



Trusted
Game 

Game Bird Health & Welfare Scheme assured by vets

Why do we need regulation/audit in our sector?

- Reported government pressure for industry regulation (~ 80% of the industry required to participate to self-regulate), in particular with regard to Health and Welfare
- Increasing external inspections from local authority, RSPCA and trading standards etc
- Increasing challenges from anti-shooting organisations
- Food sustainability demands the highest level of animal welfare as well as safe production if it is to support, and be supported by, local supply chains as well as larger corporate marketing chains.
- To bring our sector in line with other farming sectors where regulation has been commonplace for years
- To ensure everyone is working to best practice training and certification is required
- To prove to the outside world that the majority of the industry are doing a good job



How did Trusted Game start?



Indications were of government pressure for regulation within the game and shooting sector and increasing challenges from outside.

Three specialist game vet practices receiving increasing client demand for a practical game bird audit scheme:

- Sandhill Veterinary Services (Richard Byas, Dan King, Laura Langstaff)
- Daltons Game Consultancy (Rita Alves)
- South Downs Veterinary Consultancy (Mark Elliott)

Experience revealed that, while many game farms and shoots have overall good or excellent results (outcomes), their systems and management would not fit into the rigid standards of the single and current assurance scheme so a different model was required

Veterinary Involvement in the Gamebird sector



- Launched in 2022, uptake of **Trusted Game** has been above expectation considering the problems faced through that year.
- ALL practices providing a significant level of Gamebird services have signed up to provide **Trusted Game**.
- The sectors Vets have also formulated through the BVPA specific **training courses** for Gamefarmers and Gamekeepers, and launched these in 2022 with enthusiastic support.
- **Antimicrobial use** is an issue in the sector, but Vets have reduced use in the sector by around 50% so far, and have set up programs of **research linked with Surrey University** which are intended to provide real world solutions. The first scientific paper is due for publication shortly in the Vet Record, and ***we hope shortly to announce the first research Fellow and more projects going forward.*** Vets are the ones pushing this as no-one else is researching the commercial sector.

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- A practical audit scheme run by your own vet
- Audited on both standards and outcomes
- Written by vets with significant input from game farmers and keepers
- A scheme aimed at those actually doing the job day in day out
- No external database or information sharing
- A not-for-profit scheme

A scheme for the good of the industry to give veterinary assurance that the particular end product (day olds/poults/game meat) can be Trusted.



Trusted Game

An audit based scheme that isn't just a tick box scheme, but also a detailed health and welfare review, with vets working closely with keepers and game farmers to improve bird health, welfare and performance whilst also assuring (the public / government / buyer) of best practice and working within the law.

Facilitating widespread uptake of credible audit within the entire game bird sector, whatever the shoot/farm size, delivered in a practical and cost-effective way, linked to training, enabling ongoing improvement and AMR.

Promoting the infrastructure to market and sell safe game meat to a standard that is required by the food industry

All for the purpose of ensuring the sustainability of our sector.



How does the audit work?

1. Sites audited against a set of best practice standards

- Evidence Based, these evolved from real-world data collected over the last 18 months by the vets involved
- To ensure workability and practicality significant input from game farmers and keepers was sought
- Generic Audit is followed by audits created for different areas of the annual programme, and all game species.

Trusted Game audits are designed to incorporate the vast differences in game rearing practices across the country and accepts that no one method or figure is universally accepted as standard. Therefore...

2. Additionally audited are OUTCOMES:

- Mortality data
- Antibiotic use
- Bird health and welfare – as appraised by the best judgement of the auditing vet
- Working within the law



How does the audit work?

3. Providing all of the above '**outcomes**' are acceptable, the standards themselves are not proscriptive, the intention being they form a guide of best practice against which the business can be compared.
4. Information on the required legislation is provided and relevant paperwork is provided
5. Where a site is underperforming, the standards should be followed as evidenced best practice
6. After each audit the site will receive feedback and a list of key areas to address. These should be completed within a timescale as deemed acceptable by the auditing vet.
7. Any site that does not meet that standards AND is underperforming OR is not working within the law will not be able to claim approval or use the Trusted Game logo.

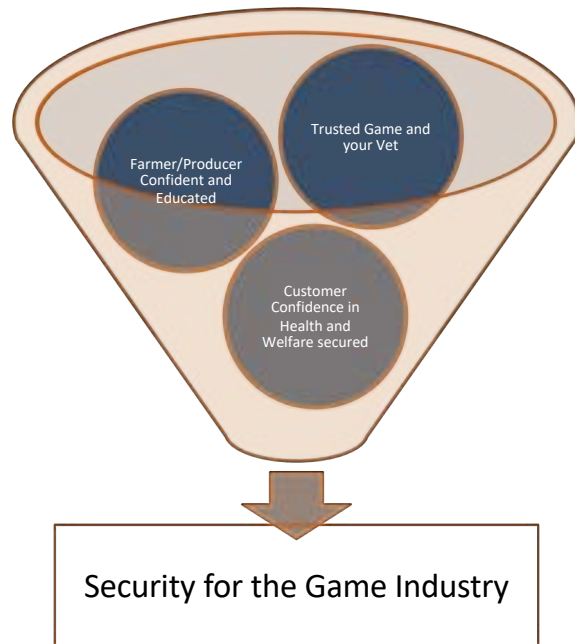


Why vets auditing?

