

LIVESTOCK HUSBANDRY PROCEDURES

This appendix outlines the scheme requirements when undertaking certain husbandry procedures (also known as common veterinary operations). Consideration should be given to whether the procedure is necessary – and procedures must only be carried out by competent persons. Consideration must also be given to the application of dressings/ antibiotic sprays to wounds.

Where husbandry procedures are carried out on-farm, it is a requirement that you document this in your health plan – and a recommendation that the need of husbandry procedures is reviewed with a vet.

A competent stock person is a trained and/ or experienced stockman who understands the welfare implications of the procedure they are undertaking, the methods they are using and the conditions for use.

CATTLE

PROCEDURE/ METHOD		CONDITIONS OF USE		
		Animal age	Operator	Anaesthetic
Castration	Elastration/ Rubber ring	1st week of life only	Competent stock person	
	Bloodless castration e.g. burdizzo	Up to 2 months of age	Competent stock person	With
	Other method	Up to 2 months	Appropriately trained stock person	With
	When the animal is over 2 months of age	Over 2 months of age	Vet Only	With
Disbudding	Chemical cauterisation	1st week of life only	Competent stock person	With
	Other method than above e.g. hot iron	Up to 2 months of age	Competent stock person	With
Dehorning	Cutting/ sawing horn (must not be used routinely)	Up to 5 months of age	Competent stock person	With
		Over 5 months of age	Vet Only	With
Removal of Supernumerary Teats	Using clean, sharp scissors	Up to 3 months	Competent stock person	With
		3 months and over	Vet Only	With

Routine tail docking of cattle is not permitted.

SHEEP

PROCEDURE/ METHOD		CONDITIONS OF USE		
		Animal age	Operator	Anaesthetic
Castration	Elastration/ Rubber ring	1st week of life only	Competent stock person	
	Clamp/ bloodless	Up to 3 months	Competent stock person	
	When the animal is over 3 months of age or where any methods other than above are used		Vet Only	With
Tail Docking*	Rubber Ring	1st week of life	Competent stock person	
	Hot iron/ clamp	Up to 2 months	Competent stock person	With
	Surgical/ other	Any age	Vet Only	With
Dehorning and disbudding**	Trimming of insensitive tip of an in-growing horn	Any age	Competent stock person	
	All other cases	Any age	Vet Only	With

* There must be sufficient tail to cover the vulva or the anus. Any shorter must only be in the case of emergency, disease or injury following consultation with a vet (and administration of anaesthetic).

** Under the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 (as amended), only a veterinary surgeon may dehorn or disbud a sheep, apart from trimming the insensitive tip of an ingrowing horn, which if left untreated could cause pain or distress.