

1. NIBL FQAS Performance Indicators Improve

A performance analysis of NIBL FQAS inspections carried out since September 2002 shows significant year-on-year improvements in key performance indicators. NIBL FQAS participants are to be congratulated for their consistent high standards and their continued improvement in key performance indicators is a welcome development for the scheme.

In 2004/05 only seven of the individual codes (either whole or part of the code) had a non-conformance incidence of more than ten per cent, and within the top seven, six were related to record keeping. There were also 47 individual codes which had a non-conformance incidence of less than one per cent.

The top five non-conformances are:

1. Medicine records (Usage & Purchase) incomplete
2. Prescription Only Medicine not labelled correctly
3. Conditions for performing common veterinary operations not followed
4. Withdrawal periods in medicine records not recorded
5. No record to confirm annual veterinary visit

“Incomplete medicine records” continue to be the most commonly occurring non-conformance (frequency 28 per cent). Medicine records are a food safety issue and a legal requirement for all farms, not just for NIBL FQAS farms.

“Conditions for performing common veterinary operations not being followed” was the most frequently occurring non-conformance relating to Animal Welfare issues (frequency 24 per cent). This may include not using an anaesthetic as required and not recording use of anaesthetic in medicine records.

Non-conformances in relation to “Environmental Care” were all below a frequency of 10 per cent, for example farm waste management and general farm tidiness, both nine per cent frequency.

Performance analysis of Assured British Meat schemes in England and Wales show a similar pattern. The top five non-conformances are all related to record keeping and the most commonly occurring non-conformance is incomplete medicine records.

NIBL FQAS continually monitors key performance indicators i.e. the main types of non-conformance and their frequency. This analysis ensures that food safety, animal welfare and environmental care standards are not only achievable but are maintained and ultimately improved.