

Dear

ATISN 26768 – Farming Statistics & Enforcement of the Laws Governing the Welfare of Farmed Animals in Wales

Information requested

Thank you for your request which we received on 04 March.

You asked for information concerning farmed animal populations and enforcement of the laws governing the welfare of farmed animals in Wales.

You have specifically asked the following questions:

Farming Statistics for Wales

1. We understand that you are responsible for the conduct of the June Survey of Agriculture and Horticulture in Wales and publish data on the results of this survey including farmed animal populations across Wales as a whole. Can you please provide the following:
 - a. Your latest data on farmed animal population in Wales broken down by subregion?
Please provide when the data was gathered.
 - b. Number of farm holdings in Wales as of June 2025 which are of a type which may keep farmed animals.
2. Please could you also provide the current registered Country Parish Holdings in Wales, registered with the following:
 - a. Less than 50 animals; and
 - b. Over 50 animals.
3. What is the total number of live farmed animal markets and collection centres in Wales?

Enforcement of the Laws Governing the Welfare of Farmed Animals in Wales

Terminology

By 'farmed animals', we refer to any animal bred or kept for the production of food, wool or skin or other farming purposes.

The premises referred to in this question are:

- Farms keeping animals for commercial use
- Livestock markets that sell and trade live animals
- National and international border control posts
- Vehicles transporting farmed animals for commercial purposes

Where referencing Transport Vehicles, we are referring to welfare issues during transport and vehicle related issues which breach animal welfare law.

By 'inspections', we refer to on-site inspections on behalf of your organisation. By welfare complaints, we are referring to any complaints relating to animal cruelty or failure to meet the welfare needs of an animal, whether from members of the public, animal protection organisations, staff members, veterinary surgeons etc.

Please could you provide the following information in relation to farmed animal species **only** during the period **1 January 2025 - 31 December 2025**.

4. Do you enforce farmed animal welfare legislation?
 - a. If the answer is no, please explain why e.g. a different public authority does etc.
 - b. If a different public authority enforces this legislation in your area, please inform us which one?
5. What was your body's budget for farmed animal welfare enforcement?
6. How many people do you employ to carry out farmed animal welfare inspections as part of their duties? If possible, please provide the response in FTE (Full time equivalent).
7. How many of each of the following premises in your jurisdiction were inspected for welfare purposes one or more times?
 - a. Farms;
 - b. Markets.
 - c. Borders; and
 - d. Transport vehicles.

For the avoidance of doubt, if the same premise was inspected more than once, it should only be recorded once.

8. What was the total number of inspections that were conducted for welfare purposes in your jurisdiction at the following premises?
 - a. Farms;
 - b. Markets;
 - c. Borders; and
 - d. Transport vehicles.

Please note that this question refers to the total number of inspections, not premises inspected. Therefore, the numbers can include situations where multiple inspections took place on the same premise.

9. How many of these inspections found non-compliance with animal welfare law at the following premises?
 - a. Farms.
 - b. Markets;
 - c. Borders; and
 - d. Transport vehicles.

10. Statutory Notices

10A) Please list whether an improvement notice was issued under section 10 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006 on each of the occasions an inspection revealed non-compliance at each of the following:

- a. Farms;
- b. Markets;
- c. Borders; and
- d. Transport vehicles.

10B) Please list whether an improvement notice was issued under the Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007 on each of the occasions an inspection revealed non-compliance at each of the following:

- a. Farms;
- b. Markets;
- c. Borders; and
- d. Transport vehicles.

11. Please list whether a prosecution was commenced or referred to the Crown Prosecution Service, local authority or any other enforcement body on each of the occasions an inspection revealed non-compliance with animal welfare law at each of the following:

- a. Farms;
- b. Markets;
- c. Borders; and
- d. Transport vehicles.

12. How many welfare complaints did you receive in relation to the following:

- a. On-farm;
- b. At markets;
- c. At a border post; and
- d. During transport.

13. Of the above complaints, how many led to an on-site inspection?

- a. On-farm;
- b. At markets;
- c. At a border post; and
- d. During transport.

14. How many charges did you bring or refer to the Crown Prosecution Service, a local authority or any other enforcement body for offences named in the following:

- a. Animal Welfare Act 2006?
- b. The Welfare of Farmed Animals (Wales) Regulations 2007?
- c. Welfare of Animals Markets Order 1990?
- d. Welfare of Animals (Transport) (Wales) Order 2007?

15. How many individuals subject to any of the above enforcement actions (both prosecutions and statutory notices) had previously been convicted of an animal welfare offence?

Tail Docking of Pigs

16. We are also particularly concerned with the enforcement of the prohibition on the routine tail docking of pigs. The docking of pigs' tails is prohibited by section 5 of the Animal Welfare Act 2006, except in certain circumstances provided for in the Mutilations (prohibited procedures) (Wales) Regulations 2007. However, evidence indicates that docking takes place on up to 85% of UK farms. Could you please disclose how many complaints you received regarding the docking of pigs' tails?

Our Response

Question 1a: The following data was gathered during the summer period of 2025 to inform the results of the Agriculture and Horticulture Survey in Wales, published in November 2025.

The information provided reflects agricultural regions, which are defined as individual local authorities or groups of local authorities.

Subregion	Farmed Animal Population
Northwest Wales	3,603,093
Northeast Wales	3,133,950
Powys	9,565,725
Ceredigion	1,053,528
Pembrokeshire	1,161,022
Carmarthenshire	1,127,614
South Wales	2,417,979

Northwest Wales comprises the authorities of Ynys Môn and Gwynedd.

Northeast Wales comprises the authorities of Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham.

South Wales comprises the authorities of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Vale of Glamorgan, Cardiff, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Newport and Monmouthshire.

By 'Farmed Animal Population', we refer to any animal bred or kept for the production of food, wool, skin, or for other farming purposes, including cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry, horses, and goats.

Source: June 2025 Agricultural Survey.

Question 1b: 23,509 County Parish Holdings in Wales are of a type which may keep farmed animals.

Question 2a: 10,686 County Parish Holdings in Wales are registered as having under 50 animals.

Question 2b: 12,823 County Parish Holdings in Wales are registered as having over 50 animals.

Source: June 2025 Agricultural Survey.

Question 3: Welsh Government does not hold this information. This information is held by Local Authorities in Wales.

Question 4: No.

Question 4a & 4b: Farmed animal welfare legislation is enforced by Local Authorities, supported by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).

Question 5: Please refer to the answer provided at 4a.

Question 6: Please refer to the answer provided at 4a.

Questions 7 – 15: Welsh Government does not hold this information.

Tail Docking of Pigs

Question 16: Welsh Government did not receive any complaints relating to the docking of pigs' tails between 1 January 2025 and 31 December 2025.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely