



T: 0300-244 9833
E: ian.murdoch@gov.scot

Edward Mountain MSP
Committee Convener
Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

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Dear Mr Mountain

I am writing to address questions on the Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019 (TSE Amendment Regulation) raised by members of the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee on 1 May.

The work of Animal Health and Welfare requires a large amount of legislation. Due to this, it was agreed that all the animal health changes required for a no deal situation would be provided for in one jumbo Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI): The Animal Health (EU Exit) (Scotland) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019 (SSI 2019/71).

Among other topics, this SSI covers TSEs and fixes deficiencies that would result from EU exit, such as references to EU legislation and other wording that would no longer be appropriate in the event of a no deal exit. The Scottish Government remains ready to act by making the changes that are required to meet the conditions of any proposed deal if/when the conditions are agreed.

In response to the question from Stewart Stevenson MSP on the references to various pieces of EU legislation in the TSE Amendment Regulation, the Scottish Government has been prioritising work on EU Exit SSIs to ensure they are operable and in force in the event of a no deal exit.

Addressing the question from Peter Chapman MSP seeking clarification on the implementation in Scotland of a different system for ageing sheep at slaughter from the rest of the UK. The Scottish Government and Food Standards Scotland have worked with industry to develop an implementation plan and a protocol to use a date-based system instead of using dentition checks to age the animals.



However, given the complexity sheep farmers would face if Scotland implemented a different sheep ageing system from the rest of the UK, the Scottish Government has reluctantly agreed that we will not be proceeding with this change this year. The Scottish Government will continue to liaise with Defra and the Welsh Government on plans to implement this proposal on a GB basis.

I hope the committee members find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

Ian Murdoch
Animal Health – Disease Prevention Team

