

Veterinary Attestation - your questions answered

In January 2022, “regular veterinary visits” became a requirement of the European Union’s Animal Health Regulation. This means that farms producing animals or products of animal origin which are exported to the EU must comply with this regulation. In order to maintain trade with the EU a temporary measure, in the form of a “farmer’s attestation” was introduced, however this does not comply with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons certification requirements. Therefore, from December 13 2023, the temporary agreement of “farmer attestation” came to an end being replaced by the requirement of a Veterinary Attestation.



What is a Veterinary Attestation?

A Veterinary Attestation is an EU requirement that certifies a regular on-farm visit by a veterinary surgeon to verify the absence of notifiable disease, a visual animal health assessment and provide advice on farm biosecurity. Evidence of this visit will then be passed to the certifying Official Veterinarian at the end of the food chain.

Without evidence of regular veterinary visits, the slaughterhouse Official Veterinarian will not be able to sign the ‘Support Health Attestation’ document which accompanies products being exported to the EU.

I’m a member of a farm assurance scheme, do I need a Vet Attestation?

You do not need to arrange a vet visit if you are a member of one of the following schemes, membership of these farm assurance schemes is accepted as evidence that a premises meets the regulation requirement of regular health visits by a veterinarian:

- Farm Assured Welsh Livestock Beef and Lamb Scheme (FAWL) / Welsh Lamb and Beef Producers Ltd (WLBP)
- Red Tractor
- Lion Quality
- Poultry Health Scheme
- England only - Pathway Vet visits under the annual health and welfare review, government scheme

I’m not a member of a farm assurance scheme, do I need a Vet Attestation?

If you produce livestock that is destined for slaughter, then it is strongly recommended that you arrange a visit by your vet to obtain a Veterinary Attestation Certificate.

It is the farmers’ responsibility to arrange a vet attestation visit. The vet visit doesn’t need to be for the sole purpose of providing a vet attestation, it could be done in conjunction with other routine work.

I don’t sell livestock directly to slaughter, do I need a Vet Attestation?

Livestock that are not being sold directly to slaughter do not require a VAN. However, there may be occasions where a direct to slaughter route might need to be taken, which would require an attestation.

What happens if I don’t have a Vet Attestation?

Without a vet attestation, the official veterinarian at the slaughterhouse would not be able to sign a Support Health Attestation which is a requirement for EU export of products from animal origin. Your produce will not be allowed to be sold and exported to EU markets.

In order to maximise full carcass value, many parts of the carcass, including some fifth quarter produce, are exported and will require evidence of a veterinary visit in order to fulfil the export criteria.

I’ve booked a veterinary visit, now what?

To meet the requirements of the declaration the visit will incorporate a visual animal health inspection and provide advice on any biosecurity concerns. The purpose of the visit is to evaluate for disease prevention and detection of biosecurity risks.

Following successful inspection you’ll receive a Veterinary Attestation Certificate that will state your Veterinary Attestation Number (VAN).

What is a Vet Attestation Number (VAN)?

The VAN number is your unique reference number provided by the vet to certify that an on farm veterinary visit has taken place. It is this VAN number that you’ll need to provide to onward buyers, whether that be to livestock markets or direct to the slaughter house, for them to include on subsequent paperwork, the Food Chain Information (FCI) document.

The VAN is a 20 digit number that comprises the veterinarian’s Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) number, the County Parish Holding (CPH) number that the VAN corresponds to and the expiry date of the certificate.

(RVCS number)-(CPH number)-(Expiry date)

What should I do with the paper copy of the Veterinary Attestation Certificate?

As the farmer you should keep this certificate with your farm records and a copy will be kept on your veterinary practise database. You don’t have to send paper copies of the certificate with animals to market or slaughter, it is the VAN number only that follows the animal to slaughter.

How long is the Veterinary Attestation Certificate valid for?

The vet attestation is valid for 12 months, and it is the farmers responsibility to renew the certificate annually and ensure that the new VAN is updated on relevant documentation such as the FCI.

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I have several CPH numbers and temporary CPHs, will I need a VAN for each holding?

