

**RSPCA Beef Cattle Standards Technical Advisory Group meeting
on Wednesday 20th February 2019.**

Meeting Summary Notes.

What has been happening to the standards since the last meeting?

The RSPCA welfare standards for beef cattle had not been updated since March 2010, with the exception of the production of standards and guidance for the rearing of calves in December 2013. The welfare standards were now in a position to be developed further, to take account of developments within the industry since 2010, and to further improve beef cattle welfare. The meeting was a forum for discussing areas of the RSPCA welfare standards for beef cattle that may require amendment in future versions.

Collection centres and livestock markets

Members had an in-depth discussion considering the positive and negative welfare implications of these aspects of the cattle industry and whether they had a place within the RSPCA welfare standards for dairy or beef cattle. Members were informed of new data on current market practices in regard to animal welfare including training courses available for market staff. The group discussed the potential effects livestock markets and collection centres might have on vulnerable animals such as cull cows and calves, as well as cattle in general.

Access to pasture

The group discussed matters surrounding access to pasture for beef cattle and the welfare implications of outwintering cattle. These will be considered further.

Environmental Enrichment

The benefit of environmental enrichment to all housed cattle was discussed including what materials could be included as "enrichment".

Surgical Castration

Members discussed whether surgical castration should have a place in the standards. Pain relief, age limits and the level of competency of the individual undertaking the procedure were all discussed.

Slaughter of pregnant animals

Reasons behind why pregnant cattle would be sent for slaughter were discussed with a view to ensuring that preventative measures are publicised. The welfare of the foetus was discussed.