

profession. We therefore take a keen interest in all issues affecting the profession, including animal health and welfare, public health, regulatory issues, and employment matters.

Introduction

2. Veterinary surgeons contribute to every aspect of animal production, and therefore the profession can contribute to mitigating losses and driving productivity.
3. With the above in mind, we welcome the opportunity to provide evidence to the Committee on the pressures facing the UK food supply chain and its implication for UK food security and nutritious food.
4. The veterinary profession contributes to food security through improvements to animal health, animal welfare and biosecurity, as well as highlighting the main areas we believe government must focus on to maintain and improve food security

Animal health and welfare

5. Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the importance of agriculture, and all those involved in the farm to fork process, was brought into sharp relief. This includes farm animal vets and Official Veterinarians in abattoirs who continued to provide essential services to ensure sufficient food for the UK at the height of lockdown restrictions.
6. As with other sectors, increased production costs, resulting from the pandemic and subsequent cost of living crisis, will have consequences for livestock sectors. There is a concern that economic uncertainty will see farmers postpone more future-minded services such as herd health planning or vaccination, or delay investments in systems that will see an increase in health and welfare.
7. The contribution of improved animal health to food security is vast. According to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), over 20% of animal health

9. Recently, Animal Health Ireland noted that their disease programmes were estimated to have saved Irish farmers and the agri-food industry at least €135m per year by reducing BVD and mastitis.³
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