



Foot trimming training - Justification

PL.1.1 - It is recommended that any persons trimming cows feet are trained and competent

Justification

Foot health is a key component of dairy cow welfare, productivity and longevity. Foot trimming can play an important role in preventing and managing lameness, as well as providing an opportunity to identify lesions and other foot health issues and support timely intervention.

Preventive foot trimming is already widely practised on GB dairy farms, by both professional foot trimmers and farm staff. However, scientific knowledge and recommended practice around when, why and how feet should be trimmed continues to evolve. For example, current guidance increasingly emphasises assessment of the individual foot, recognising when trimming is not required, avoiding unnecessary removal of horn and maintaining appropriate sole thickness. Ensuring that those undertaking foot trimming have the necessary training and competence helps support effective foot health management. Maintaining and updating that knowledge and competence is very important for both newer and more experienced foot trimmers, so that established practices continue to reflect current evidence and guidance. It also contributes to the successful implementation of the farm's lameness policy, particularly where individuals are responsible for footcare and the delivery of lameness prevention and treatment strategies.

The recommendation applies equally to farm staff, professional foot trimmers and any other person undertaking hoof trimming activities. It does not prescribe a particular qualification, training provider or foot-trimming approach, recognising that farms may utilise a range of suitably trained and competent individuals to undertake this work. This approach also recognises ongoing industry work to improve consistency in foot-trimming training and competence, including the development of recognised training pathways and the identification of approved courses. Recognised qualifications and professional registers are already available, and continued development of industry standards should provide greater clarity on routes through which competence can be demonstrated and maintained.

By encouraging foot trimming to be undertaken by trained and competent individuals who continually update their skills to remain current, the recommendation supports the effective delivery of the farm's lameness strategy, promotes good foot health management and contributes to positive welfare outcomes. As a recommendation rather than a mandatory standard, it promotes good practice whilst recognising the range of farm systems and approaches used across the dairy industry



References

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