

STATUS TABLE ON 24 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS UNDER THE BEYOND CALF EXPORTS STAKEHOLDERS FORUM

Status report dateline: June 2008 (+ 6 months)

Success measurements:

- **Increased uptake of male dairy calves in the UK beef chain**

Slight increase projected, based on 16% reduction in calves killed on farm and 9% reduction in calves exported compared to one per cent reduction in the dairy herd.

- **Reduction in number of calves killed on farm**

Figures to be confirmed at end of 2008. In 2007 it was 150,000 but this was high due to FMD and blue tongue restrictions.

- **Reduction in live exports of calves for further fattening**

Slight reduction: during the first six months of 2008, 33,600 male dairy calves were exported compared to 39,900 in 2007. (2005: 0; 2006: 76,000; 2007: 61,000).

RECOMMENDATION	STATUS	PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE
Increasing the number of male dairy calves in the UK beef supply chain		
<p>1. Every effort should be made to ensure that the valuable resource of male dairy calves is not wasted but used to displace beef imports.</p>	<p>The increase in use of dairy semen is still gaining momentum and the UK will be processing significantly fewer beef cross animals from the dairy herd.</p> <p>Unless 400,000 black and white male dairy calves are reared over the 12 months from June 2008 there will be an 18 – 19 per cent reduction in UK beef production in 12 months after August 2009.</p>	<p>Further work needed to increase uptake of male dairy calves into the UK beef chain.</p>
<p>2. The British beef industry is 77% self sufficient and could absorb any increase in production of beef from male dairy calves.</p>	<p>Very slight increase in beef from dairy and suckler herds from retailer and food sector initiatives but more schemes are needed with wider distribution across the country. Dairy and suckler herds' reduction projected to be by 19% by 2010.</p>	
<p>3. Beef from male dairy calves presents a domestic and export market opportunity. Opportunities exist to sell onto the EU market. Limited market for UK veal.</p>	<p>Sainsbury's has replaced Dutch veal with British veal; Marks and Spencer trialling eight British veal products from July.</p> <p>An organic veal pilot by Tesco ran successfully but stopped due to consistent supply of animals – due to restart in autumn. Lack of a contracted market is generally restricting interest in rearing organic dairy male calves for veal or beef market.</p> <p>Blade Farming is producing British veal for export.</p>	<p>Further work needed on market development for British veal and consumer awareness.</p> <p>Further information needed on export opportunities for bull or steer beef.</p>
<p>4. 30% more cattle could be slaughtered without the abattoir industry changing its practices.</p>	<p>Little change in the numbers of calves being slaughtered.</p>	

<p>5. Need to counter the discrimination against Holstein carcasses. Potential to market Holsteins as a differentiated product because of, for example, its low fat qualities.</p>	<p>Some schemes being trialled by McDonald's, Tesco and Waitrose (see under 8). M&S is introducing a range of eight innovative veal products that has been developed to maximize carcass utilisation.</p> <p>EBLEX has commissioned research into carcass classification and saleable meat yield. EBLEX/Dairy Co have launched www.holsteinbullcalves.co.uk. The website reports on calf rearing options and includes an economic multiplier for rearing options to help farmers decide whether to rear their male dairy calves.</p>	<p>Further work needed on market development, research and industry awareness.</p>
<p>6. Streamline supply chains and encourage more production of beef from male dairy calves by large processors/retailers offering fixed prices for finished black and white bulls or steers.</p>	<p>Some schemes being trialled by McDonald's, Tesco and Waitrose (see under 8).</p> <p>www.Tescofarming.com website launched to link the beef and dairy industry and encourage greater synergy in the supply chains.</p> <p>Blade Farming has announced forward prices from Sept 2009 to March 2010.</p> <p>M&S high welfare veal is now being produced on one M&S dairy farm with all calves originating from M&S dairy farms.</p>	<p>Further work needed on developing supply chains.</p>
<p>7. Identify market for farmers before finishing black and white male dairy calves.</p>	<p>Some schemes being trialled by retailers and food sector (see under 8).</p> <p>Blade Farming reintroducing schemes for contract calf rearing of black and white male dairy calves and other male dairy calves.</p> <p>EBLEX Analysis of Business Pointers Costings (June 2008) show intensive finishing average producer GM of +£106 which is a Net Margin of -£20 loss after fixed cost. Top third producer is GM +£140 and NM of +£76.</p>	<p>Further work needed to develop supply chains and to create incentives for farmers to encourage them to invest in production.</p>

