



DAMORY LODGE EDWARD STREET BLANDFORD FORUM DORSET DT11 7QT
TEL: 01258 452 626 FAX: 01258 453 548 EMAIL: office@damoryvets.co.uk www.damoryvets.co.uk

September 2013

Emergency Slaughter of "Casualty Cattle"

If a healthy animal which is fit for human consumption has an accident which it is unlikely to recover from, and which renders it unfit to travel, then it may still enter the food chain provided it is slaughtered on farm and transported to an abattoir within 2 hours.

In the past it has been difficult to get these casualty animals booked into an abattoir last-minute, plus meat prices were lower and the hassle of driving the carcass several miles often made this route to slaughter unviable.

With the recent hike in meat prices and relative shortage of beef many abattoirs have made this route to slaughter much more viable:

The abattoir S. J. Norman and Sons in Bridport are happy to send a slaughterman to your farm to stun and bleed a casualty animal and take the carcass back to their abattoir within the 2 hour time-frame. At the time of writing they will pay approximately **£0.90 - £1.50/kg deadweight** for the animal which includes the visit, slaughter and transport costs. They are sometimes available at night and at weekends if necessary.

You must arrange for us to arrive shortly before the slaughter. We have to clinically examine the living animal immediately prior to slaughter in order to issue a slaughter certificate declaring the animal is free from disease and suitable to enter the food chain. **If the animal is slaughtered before the arrival of the vet then a slaughter certificate cannot be issued and the animal cannot enter the food chain.** The vet must be present at the time of slaughter as the exact slaughter time must be recorded on the certificate.

Two vet visits may be required: An initial visit to assess the animal to determine whether it can be treated or whether it qualifies as a casualty cow, and a second visit at the time of slaughter.

Please note the final decision on whether the animal is fit for human consumption and can enter the food chain rests on the post-mortem inspection carried out by the official veterinarian at the abattoir.

What defines a "Casualty Animal"?

- Casualty animals are fit and healthy animals which have suffered an acute accident (e.g. slipped in yard and unable to get up due to damaged ligaments etc).
- Animals that have been down for more than a few hours are no longer fit for human consumption and are not eligible for casualty slaughter.
 - The decision as to whether to treat the animal or send it on as a casualty cow needs to be taken promptly and ideally guided by veterinary advice. You cannot wait 24 hours to see if the animal will improve before opting for casualty slaughter as by then it will not be fit for human consumption.

The welfare of the casualty cow must always be put first:

If the animal is suffering acute pain resulting from the accident (e.g. broken leg) then it must be euthanased as soon as possible in a humane manner. If arranging casualty slaughter will unduly prolong the suffering of the animal then it must not be considered.

- Animals that are not fit for transport due to any other reason than an acute accident (e.g. chronic lameness) are not eligible for casualty slaughter.
- The animal concerned must not be under any drug meat withhold period and must be clean to enter the abattoir.
- The animal must be stunned and bled in the correct way by a qualified person; i.e. veterinary surgeon or qualified slaughterman.

Economics of Casualty Slaughter:

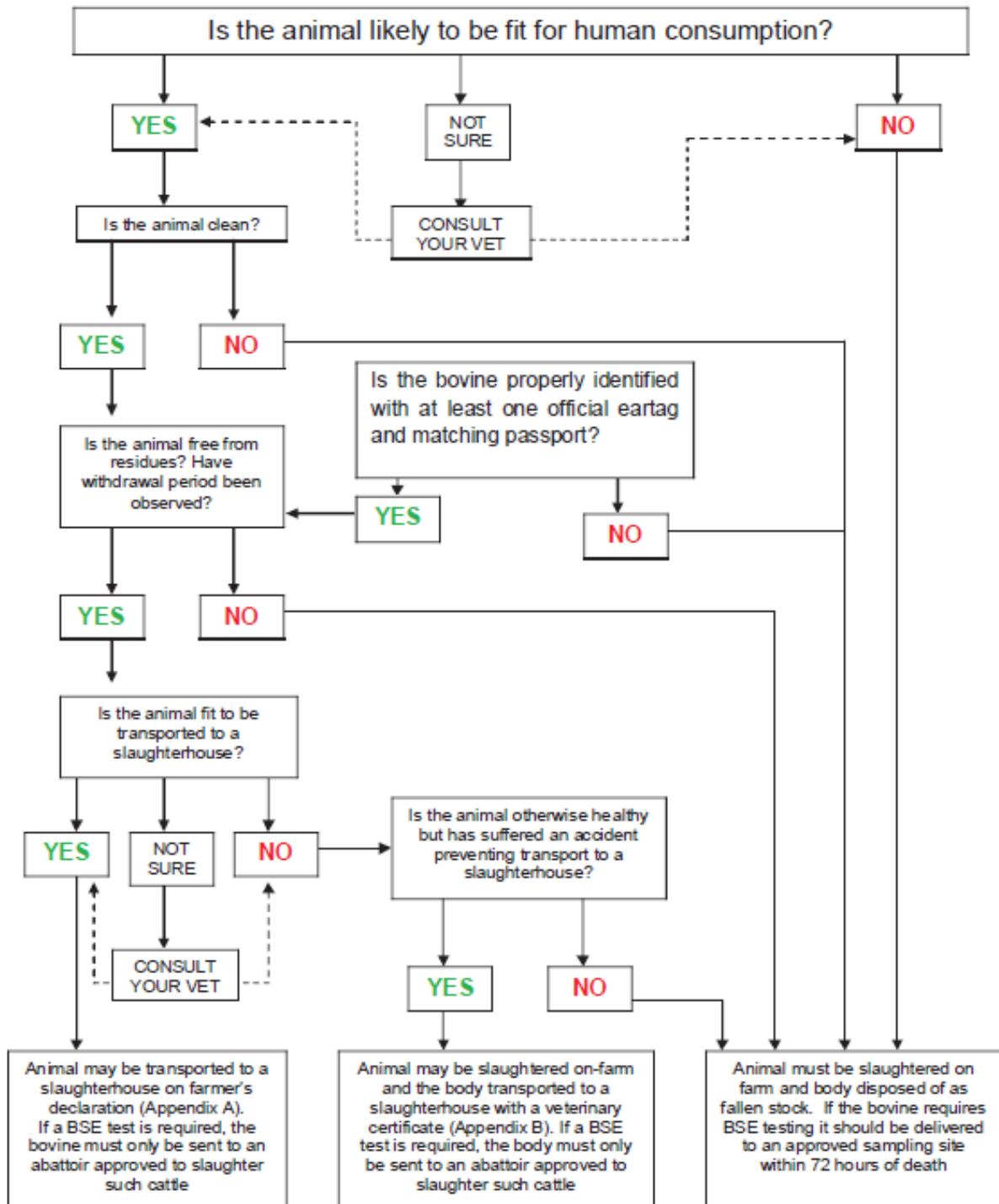
Be aware that sometimes with casualty slaughter the damaged part of the body (e.g. leg or half the carcass) may be condemned such that you only receive the value of part of the carcass.

Despite this it is hoped that the value recovered from the animal should at the very least cover the cost of the exercise and leave you better off than paying for fallen stock disposal.

Please contact us at the surgery (Tel: 01258 452626) and/or contact S. J. Norman and Sons (Tel: 01308 422967) for more information.

Damory Veterinary Clinic

DECISION TREE FOR CATTLE WHICH ARE INJURED OR SHOWING SIGNS OF ABNORMALITIES¹



¹ Cattle born or imported into the UK before 1 August 1996 are prohibited from entering the food chain and the body must be delivered to an approved sampling site within 72 hours of death.