

## Gene Editing Working Group

22nd March 2023, 12pm on Zoom

### Attendees:

Madeleine Campbell, Chair  
Rose Jackson, BCVA  
Charlotte Commins, BVPA  
Dominic Wells, Professor of Translational Medicine, RVC  
Richard Piercy, Professor of Comparative Neuromuscular Disease, RVC  
Fritha Langford, BVA EWAP  
Polly Compston, BVA Policy Committee

### BVA:

Amelia Findon Director of Policy and Governance  
Alison Ramsay Head of Policy and Public Affairs  
Hannah Killeen Policy and Public Affairs Officer

### Apologies:

Emily Craven, BVA Policy Committee

## Scope and Objectives

1. The Chair introduced the proposed work of the group, setting it in the context of the Genetic Editing (Precision Breeding) Bill which was on the point of receiving Royal Assent in Parliament. It was highlighted that gene editing had a lot of potential benefits, but there were also concerns around the uses the technology could be put to, and the need for regulation. BVA had



## Key Principles

5. The group reviewed the draft key principles documents and agreed on the following amendments:

### Animal Health and Welfare

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- that the group was now looking at equine and companion animals.
- Add something to the section about the potential benefits to health and welfare
- Add a paragraph on ethics.

Commented [AR(1)]: What was agreed? This sounds a bit vague.

### Safety

- Rename this section Public Health for clarity
- Remove the specific reference to parasites
- Move the line on beneficial effect on animals health and welfare to the AHW section

### Sustainability

- Add a positive caveat around promoting sustainable agriculture (through reduced inputs, reduction in methane emissions etc)
- Add detail about one health outcomes e.g. reduction of parasites, species balance, AMR
- husbandry to the detriment of environments, biodiversity,

### Emerging Research

- Retitle
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Commented [AR(2)]: This needs more detail. "Amend line to read"?

6. On the definitions section, it was agreed to add a preamble explaining that for the purposes of this report, the terms would be defined as follows. There was general agreement that the difference between gene editing and genetic modification was a semantic distinction drawn for political reasons. It was agreed that consistency should be maintained with the language of the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Act, and gene editing refer to a change which does not introduce any exogenous DNA. The definition.

## Workplan

7. It was agreed to focus the remaining meetings broadly as follows:



**May** Benefits and Risks to animal health and welfare

**July** Benefits and risks to humans, sustainability, biodiversity, climate change

**September** - The practical implications of the Act, likely secondary legislation, checks and balances, guidance for vets

**November** Non-production Species

**Action: Secretariat to set future meeting dates via doodle poll.**