Farms that have more than one site under the same CPH number will need to have all sites assessed for the vet to issue the attestation for the whole CPH number. However:

- A VAN can be issued if the visiting vet is confident that the premises and the relevant areas or locations related to that premise is/are subject to regular veterinary visits or are within the routine control of the farm vet.
- If the last holding prior to movement to a slaughter market or abattoir is from a temporary CPH, the requirement has been met if the main CPH in the movement chain has had a vet visit and a VAN issued.

Can one Vet Attestation cover multiple species, for example cattle and sheep?

Yes, more than one species on one holding can be covered by one Vet Attestation visit, providing the vet assesses the health and biosecurity criteria for all species on that site during the visit.



Where do I log the VAN?

As a vendor or seller of livestock destined for slaughter, you will be required to provide the auctioneer or purchaser with the VAN number of the last premises that the animals were resident.

Sheep movement forms (AML-1) have been amended to include an area to note the VAN (see form below), if your movement forms do not contain this area then the VAN can be noted on the back of the form in the 'Additional FCI' section.

Cattle; the VAN should be provided to the market, usually on the market entry form or FCI

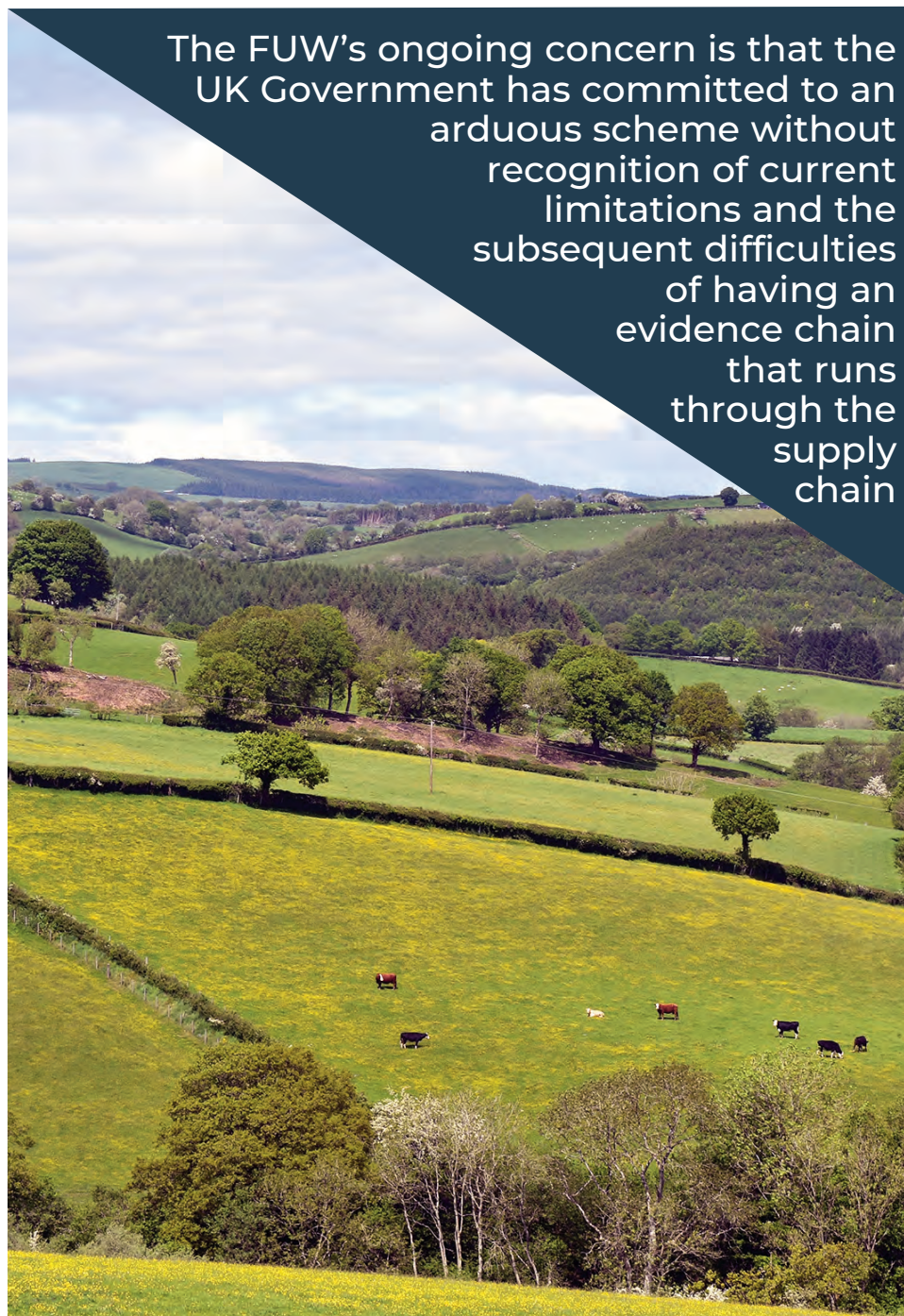
Pigs digital eAML2 system has been updated to accommodate the VAN

