

Issued by NBA on 2 July 2007

The Rural Payments Agency is to introduce an ear tag based booking system for the ten OCDS abattoirs handling pre-August 1996 cattle, born and reared in the UK, from August 1st 2007. It will continue until the OCDS ends on December 31st 2008.

The aim over the remainder of 2007 is to encourage the owners of older cows and bulls to book in time to avoid the complications caused by the expected surge in culling, and OCDS delivery, over October-December - and the disappointment from failing to avoid the ten per cent cut in the OCDS payment from January 1st 2008.

A deadline of September 30th 2007 has been made for cattle to be killed in November-December 2007 slots.

Bookings are to be made by the owner through the OCDS abattoir, which will confirm the slot through the RPA, and will only be accepted if they are accompanied by an ear tag number. Booking can be made through an auction market, or an agent, but again only if accompanied by an ear tag number.

BCMS has flagged up OCDS eligible cattle to individual owners in its latest statement.

The booking system will operate on a first come, first served, basis so the most popular slots are likely to be filled first. This will encourage even booking so the RPA can make sure OCDS abattoirs run to full capacity. Owners who miss out on the prime slots will be encouraged to place their cattle in September and August.

The aim over 2008 is to make sure that everyone who wishes to surrender their older cattle to the OCDS does so before it ends on December 31st.

There will, of course, be no safety net in January-February 2009 to catch those who have missed out – because the OCDS will not be extended - so the message to owners is to make sure they are booked because if the booking is left too late, and there are no slots in OCDS abattoirs at the end of 2008, owners will lose their 292 euro compensation payment.

In addition to this pre-August 1996 cattle culled on-farm in 2009 will be treated as fallen stock and there will be a cost to the owner when they are collected.

The owners of pre-August 1996 born cattle that have been imported into the UK do not have to use the OCDS. They can deliver these culled animals to any OTM approved plant – even after the end of the December 31st 2008 deadline.

The owners of OCDS abattoirs have approved the booking system.

Owners are reminded that it is an offence to send pre-August 1996 born animals to an abattoir which slaughters cattle for the human food chain. Pre-August 1996 born cattle which take the wrong route will be binned and their owners may face prosecution.

Also that if OCDS eligible suckler cows are put to the bull this year they could still be suckling calves after the scheme has closed.

A publicity campaign organized by Defra which will make owners aware of the booking scheme, and the reasons why they should take advantage of it, has already been set in train.

Posters will be used by Defra and OCDS abattoirs to emphasise the points already made. The NBA and other farmers' organisations will play their part too in making sure the message gets across. Posters will be sent to owners in the next BCMS cattle statement in November.

BCMS currently records 320,000 OCDS eligible animals as still alive. In Northern Ireland the figure is 50,309.

It should be noted that in May around ten OCDS cows were still sent to food chain abattoirs and the owners lost their compensation.

Below is the list of OCDS plants with locations and contact numbers.

England	
Anglo Dutch Meats (Charing) Ltd, The Abattoir, Charing, Kent, TN27 0JL	Tel: 01233 712 387 Fax: 01233 713 450
Duerden (Wholesale Meats) Ltd, Lindal Moor Abattoir, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 0LT	Tel: 01229 464 534 Fax: 01229 467 218
F Redfern & Sons, Haslin Abattoir, Buxton, SK17 9HT	Tel: 01298 24114 Fax: 01298 24511
North West Meats, The Abattoir, Dunkerley St, Oldham, OL4 2AX	Tel: 01616 338 077 Fax: 01616 203 086
Southern Cull Services Ltd, Huish Episcopi, Langport, Somerset, TA10 9HG	Tel: 01458 252 755 Fax: 01458 254 555
Scotland	
Amanda Buitelaar (Kilmarnock) Ltd, Kilmarnock Abattoir, Dundonald Rd, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, KA2 0AZ	Tel: 01563 527 730 Fax: 01563 527 460
Matheson Jess, Montrose Rd, Brechin, DD9 7PL	Tel: 01356 622 876 Fax: 01356 625 760
Wales	
TWM Ltd, Unit 1, Glanlliedi Business Park, Dafen, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire, SA14 8PD	Tel: 01554 774 001 Fax: 01554 778 352
Northern Ireland	
Langford Processors Ltd, 73 Largy Rd, Crumlin, County Antrim, BT29 4RS	Tel: 02894 459 883 Fax: 02894 459 883