

Dear SMS member

You may have heard that changes are taking place with the Scrapie Monitoring Scheme as a result of amended EU regulations. I have summarised these overleaf. We have updated the rules and conditions of the SMS scheme and you can see them at;

www.sheepandgoathealth.co.uk

I would also like to take this opportunity to inform you that some SMS flocks lost their valued status due to non-compliance with the rules. Common reasons for the loss are detailed below.

SMS – Common reasons for loss of status

- 1) Purchase of Ram from non-SMS flock. Only a ram with the ARR/ARR scrapie genotype is allowed to join a SMS flock from a non-SMS flock. Breeders are encouraged to genotype rams before sale as it is best for SMS members to buy a ram with the ARR/ARR genotype rather than taking a gamble on a purchase which turns out not to be ARR/ARR. If you have already used a ram in your flock that comes from a non-SMS flock and it does not have the ARR/ARR scrapie genotype it is too late.
- 2) Purchase of Females from non-SMS flocks. If you want to buy from non-SMS flocks make sure that purchases are of ARR/ARR genotype.
- 3) Purchase of in-lamb females at non-segregated sales. Very few sales (held from September 1st to April 30th) applied for segregation. As a consequence any stock bought at these sales are classed as non-SMS, unless of ARR/ARR status. Flocks purchasing stock at these sales will lose SMS status. Flocks taking stock to these sales will lose their status if unsold stock are returned home. There are many sales of in-lamb animals in the late autumn period. Purchasing at these sales may jeopardise your flock status.

Please make sure you are not in any of the categories above.

Can I also remind you as an SMS member that ALL FALLEN STOCK should be submitted for testing.

Regards



Ian Pritchard

PSGHS Manager

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Amended EU regulations, effective from July 1st 2013, bring EU trade requirements more in line with World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). In order to demonstrate Scrapie freedom an increased surveillance period of seven years is now added and is required for some countries.

There will be 2 categories of status for SMS members.

1) **Negligible Risk** – this is equivalent to Scrapie free and is for flocks/herds showing compliance for at least 7 years. Movement of sheep and goats (and their embryos/semen) to the 4 member states(see below) with an approved control programme can only take place from holdings with this status. Some South American countries also stipulate animals of Negligible Risk status.

2) **Controlled Risk** – is freedom for at least 3 years and is intended for all the other member states that do not have an approved scrapie control programme in place. This is similar to the current situation. Controlled risk flocks may achieve Negligible risk status after being monitored for 7 years.

Questions and Answers

Q: Why have these changes been introduced?

A: To align EU rules in this area with those recommended by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), mainly to enable Member States (MSs) which are considered Negligible Risk or have an approved National Scrapie Control Programme to protect their status by only allowing ovine/caprine animals of a similar health status.

Q: When will these changes come into effect?

A: These changes came into effect from 1 July 2013.

Q: Is there a transitional period?

A: Yes.

Q: What is this transitional period?

A: The transitional period only relates to how the holding of origin is classified in terms of the classical scrapie risk. Until 31 December 2014 evidence of Controlled and/or Negligible Risk can be provided by routes other than membership of a government approved scheme.

However, from 1 January 2015, it must be through such a scheme which, in the United Kingdom, is the Scrapie Monitoring Scheme (SMS). The SMS is provided by SAC Consulting: Premium Sheep and Goat Health Scheme (PSGHS). SAC Consulting is part of Scotland's Rural College (SRUC).

Q: What needs to be done to obtain/retain Negligible Risk status?

A: The criteria are broadly equivalent to those for a scrapie free establishment as recommended in the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code – namely that of demonstration of freedom from classical scrapie for at least 7 years.

Movement of sheep and goats for breeding and fattening to Member States with an approved national control programme for classical scrapie (currently Austria, Denmark, Finland and Sweden) can only take place from holdings having such a status unless they are ARR/ARR genotypes (and provided the holding is not under any official classical scrapie related restrictions).

This is subject to the following:

- Certification verifying that the sheep is 'ARR/ARR prion protein genotype' and the certification issued by an approved laboratory which tested the sheep and, at the time of testing, undertaken either as part of the National Scrapie Plan (NSP) in Great Britain (now closed) or the Northern Ireland Scrapie Plan; or
- The testing was carried out by either AHVLA or SAC Consulting: Veterinary Services under the terms of their export approved schemes. Export approved genotyping can only be done by AHVLA or SAC Veterinary Services.
- The certifying Official Veterinarian (OV) must be satisfied that the individual sheep identification correlates with the laboratory information relating to the genotype result.

Cellmark no longer do scrapie genotype testing.

Q: What needs to be done to obtain/retain Controlled Risk status?

A: This reflects the status quo (demonstration of freedom from classical scrapie for at least three years).

Q: Can you trade within the EU in sheep and goats and their semen/embryos if you are not in the SMS?

A: Not from 1 January 2015 as, from then, you must be in the SMS if you wish to trade within the EU in sheep and goats and their semen/embryos. The only exception is ARR/ARR sheep (and their semen/embryos).

Q: If a flock has complied with the requirements for the SMS, for say 5 or 6 years, (and so nearing "Negligible Risk" status) should they be only purchasing animals from a flock with the same or more years of compliance?

A: Yes. For a flock/herd to achieve or retain Negligible Risk status, then all obtained/purchased animals must come from other SMS flocks/herds that have (1) Negligible Risk status, or (2) are of ARR/ARR genotype and not from flocks/herds subject to scrapie restrictions. If purchasing from a Controlled Risk flock/herd caution must be taken to ensure that the flock/herd has been monitored for at least the same number of years. If this does not happen progress to Negligible Risk status will be delayed.

Q: If I am not a member of the SMS but now wish to join to trade within the EU in sheep and goats and their semen/embryos what do I need to do?

A: It is advisable to join the SMS. Please contact the Premium Sheep and Goat Health Schemes (PSGHS) office on 01463 226995 or at psghs@sac.co.uk if you are currently not a member of the SMS.

Q: If you have a query over how these changes will be managed who should you contact?

A: If you are a current member of the SMS (or intend to join in the future before 1 January 2015) please contact the Premium Sheep and Goat Health Schemes (PSGHS) office on 01463 226995 or at psghs@sac.co.uk for any queries you have on how these changes will be managed for members of the SMS.

Q: If you have any general queries on exports who should you contact?

A: Please contact the exports team at AHVLA Carlisle on 01228 403600 if you have any general queries in relation to these changes.

Q: How many fallen stock must I test?

A: The new rules state ALL FALLEN STOCK. In effect these are animals, over 18 months of age, dying on the holding. It does not include animals that enter the food chain. There is a derogation for goat herds in that it does not apply to animals culled at the end of their working life.

Q: Where do I send fallen stock?

A: These should be delivered to your local SAC Consulting: Veterinary Services Centre or the local centre of AHVLA.

The onus is on you to get fallen stock tested – there will be a charge for this. Submitting carcasses to knackeries, hunt kennels, etc. does not meet SMS rules.

Q: Where can I see a current list of SMS members?

A: Please look at www.psghs.co.uk. If your name is not on list please contact PSGHS on 01463 226995 or at psghs@sac.co.uk. The list published will only include producers who have authorised PSGHS to publish their details. The list will identify negligible risk and controlled risk breeds and holdings. Defra and AHVLA are issued with updated list monthly.

Q: Where can I see the rules and conditions of Scrapie Monitoring Scheme (SMS)

A: www.sheepandgoathealth.co.uk