Can the VAN be logged digitally?

Currently there is no capacity to incorporate the VAN into digital cattle movements, the VAN has to be manually given to the market or written on FCI documentation. Similarly the digital platform for sheep movements in Wales, EID Cymru, cannot accommodate the VAN number.

The Welsh Government are exploring digital solutions for the longer term, however no timeframe has been given for this work.

Since December 13 2023 most livestock markets will request and upload your VAN number to their market systems, this allows for the VAN (or assurance number) of each lot to be provided to the purchaser on their sale invoice.




The FUW's ongoing concern is that the UK Government has committed to an arduous scheme without recognition of current limitations and the subsequent difficulties of having an evidence chain that runs through the supply chain

FUW Lobbying

The FUW believes that the requirement for an annual veterinary attestations for export represents yet more 'gold-plating' of EU regulations. The relevant EU regulation simply states that veterinary animal health farm visits will be required 'when appropriate; and that the frequency should be 'proportionate to the risk'.



Whilst now accepting that the new regulations have come into force on December 13 2023, the FUW's ongoing concern is that the UK Government has committed to an arduous scheme without recognition of current limitations and the subsequent difficulties of having an evidence chain that runs through the supply chain.

Looking forward, FUW will be lobbying the Welsh Government to develop the integration of the VAN into the digital multi species EID Cymru platform. In addition, the FUW will lobby to ensure that any requirement for animal health and welfare, biosecurity and on farm veterinary visit held within the proposals of the future Sustainable Farming Scheme would be accepted as proof of veterinary attestation to allow for EU exports.



Sheep and Goat Movement Document – AML1

Please read the important notes overleaf before completing using CAPITAL letters and pressing firmly with a BALLPOINT pen.

1. Departure Location

Departure CPH: / /

Departure Address:

Postcode:

Arrival Address:

Postcode:

Sheep Total number moved
 Goats

Ewes/Rams/Lambs/Goats/Kids	Individual Identification or Flock/Herd mark (if EID slaughter tags)

2. Please tick box if:

Moving to/returning from rounding up on common land Moving animals to a Central Point Recording Centre
 Using a continuation sheet (AML1A) or animal numbers printout stapled to this form Movement has been recorded online at EIDCymru.org and can be accepted

3. Assurance Scheme or Vet Attestation Number. PLEASE COMPLETE ONLY ONE (please refer to back page Note 6)

Farm Assurance scheme number:

Vet Attestation Number (VAN), enter all 20 digits:

4. Food Chain Information (FCI) – Declaration for sheep and goat movements to slaughter (tick 1 box)

i. All the animals listed in this consignment satisfy the FCI statements detailed on the reverse of this form.

ii. The FCI statements are not satisfied for all the animals listed in the consignment and additional information is provided on the reverse of the pink copy or on an attached document.

I declare that the details provided are correct

Keeper's signature: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	Departure date: <input style="width: 50%;" type="text"/>
Print name: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	Date of loading (if different): <input style="width: 50%;" type="text"/>
Phone number: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	Time first animals loaded: <input style="width: 50%;" type="text"/>
Name of owner if different to keepers named above: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	Time of departure: <input style="width: 50%;" type="text"/>
e-mail address: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	Expected duration of journey: <input style="width: 50%;" type="text"/>