minimise the risk of error in feeding
4b	Use of paints & preservative	Deleted	No conformances raised against the standard for many years
7b	Condition of livestock	“Livestock must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • healthy and protected from pain, fear, disease and injury. • Well-fed and watered, free from hunger and thirst with a diet that maintains health and vigour. • showing appropriate body condition. • comfortable and protected from extreme weather. • content in their environment and free from discomfort • able to behave in a natural manner” 	Included to underline the importance of the animal health and welfare to the scheme
7c	Competence of stockmen	All farm personnel with responsibilities for livestock and for farming operations (including any contractor employed) must be competent	The phrase in brackets “(including any contractor employed)” added to note that all personnel dealing with stock and farming operations in general need to be competent in what they do.
7g	Electric goads	Reintroduced – “The use of electric goads is prohibited.”	Standard reintroduced following concerns raised by other assurance schemes elsewhere
8c	Annual livestock health & welfare review	An annual livestock health & welfare review must be undertaken with the farm vet. The vet will be expected to review: Added in bold at point 3: (3) the use of antibiotics, including the Highest Priority Critically Important Antibiotics (HP-CIAs) (if any), estimating average use as mg/kg (as per industry parameters) using WLBP’s AMU Calculator which is on the online Vet Portal to calculate and record the outcome.	This is the most important amendment to the current FAWL standards. Government and consumers are concerned about resistance to antibiotics. We need to demonstrate that farmers are using these medicines responsibly otherwise we may be denied access to some of them. We need data as evidence to prove responsible use. Vets, using our website can calculate average use to agreed industry and government norms. That will strengthen farming’s hand significantly in our argument for continued access to some very important medicines
9i	Water Supply	(a) Deleted in previous standard “that are outside” after “All livestock”. Now reads: All livestock must have a good supply of fresh water available at all times. (b) Added as well: “Private water supplies (such as bore holes) should have an alternative supply available in case of emergency.”	(a) To clarify that all stock must have access to clean water, not just ones that are outside (b) To ensure that alternative sources of water are available should private sources such as wells dry up.
11e	Treatment record	Members are asked to add ‘Reason for treatment’ in Medicine Record Book when noting the use of any relevant medicine	Previously, this had been a recommendation in previous standard.
12d	Birthing facilities	New: “There must be appropriate facilities for livestock to give birth indoors with facilities available to separate ewe/ cow from the rest of the group if necessary; clean, dry bedding provided and replaced regularly; lighting to enable close inspection of livestock; restraining facility (e.g., crush; calving gate) available for use where livestock give birth, if necessary.”	While previous versions of the standards had a provision for lambing or calving outdoors, it was considered appropriate to have standards that referenced indoor birthing as well.
13g	Casualty animals	Added: “Livestock must be able to bear their weight on all four legs and walk onto the vehicle unaided.”	To comply with codes of practice and legislation

14a	Farm Environment	Standard restated: “The farm’s environment, its water, soil or air must not be impaired or polluted by the farm’s management or its farming practices.”.	To underline the scheme’s commitment to work to minimise the risk of environmental pollution from farming practices
14d	Government Regulation	Statement of general policy – “FAWL members must comply with any government regulation that applies to the control of agricultural pollution in Wales, as and when it takes legal effect.”	Environmental regulation (relating to water quality, in particular) is evolving in Wales. While having a general policy of complying with regulation, the FAWL scheme is committed to working sympathetically with members as they are asked to adapt to new rules
16a-c	Storage facilities	A previous standard has been split into three, covering (a) General storage facilities (b) Slurry, dirty water, silage effluent (c) Silage storage	For more clarity and to underline the role of adequate storage in minimising the threat of pollution.
16e	Temporary field heaps	Added to previous requirement: “Manure stored outside in a field should not be in a field liable to flooding, becoming waterlogged, or close to surface water, land drain borehole, spring or well.” And additionally, re-worded from previous standard: “It should not be located in any single position for more than 12 consecutive months or located in the same place as an earlier one used in the last two years.”	Reference to flooding etc. meant to minimise the threat from pollution. The requirement that temporary heaps should not be sited in the same place for more than 12 consecutive months is more practical than to suggest resiting every year as was the case in the previous standard.
16f	Fuel oil	Added: “Fuel oil must be stored safely and securely in robust facilities that meet the current legal requirements and minimise the risk of polluting the environment.”	To underline the importance of adequate storage
17a	Application of slurry, dirty water, silage effluent	“These must be applied to land in accordance with the current legal requirements and COGAP to minimise the risk of water pollution, unacceptable odours, soil compaction or other environmental damage.”	Previous requirement on spreading in proximity to water set out in another standard – 17f
17b	Solid manures	Deleted from previous standard “(in NVZ there are other legal requirements)”	In anticipation of regulatory changes
17d	Nitrogen fertiliser	New – “Before applying any nitrogen fertiliser (from whatever source) a field inspection should be undertaken to assess the risk of polluting surface water, paying particular attention to the prevailing weather conditions. Fertiliser and lime applications must be made at an appropriate time of year taking into account limitations imposed by regulation. All applications should be in accordance with the farm’s nutrient management plan. Application records must be kept.”	To encourage scheme members to minimise the risk of pollution from the use of nitrogen fertilisers
17e	Artificial fertilisers & surface water	New – “When spreading manufactured nitrogen fertiliser, care should be taken to ensure that it is not spread closer than 2 metres to surface water.”	To encourage scheme members to minimise the risk of water pollution from the use of nitrogen fertilisers
17f	Organic manure, effluent & proximity to water	New – “Organic manure and effluent should not be spread within 10 metres of surface water unless using precision spreading equipment (trailing shoe, dribble bar or injector system) in which case no person may spread organic manure within 6 metres of surface water. No spreading within 50 metres of a borehole, spring or well.”	To encourage scheme members to minimise the risk of water pollution from the use of organic manure and effluent
17g	Organic materials	Underlined added to previous standard – “Organic materials such as digestate or sewage sludge may be applied to land for agricultural benefit if the appropriate legislation <u>and other agreements (e.g., PAS 100; PAS 110; Biosolids Assurance Scheme [BAS])</u> are complied with. “ Underlined added to previous standard – “Organic materials such as digestate or sewage sludge may be applied to land for agricultural benefit if the appropriate legislation <u>and other agreements (e.g., PAS 100; PAS 110; Biosolids Assurance Scheme [BAS])</u> are complied with. “	To reflect development of Biosolids Assurance scheme since last standards review
17j	PPP application equipment including Crop Sprayers	Standard re-written – “Knapsacks, hand-held or pedestrian sprayers need to be checked regularly to ensure accurate and efficient application of pesticide: records of inspection need to be maintained. Boom sprayers 3 metres and under must be tested before the machine is 5 years old and then retested every 6 years. Boom sprayers over 3 metres must be tested before they are 5 years old; over 5 years old, they need to have been tested within the last 3 years and then re-tested every 3 years.”	Requirement for pedestrian sprayers to be regularly checked as well as knapsacks and hand-held included. Testing for boom sprayers explained. Reference to time limit in previous standard removed.