# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Animal Welfare in the Food Chain** |
| **DATE**  | **22 March 2018** |
| **BY** | **Lesley Griffiths AM, Cabinet Secretary Energy, Planning and Rural Affairs** |

The safeguarding of the health and welfare of farmed animals kept in Wales throughout their lives, up to and including the point of slaughter, is a high priority for me. Today, I am pleased to announce I will be launching, before the summer recess, a £1.1million Food Business Investment scheme package of grant aid specifically for the small and medium size slaughterhouses in Wales. This support will enable these businesses to invest in improvements to ensure their resilience and their ability to continue to provide slaughtering facilities which are often in remote areas. Small slaughterhouses support both short and local supply chains and provide processing facilities for small scale livestock producers, reducing the distance travelled from farm to slaughterhouse. The slaughterhouse can be the first and last destination for animals leaving the farm and it is important this transfer is as stress free as possible.

Grant aid will cover both capital investment and the provision of advice on animal welfare, business improvement and technical matters. Welfare friendly infrastructure and facilities will be supported and also the installation and upgrading of CCTV monitoring systems. I want to assist Food Business Operators to put systems in place, while legislating for CCTV in slaughterhouses is taking place in England. I want Wales’ slaughterhouses to be fully prepared as I continue to explore opportunities to legislate in the longer term.

Officials worked closely with a slaughter industry task and finish group which provided a report of recommendations to me last year on ways to improve animal welfare at slaughter. The Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group supported the recommendations, which have also proved useful in identifying other links in the supply chain such as transport which may require further actions to safeguard animal welfare.

The details of the grant scheme will be worked up in consultation with the task and finish group to ensure the package of support is bespoke to the sector’s needs. Small slaughterhouses have survived well in Wales despite many challenges which has seen a steady decline in the numbers elsewhere in Britain. I want to assist their sustainability in

Wales and to maintain high standards of animal welfare that will be beyond reproach.

I expect the scheme to launch before the summer recess and officials, together with industry representatives, will be working out the details in the meantime.