

Animals Weekly

Our Reference: FOI1642

By email: [request-238887-97c399af@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-238887-97c399af@whatdotheyknow.com)

Dear Animals Weekly

Date: 5 December 2014

## Freedom of Information Act 2000

Further to my letter of 24 November 2014 acknowledging your request for information which was received by us on 12 November 2014, I am now in a position to respond.

You requested the following:

*We should be grateful if you would answer the following questions that relate to the statistics of rearing and slaughtering of animals for meat and dairy products in the UK (for the avoidance of doubt, all references to the UK refers to England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland inclusive):*

*(NB: Rearing establishments = the premises used for rearing livestock (for these purposes cattle, dairy cows, broiler chickens, laying hens, sheep, pigs and turkeys) before they are transported to i) the production site in the case of eggs or milk production; or ii) the slaughterhouse).*

### *Rearing Locations*

*1(a) What are the latest figures on: i) The number of beef cattle rearing establishments per county in the UK ii) The number of beef cattle reared per county in the UK in 2013.*

*(b) What are the latest figures on: i) The number of dairy cow rearing establishments per county in the UK ii) The number of dairy cows reared per county in the UK in 2013.*

*(c) What are the latest figures on: i) The number of broiler chicken rearing establishments per county in the UK ii) The number of broiler chickens reared per county in the UK in 2013.*

*(d) What are the latest figures on: i) The number of laying hen rearing establishments per county in the UK ii) The number of laying hens reared per county in the UK in 2013.*

*(e) What are the latest figures on: i) The number of sheep rearing establishments per county in the UK ii) The number of sheep reared per county in the UK in 2013.*

*(f) What are the latest figures on: i) The number of pig rearing establishments per county in the UK ii) The number of pigs reared per county in the UK in 2013.*

*(g) What are the latest figures on: i) The number of turkey rearing establishments per county in the UK ii) The number of turkeys reared per county in the UK in 2013.*

#### *Religious Slaughter*

*2. (a) (i) How many chickens were slaughtered in 2013 using religious slaughter methods? (ii) What methods were used in what proportions?*

*(b) (i) How many cattle were slaughtered in 2013 using religious slaughter methods? (ii) What methods were used in what proportions?*

*(c) (i) How many sheep were slaughtered in 2013 using religious slaughter methods? (ii) What methods were used in what proportions?*

*(d) (i) How many pigs were slaughtered in 2013 using religious slaughter methods? (ii) What methods were used in what proportions?*

*(Regarding question 2, the most recent statistics we can find are from the FSA Animal Welfare Survey 2011. We believe a survey was conducted in 2013 but we cannot locate this).*

Your request is being handled under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act).

#### Question 1

In relation to your query on rearing establishments, as mentioned in the acknowledgement letter of 24 November 2014, this should be directed to the Department of Rural and Environmental Affairs (Defra) as they have oversight of rearing establishments. If you have not already done so, and wish to contact Defra they can be contacted at:

Customer Contact Unit,  
7th Floor,  
Nobel House,  
17 Smith Square,  
London  
SW1P 3JR.

[defra.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:defra.helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk)

## Question 2

The FSA does not routinely record the information you have requested on religious slaughter neither do we hold it in format that you have requested

The information you have requested on religious slaughter is, in part, in the public domain although not recorded in the manner of your question or covering the time-period of your question. This information is provided at the link below.

You have made reference to the animal welfare survey in 2011 in your request. The FSA carried out this survey in slaughterhouses in Great Britain to provide assurance that FBOs are taking active steps to comply with legal requirements and achieve necessary animal welfare standards; and official veterinarians and frontline teams are carrying out their roles effectively, with appropriate monitoring and relevant enforcement action being taken in the event of Food Business Operator non-compliance. Although, you are clearly aware of the content of this survey for the ease of reference here is the link where this information can be found.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/board/fsa120508annexes.pdf>

There are details in the survey of the number of animals, per species, slaughtered in a single week period and these can also be found on pages 28 -31. With fluctuations in the number of animals processed by week, it is however not appropriate to aggregate these figures to give an annual figure as that would not give an accurate reflection.

As you are aware, from the content of your query, the FSA has carried out a further animal welfare survey in September 2013. The results of the survey are currently being validated and will be published by the FSA later this month. As such this information is exempt from disclosure under Section 22 (information intended for future publication) of the FOI Act, which states that

*(1) Information is exempt information if -*

*(a) the information is held by the public authority with a view to its publication, by the authority or any other person, at some future date (whether determined or not),*

*(b) the information was already held with a view to such publication at the time when the request for information was made, and*

*(c) it is reasonable in all the circumstances that the information should be withheld from disclosure until the date referred to in paragraph (a).*

As Section 22 is a qualified exemption, we have considered the public interest for and against disclosure. In favour of disclosure we have recognised the general public interest in openness particularly with regard to animal welfare. On the other hand there is a public interest in permitting public authorities to publish information in a manner and form and at a time of their own choosing, so that pre-publication

procedures, such as verifying that survey results are accurately collated and fully reviewed are followed. In this case we consider that it is preferable to put the information into the public domain by publishing it as planned rather than disclosing it prematurely to an individual applicant. Overall we consider the balance is in favour of withholding this information at this time.

Details of those slaughterhouses that are approved to use bovine restraining boxes for non-stun slaughter are held by Defra. A list of all FSA approved meat premises, including the plant's approval number, is available on the FSA's website:

<http://food.gov.uk/enforcement/sectorrules/meatplantsprems/meatpremlcence>

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number at the top of this letter in any future communications.

If you are not satisfied with the way the Agency has handled your request for information, you should write within two calendar months of the date of this letter to the Openness Team, and ask for an internal review. They will arrange for the FSA's Complaints Coordinator to conduct the review. Their address is Food Standards Agency, Room 2C Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6NH (email: [Openness.team@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Openness.team@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Agency. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or through the website at: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Emma Monks', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Emma Monks  
**Private Secretary to Chief Operating Officer**