

Call for evidence on UK-wide ban on live export of animals for overseas slaughter launched

The proposals relate only to the export of animals for slaughter and not to the banning of live animal exports for production or breeding.

Whilst a ban on live animal exports is not currently possible due to EU free trade rules, a ban could be introduced once the UK leaves the EU.

The Welsh Government has also agreed to work with the UK Government and other devolved administrations to consider how existing welfare in transport standards can be strengthened and to support further research in this area.

Cabinet Secretary for Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs Lesley Griffiths said:

“As a government, we are committed to ensuring high standards of welfare for all animals kept in Wales and our position on live exports for slaughter is clear.

“We would prefer for animals to be slaughtered as close as practicable to their point of production and consider a trade in meat and meat products to be preferable to long distance transport of animals to slaughter. That is why we are supporting the call for evidence on a UK-wide ban on the export of live animals for overseas slaughter.

“Whilst there is likely to be public support for a ban on live exports for slaughter it is important to recognise the trade is currently lawful and a ban is unlikely to be welcomed by all. The livestock industry and the sheep sector in Wales for example are likely to have mixed views, particularly given the uncertainty around our future trading relationship with the EU.

“I encourage the public, the agriculture industry, partners and anyone with an interest in animal welfare to get involved and share their views with us on this important issue.”

“I have also agreed to work with the UK government and other devolved administrations to see how the protection of animal welfare during transport can be strengthened and to support further research in this area. I look forward to receiving the recommendations from both in due course.”