- Recognised as guardians of animal health and welfare by government and general public
- Independent, regulated and held to high standards of integrity by the RCVS
- Trained in health and welfare and experienced in the needs of the game industry and, more importantly, the birds themselves.
- Visiting clients' sites annually anyway, and often much more than that.
- Formalising of work already being carried out by proactive vets on their clients' sites, working with evidence based standards, protects the integrity of the industry and validates the process.
- Vets are key to assurance in all other sectors of the livestock industry and have an important role in public health and food safety in which they are trained
- Trust – forging close relationships with clients over many years, accreditation is an ongoing and dynamic process. The audit isn't just a snapshot of what is happening on the day of audit.
- Trust – by making the audits part of the clinical record the clients confidentiality is protected



Why vets auditing?



The British Veterinary Association's Policy regarding Assurance Schemes states unequivocally:

"Expert input and advice from the veterinary profession in the development, implementation, and continuous review and improvement of farm assurance schemes is crucial to the value of those schemes in terms of animal health and welfare, public confidence, and producer/farmer buy-in. Consumers may wish to consider whether the scheme is independently certified, underpinned by veterinary expertise, and committed to continuous improvement."

Compassion in World Farming, with reference to assurance/audit:

"It is important to measure welfare outcomes.... As they reflect the overall performance of the system – which will be influenced both by the welfare potential of the system and by the level of human management skill applied to it"

"The importance of measuring and monitoring welfare outcomes for the delivery of good or improved animal welfare is increasingly recognised."

All Schemes, be they Assurance, Accreditation or just simple audit at this time, will ultimately be required therefore, to audit against a fully integrated input – outcome system. Not just a list of standards against which one either passes or fails

What can be achieved by signing up to Trusted Game via your Vet?

You:

- **Help ensure the sustainability of the industry by proving credibility to government and to the public**
- Protect your business from external challenge and scrutiny by identifying and addressing potential issues
- Ensure all paperwork is in place and all legislation is met
- Review the site performance annually with the intention of continuous improvement year to year. With the aim to increase animal welfare and reduce antibiotic usage, and consequently improve profits
- Demonstrate high standards of animal welfare
- Build customer trust, protecting your reputation and aid sales
- Uncover weaknesses in your management and/or staff, leading to recommendations for further training or improvement.
- Educate: gone are the days where knowledge arrived at through experience is considered enough. Back up your business by training staff and recording your ongoing learning
- Provide provenance and assurance of the end product to aid the sale of gamebirds and game meat





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Satisfies government and the public of regulation within the industry



Ensures legal practice and that all boxes are ticked



A practical scheme for everyone to improve bird health and welfare



Facilitates the marketing and sale of game meat by ensuring food safety

What should the Trusted Game project ensure Clients keep as Records?

Basic Vet Health Plan (see sample FHP template – individual practices will have their own) updated annually

Map of shoot/site layout

Specific area audits (Breeders/Rearing/Release/Ducks supplement)

Note of the legislative requirements and document informing of where to download **

Cossh and Data Sheets – either hard copy or link to downloads **

Clinical Records copies

Prescriptions (VWD) copies

Notes on Prescribing doses (Individual practices may have varying opinion)

Records of Training – template ** (in sample FHP template)

Movement Records template**

Medicines Records – purchase template **

Medicine Records – Use template **

Performance Indicators – inc. Mortality Records

** It is intended that there are Downloadable templates on TG/Practice Websites



Additional slides

Additional slides

Why vets?

Vets sign an oath and are bound by certain rules and principles. Acting in a way that violates these rules would ultimately result in dismissal from the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons states:

- 21.3 Veterinary certification plays a significant role in the control of animal health and welfare, the continuity of European and international trade and the maintenance of public health. Veterinarians have a professional responsibility to ensure the integrity of veterinary certification. The simple act of signing their names on documents should be approached with care and accuracy.
- 21.4 Veterinarians must certify facts and opinions honestly and with due care, taking into account the 10 Principles of Certification. They should not sign certificates which they know or ought to know are untrue, misleading or inaccurate. This applies equally to hand-written, printed and electronic certificates.

5 principles of veterinary practice

- *Professional competence*
- *Honesty and integrity*
- *Independence and impartiality*
- *Client confidentiality and trust*
- *Professional accountability*



SUPPLY OF WILD GAME MEAT – requirements (Self-declaration)

1. Unless shooting for own private consumption all shoots need to be **registered with its local authority** as a food business under Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004.
2. Meets the **traceability** requirements of Regulation (EC) 178/2002 **Records of suppliers and customers, no. birds, dates supplied**
3. Meets general hygiene requirements for primary production in Regulation 852/2004 and specific provisions in Regulation 853/2004 for the initial handling of wild game intended for subsequent supply to an AGH **Transport and temperature controls** for wild game carcasses delivered to an AGHE ; **T≤4 °C** ; chiller and vehicle that delivers game to AGHE need to be approved by the local authority
4. Ensures that a **trained person** is present when the game is shot (check behaviour of birds; examine bodies/viscera); certificates must be available

• Source: The Wild Game Guide

- Direct supply of small quantities of in-feather game carcasses to the final consumer or local retailers - 1,2
- Supply of in-feather game carcasses to approved game handling establishments -1,2,3,4