<p>8. Retailers to develop outlets for male dairy calves.</p>	<p>Six in operation: McDonald's are trialling four suppliers. Tesco are trialling a scheme for their 1200 farmers and estimate that 100 calves per week are taken up at present. Morrison's setting up terms of reference to trial a scheme to retail calves. Sainsbury's is selling British veal instead of continental veal. Waitrose: 40 per cent of the calves going into the conventional beef supply chain are black and white bulls; 45% of the calves going into the organic beef supply chain are B&W bulls; these farms are mostly existing members of the Dovecote Park beef scheme and Waitrose is taking all of their surplus calves. Waitrose has also trialled the suitability of using black and white bull calves through its welfare friendly veal system. The eating quality results are encouraging and Waitrose will now start using some black and white bull calves in veal production. Marks and Spencer introduced British veal from one farm and eight veal products introduced from July 08. M&S is in discussion with other dairy / beef producers within its supply chain to increase the number of calves being reared.</p>	
<p>9. Defra, REERAD, WAG and Dardni to facilitate working with the industry to encourage supply chain development.</p>	<p>Defra reported that the procurement review is due to report back by end of 08.</p>	<p>Examine ways of encouraging schemes under RDPs and modulation payments.</p>

<p>10 and 11. Retailers, beef and dairy industries and animal welfare organisations to increase consumer awareness of how they can support the forum's efforts by purchasing milk and meat from outlets that guarantee a good life for calves.</p>	<p>CIWF and RSPCA have launched initiatives under their websites to promote schemes mentioned under Forum; CIWF and RSPCA working with the retailers on improving their standards; CIWF developing consumer awareness tools to promote higher welfare products that support this initiative.</p>	
<p>Breeding and education</p>		
<p>12. Support the dairy industry's move towards longer-living, more sustainable cows in order to provide more opportunities to cross with beef bulls.</p>	<p>McDonald's trial includes the cow and the calf. Tesco is encouraging use of an Aberdeen Angus bull for crossing. Waitrose is working with Alta, Cogent, Genus and Semex on the breeding of more sustainable dairy cows. High price of grain is encouraging more seasonal production and more grass-based production, which will encourage use of different breeds.</p>	<p>Further work needed on integration between the beef and dairy industry to promote production of good calves.</p>
<p>13. Encourage farmers to improve the quality of calves through more dual purpose animals via breeding and assess production and economic effects of increasing musculature in Holsteins.</p>	<p>A report on breeding Holsteins with more muscle funded by Dairy Co and EBLEX shows that selecting for an annual improvement of 0.01 conformation units (where E to P = 15 units) could increase profit from dairy cows without any restriction in progress on milk yield. A selection pressure of 0.1 units would limit progress on milk yield and overall profitability. Blade Farming is working with Genus to support dairy farmers wishing to improve their genetics and will be promoting a 'better' Holstein.</p>	

