



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

The Rt Hon Sir Mark Spencer MP
Minister for Food, Farming and Fisheries

Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

T: +44 (0) 3459 335577
E: correspondence.section@defra.gov.uk
W: gov.uk/defra

Iain Stewart MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA
iain.stewart.mp@parliament.uk

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Dear Iain,

Thank you for your email of 15 March on behalf of your constituents about the Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Bill. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area.

The Animal Welfare (Livestock Exports) Bill completed its passage through the House of Commons on 15 January and was introduced to the House of Lords on 16 January 2024. The Bill will ban the export of cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and horses for slaughter and fattening from GB, stopping unnecessary stress, exhaustion and injury caused by exporting live animals. There have been no recorded live exports for slaughter from GB since we announced our intention to bring forward a ban in 2021. Our Bill makes this permanent, ensuring this trade cannot recommence in the future.

The ban will not apply to livestock and horse movements within the UK. It will not apply to exports for other purposes, such as breeding, competition, racing, and scientific purposes, nor to exports of other live animals, such as poultry, which are not currently considered to raise any significant welfare concerns.

The Bill provides powers to ensure that we can introduce a robust and proportionate enforcement regime across GB, through regulations. We intend to create a system which enforces the ban effectively while not adding unnecessary burdens for transporters wishing to export animals for permitted purposes. We are collaborating with the Scottish and Welsh Governments to agree a GB-wide approach to enforcement.

I hope this reassures you that the Government is working hard to take steps in further improving our already high standards of animal welfare. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you need further information.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Sir Mark Spencer MP