

## Do I Need a Licence for Open Lambing Days on My Farm?

The Tenant Farmers Association (TFA) and National Sheep Association (NSA) have teamed up to produce this blog post looking at whether farmers need a licence to hold open lambing events on their farms. This stems from an instance of a TFA member being told by their Local Authority that, according to The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 (the Regulations), a licence is needed if they are to hold public/open lambing events on their farm.

The TFA and NSA advise that if the farm hosting lambing open days is not doing these as a commercial activity, then a licence will not be required. However, if it is a commercial activity then a licence **MAY** be required depending on the interpretation of different Local Authority Environmental Health Office.

Any farm hosting open days/public events such as lambing days should notify their local Environmental Health Office and follow the code of practice that is available by [clicking here](#). The code of practice covers things like a risk assessment (Health and Safety and infection control) and the provision of handwashing facilities and warning signs (such as risks to pregnant people). The farm's insurers should be made aware of the event.

The Government has also produced guidance which is available by [clicking here](#). In summary it provides that all keeping or training animals for exhibition activities need a licence if they're carried out as a commercial business.

To decide if an activity is a business and will need a licence, consider if the operator:

- makes any sales or carries out the activity to make a profit
- earns any commission or fee from the activity
- often exhibits or trains animals for a fee,
- does not often exhibit or train animals for a fee, but the profit margin is high

In conclusion, the guidance is open to interpretation. The legislation is targeted more towards companion animals rather than farm animals but it is easy to see how an enthusiastic Trading Standards Officer could choose to include farm and farm livestock related activities within the requirement to licence. What does seem clear is the purpose of the activity relating to being a commercial/profit making activity (the specific activity rather than the business as a whole).

The Government guidance (summarised above) gives some pointers. For example, if a basic entry fee is involved, a case can be made to show that it merely offsets the costs of running the event. If an event is free and its purely educational then a licence will not be required either. However, if the aim of these open days is to make a significant profit then a licence could be considered. However, whether or not it has been decided if a licence is required, In all cases it is important that a risk assessment is completed covering health and safety and infection control, and that the farm's insurers are notified of the events.