<p>14. Improve decision making powers for farmers when selecting bull semen.</p>	<p>Tesco started sexed semen offer to farmers and will evaluate at end of 2008; Waitrose invited all its select farm milk producers to a dairy genetics seminar with about half attending. Alta, Cogent, Genus and Semex participated and representatives from SAC gave an insight into recent research findings on breeding for a more sustainable dairy cow; SAC report on sexed semen (in press) shows farmer education needs to be improved via means including farmers' juries and information sources such as veterinarians; Holstein UK provides an excellent tool for farmers: 'Bull Selector', a multi-breed tool including Holstein, Friesian, Jersey, Guernsey and Ayrshire on the CDI website at http://195.153.22.85/BullSelector/?exp=ml3-0</p>	<p>Financial data needed to assess the differing conception rates between high and low fertility milking cows and assess if this is due to failure to detect oestrus or poor energy (or a combination).</p> <p>Further work needed on initiatives aimed at farmers e.g. to make them aware that bulls that would suit their needs might not be included in standard breeding company catalogues.</p>
<p>15. Sexed semen needs to be available from a wider selection of bulls and needs to be economically viable.</p>	<p>SAC report (www.calfforum.org.uk) shows heifer uptake good but further financial data needed on milking cows. Cogent reports huge demand for sexed semen with resulting supply issues.</p>	<p>See above.</p>
<p>16. Extend lactation from 10 – 18 months.</p>	<p>No data and unlikely to be a solution in the near future.</p>	
<p>17. All dairy farmers should milk record.</p>	<p>Tesco require under the Tesco Sustainable Dairy Group for all farmers to submit data within 6 months of signing a contract.</p>	

Calf health and welfare

<p>18. Good welfare promotes healthy calves that can best contribute to a profitable and sustainable dairy beef supply. Calves must receive sufficient good quality colostrum.</p>	<p>Tesco started to look at this with their farmers and found that farmers respond positively when it is highlighted and when incentives are given to encourage attention to colostrum. Tesco may consider better prices for better quality calves to encourage farmers.</p> <p>Defra advises that failure to treat calves appropriately, for example by not providing adequate colostrum, could incur penalties under cross compliance with the SFP; seven out of 130 inspections showed failure to treat calves appropriately. Blade Farming has introduced a health card for calves to provide assurance for finishers taking on the animals. Morrison's has installed an Animal Welfare Working Group to examine treatment of calves from dairy farm to retail level.</p> <p>McDonald's trial includes calf welfare.</p>	<p>Further work needs to occur to identify colostrum in mothers and calves; a saliva test is being developed and schemes need to be developed to encourage farmers to ensure calves receive sufficient good quality colostrum.</p>
<p>19. Other factors that may compromise welfare include inappropriate feeding, housing, poor hygiene, mixing of batches, inadequate arrangements for transport and disposal of calves through markets and inappropriate methods of on-farm slaughter.</p>	<p>See above</p>	
<p>20. Dairy farmers should treat their male calves in the same way they treat their heifer calves.</p> <p>Defra, REERAD, Dardni and WAG to continue spot checks on welfare of calves.</p>	<p>Defra advises that failure to treat calves appropriately, for example by not providing adequate colostrum, could incur penalties under cross compliance with the SFP; seven out of 130 inspections showed failure to treat calves appropriately.</p>	
<p>21. Aim for farmers and industry is to promote the welfare of all calves through appropriate husbandry. Moral position is that farmers should assume responsibility for the life-time welfare of calves born on their farms.</p>	<p>See above regarding initiatives by Blade Farming, Dairy Co, EBLEX, M&S, McDonald's, Morrison's, Tesco and Waitrose.</p>	
<p>22. Welfare assurance should apply to every animal; it is recommended that a move to whole-farm assurance happens by 2011.</p>	<p>ABM and ADF are working to align standards within AFS and to develop a specific section on calves, which will be delivered in 2009.</p>	

23. Improve recordings on calves so that farmers record still births, registered, unregistered or killed on farm; this should be part of assurance schemes data provisions.	Tesco require under the Tesco Sustainable Dairy Group for all farmers to submit data within 6 months of signing a contract.	Further work needs to be done to improve data collection and provision in a number of areas. The forum intends to discuss this issue in December 2008 and work will take place in the run-up to the meeting.
24. Welfare schemes adopt a bobby calf protocol by 2008.	ABM and ADF harmonised welfare assurance for calves to include a bobby calf policy, which will be delivered in 2009.	

Ends