

Public Petitions Committee  
Scottish Parliament  
Holyrood  
EH99 1SP



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Dear John

### **PETITION PE01555: ELECTRIC SHOCK AND VIBRATION COLLARS FOR ANIMALS**

I write to thank you for the invitation to respond to the above mentioned petition, concerning the use of electric shock and vibration collars for animals.

NFU Scotland (NFUS) represents over 8,500 farmers and crofters across Scotland. Primarily, our role is to develop reactive and proactive policy on issues impacting agriculture and agricultural workers in Scotland, across the range of agricultural commodities and wider legal, technical and animal health issues.

We welcome the introduction of this petition and recognise that there is an agricultural interest in the issue. However, as it concerns wider animal welfare issue rather than a direct farming one, NFUS has not adopted a formal position strictly for or against an outright ban of electric shock or vibration collars.

Taking account of this disclaimer, in consultation with colleagues who have expertise in animal behaviour and training, a positive training approach was agreed to be the preferred option towards dog handling. NFUS therefore wouldn't actively endorse a supportive position towards dog shocking as we would suggest that having them on sale for the general public has the potential to be dangerous if used in the wrong hands. We do recognise that their very limited use in extreme situations by trained professionals in tightly controlled environments has had degrees of success for training purposes, however on a wider scale would stay clear of their use due to the potential for abuse and mis-use.



NFUS will follow the development of this petition with keen interest and, should the petition go further in the parliamentary process, we would be happy to revisit the issue and conduct a more comprehensive consultation with our membership in order to establish a more formal position on the matter. I do hope this provides sufficient direction on our position in the meantime.

Yours sincerely

Clare Slipper

**Parliamentary Officer, NFU Scotland**