

BVA and Goat Veterinary Society position on goat kid disbudding and analgesia

Executive summary

BVA and Goat Veterinary Society (GVS) believe that the prevention and management of pain, during and after the disbudding procedure, is essential for both animal health and welfare and the reputation of all goat keepers whether commercial or otherwise.

Legal requirement: Only veterinary surgeons are permitted to carry out the disbudding procedure – which is considered veterinary surgery under the provisions of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966. There are no exemptions.

Recommendation 1: Veterinary surgeons carrying out disbudding should be proficient in undertaking the procedure

Recommendation 2: Anaesthesia must be used, and analgesia should be used, for all disbudding procedures

Recommendation 3: The principles of the Cascade should be applied when prescribing analgesics, and goat keepers advised of both the risks and benefits as part of the process of obtaining informed consent for the entire disbudding procedure