

Implementation of Bovine Electronic Identification (Bovine EID) in Wales

Question 1

Do you support the mandatory implementation of Bovine EID for newborn calves in Wales?

| | | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------------|----|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|-----|-------------------------------------|----|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|

Supporting comments

We support the use of electronic ear tags as an official means of identification in cattle. It is consistent with both Welsh Government's and UK Government's principles of 'digital by default' and moving towards paperless transactions and has great potential to increase accuracy, reduce recording, transcription and potential subsequent certification errors and increase the health and safety of those involved in such tasks.

Question 2

Do you have any comments or concerns on using Low Frequency (LF) technology for implementing Bovine EID in Wales?

While low frequency (LF) is proven technology, and used in the EU, we are concerned about its limited effective reading range. We would prefer to see ultra-high frequency (UHF) technology adopted because its greater range makes it much safer for those recording animal ID numbers at all Critical Control Points (CCPs) both on farm and off, such as abattoirs, markets and collection points. It also has increased data capacity, making it future proof and limiting conflict with other LF technology (boluses, segregation gates etc). That said we do also appreciate that UHF is not ISO approved.

It is imperative that any solution in Wales takes this on board and is compatible, inter-operable and ideally identical with those being taken forward in the other three nations of the UK. This is part of a fundamental and essential component of an efficient and error-free system for animal and public health traceability purposes both in the technology employed, and the numbering system.

Following the results of a consultation in which 73% of respondents were in favour of UHF technology, the [Scottish Government has confirmed](#) a commitment to delivering UHF electronic identification to improve traceability for cattle in Scotland. Wales could opt to introduce LF technology initially, then change to UHF as the technology becomes more established and potentially cheaper. However, investing in two technologies will likely result in higher long term costs, as well as requiring two transition periods. A significant proportion of cattle have a long life span which will lead to a long transition phase for each change in technology.

Question 3

Do you have any additional views on cattle identification and traceability in Wales?

Limiting the statutory identification device/location to a tag in the ear also provides certainty to those veterinary surgeons who are required to assuredly identify the animal for animal health, public health or export certification purposes.

We think re-tagging of the current herd (i.e. those already tagged without EID) should be done as and when necessary, but with a reasonably long leadtime towards complete digitisation. Where an animal loses its identity tags and cannot be identified by other means, it should be re-tagged with EID. EID should become mandatory after three years, so as to allow for the proper realisation of the benefits of increased accuracy and health and safety (when reading/recording tags) to veterinary surgeons, farm, market and abattoir workers and others. It should reduce the inefficiencies of two systems running in parallel, which will only be exacerbated when more than 50% of the herd has EID.

Question 4

We have asked several specific questions on Bovine EID in this consultation but if you have any related feedback on cattle identification in Wales, please provide your comments below:

Question 5

Which of the following best describes you as a respondent?

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Beef suckler herd | <input type="checkbox"/> | Abattoir | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Beef rearer or finisher | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fallen stock | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dairy herd | <input type="checkbox"/> | Farming Union | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed herd | <input type="checkbox"/> | Haulier | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pedigree herd | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ear tag supplier | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Market | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify) | ✓ |

Veterinary membership association

Question 6

What, in your opinion, would be the likely effects of the implementation of Bovine EID in Wales on the Welsh language? We are particularly interested in any likely effects on opportunities to use the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English.

- a) Do you think that there are opportunities to promote any positive effects?
- b) Do you think that there are opportunities to mitigate any adverse effects?

We support the use of the Welsh language but do not have the expertise to provide a detailed response to this question.

Question 7

In your opinion, could the implementation of Bovine EID in Wales be formulated or changed so as to:

- a) have positive effects or more positive effects on using the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English; or
- b) mitigate any negative effects on using the Welsh language and on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than English?

We support the use of the Welsh language, but do not have the expertise to provide a detailed response to this question.