



## **FMDV Vaccine to Live**

***An event organised by NFUS, Moredun and Scottish Government***

**Tuesday 15 March 2011**

**Report from Break Out Session Three**

**The Processing Challenge: logistics, traceability, labelling, product quality/value**

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### **Implications for plants within differentiated zones (including vaccinated zones, if applicable)**

- Whatever zone the plant is in, there may be additional operational constraints to consider (separation, cleansing & disinfecting, license processing etc) – processors in the group felt that this was manageable in the past and vaccination would not make operating any more complex than in previous outbreaks.
- The over-riding consideration is where (i.e. what zone) the animals originate rather than the location of the abattoir. The only exception to this *may* be if the plant was the original “infected premises”. Again, whatever the implications for a plant designated as an infected premises, a vaccination policy, or not, would not impact complications for that plant in any way.
- Stand-alone cutting plants and retail packing plants are not affected per se as they are dealing with meat as opposed to animals and would continue to operate under normal traceability and labelling rules.

### **Implications for plants processing animals from vaccinated zone**

- Deboning and maturation restrictions on beef from vaccinated stock is a non-issue as the process is essentially standard practice for the vast majority of the industry and would require minimal changes to process.
- Deboning and maturation of lamb from vaccinated stock was deemed to be undesirable due to heavy devaluation of end product and high labour costs of processing in this manner. The preferred option, if dealing with vaccinated sheep was for the meat to be detained for one day and the flock tested.
- It was the feeling of the group that pigs should not be vaccinated in any circumstances, as there was no viable way of deriving value from the end product.
- Heat treatment of any species was deemed to be of no interest and not a solution for any species due to lack of market, processing capacity and/or value for the product.

## **Are dedicated processing plants a solution to processing vaccinated stock?**

- Due to the long established supply routes within the Scottish industry it was felt that this was undesirable on two counts – very disruptive to existing supplier/ processor business relationships and highly likely to create a two-tier market for product, which is in no-ones interest in the short, medium or longer term.

## **Stamps, labelling, traceability and controls**

- The group discussed at length and agreed that all the restrictions were based around the live animal and the initial controls on the processing of the meat (deboning, maturing, detaining awaiting test results etc). Due to the concentrated nature of the Scottish processing sector and the high level of independent controls and traceability already in place at abattoirs, it was felt that there was no requirement to differentiate meat (by way of stamps/labels), from vaccinated animals or non-vaccinated animals, subject to the meat having been treated as appropriate for the status of the originating animal(s). This again avoids a two-tier market situation.
- In terms of the “oval stamp” mark, it was stated that, similar to previous outbreaks, there would be no readily available stocks of alternative packaging and thus it was important to discuss labelling contingencies as part of this overall process. Suggestion of checking retail labelling equipment to see if latest generation were more adaptable/ flexible and if so was there scope to adapt systems to make use of this technology. It was stressed again that the meat is safe and undifferentiated, other than by export status.

## **Additional Comments**

- If cattle were to be vaccinated, the farmer should be allowed (subject to prevailing movement restrictions for his herd) to select and move to slaughter those animals which he felt would be better marketed now, rather than being held for a potentially long period.
- Decisions on whether to vaccinate, and if so what species, would be largely dependant on the location of the outbreak and the season of the year.
- It was felt that, even if pigs were of high genetic value, it was difficult to see benefit in vaccinating due to ongoing restrictions on the animals and their offspring.
- That said, clarity was required on the implications for vaccinated breeding stock and there offspring during relaxation of controls during the outbreak and beyond the outbreak e.g. once the country is free of FMD, what is the status of these stock in terms of export of meat, export of live animals, movement restrictions etc.
- Regionalisation was agreed to be not desirable anywhere on mainland UK under any circumstance. Regionalisation of Northern Ireland was agreed to be acceptable.
- The point was made that there are fewer livestock haulers available than was the case in 2001 and this may impact animal movement to slaughter under separation rules.