

AIM TO SUSTAIN UPLAND STANDARDS (GROUSE)



Foreword

The Aim to Sustain Game Assurance Scheme allows game farms, game shoots and estates to demonstrate publicly that they operate to the highest standards. The standards laid out in this document cover 'best practice' across a broad spectrum of topics applicable to game management and shooting on upland estates and shoots.

These standards include assessment of animal health and welfare, food quality, environmental enhancement and protection, staff training and health and safety. Certified Game Assurance Scheme members will have produced evidence during a robust assessment process to show how they meet the standards that make up this scheme and earn their certified status.

The scheme gives confidence to the public and consumers that where they see the Aim to Sustain assurance stamp, the shoot operates to the highest standards and produces high quality wild game meat, having been through the independent assessment process.

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Guidance in reference column:

- R . A Record will be required at audit.
- T . A Template is available to record evidence. These templates can be found in the Game Assurance Scheme Handbook and can be downloaded from the Aim to Sustain website.

Section 1 - Shoot procedures & operation

Shoots must comply with all legal obligations and must be maintained and operated in a manner that does not bring the shoot, shooting sector or the Aim to Sustain Game Assurance Scheme into disrepute. Shoots must abide by the Scheme rules as detailed in the Members' Handbook.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
1.1	Shoots should demonstrate an understanding of the Code of Good Shooting Practice.	 An up-to-date hard copy or electronic copy of Code of Good Shooting Practice must be available to all involved in the shoot including Guns, beaters, pickers up etc. If a complaint is made to the Code of Good Shooting Practice regarding the shoot and it is subsequently investigated by the Code's Steering Committee, the shoot must comply with the Committee's decision. https://www.codeofgoodshootingpractice.org.uk/
1.2 R	A site map of the shoot must be in place.	 The site map details all areas covered by the shoot and includes (where applicable): water courses, access points, protected sites (SSSI, SPA, SAC, RAMSAR etc).
1.3 R T	The shoot key contact list and an emergency action plan must be in place and displayed.	 Contact list and emergency action plan is up to date and accessible to all those involved with the shoot. Contact list includes: Person with overall responsibility, keeper(s), vet, energy and water suppliers, Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), and details of the trained person and game dealer if applicable. The emergency action plan must assess the critical risks and may include (but not be limited to) actions to be taken in the event of: suspected disease outbreak, activist activity, fire, accident or illness on a shoot day, extreme weather, chiller failure, absence of a game meat hygiene trained person on a shoot day

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
1.4 R T	A complaints procedure must be in place. This includes complaints made to the shoot regarding noncompliance with the Code of Good Shooting Practice and Aim to Sustain Game	The complaints procedure includes recording the complaint, investigation, outcome/resolution, lessons learnt to prevent the issue happening again.
	Assurance Scheme standards. A declaration must be made to the Aim to Sustain Game Assurance Scheme of any prosecutions or convictions against the shoot or staff for wildlife crimes.	 All prosecutions and convictions against Aim to Sustain Game Assurance Scheme members or their staff will be managed in accordance with the Scheme Rules, which can result in expulsion from the Scheme. If shoots are also members of the Moorland Association, this information will be share with them.
1.5 R T	Where applicable training should be provided, and relevant records must be kept.	 Training records for all employed staff/volunteers are available and include: name, details of training, date of training and training providers. Copies of certificates are held where applicable. Where staff/volunteers are trained to undertake specific tasks such as the use of rodenticides, pesticides, pest & predator control etc then these are listed on their record.
1.6 R	Shoots supplying game to an Approved Game Handling Establishment (AGHE) must have a "trained person present to examine the game throughout every shoot day".	 Shoot must have at least one Trained Person on every shoot day. The Trained Person must have undertaken a Wild Game Meat Hygiene Course for small game. Large game only is not acceptable. A record of the course and or course certificate available (in training records 1.5). See annex 1. Origin of wild game. Points A, B and C there is no requirement to have a trained person, but it is recommended. Point D there is a legal requirement to have a trained person.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
1.7 R	Shoots that are supplying 'in feather' or 'in fur' game to an AGHE, or which supply wild game meat to the final consumer or local retailers, are legally required to register with their Local Authority (LA) / Environmental Health Office (EHO) as a Food Business Operator (FBO).	 Confirmation of registration as a FBO. OR Evidence that the application process has commenced e.g. acknowledgement by the LA/EHO that the application has been received. See annex 1. Origin of wild game. Point A & B there is no requirement to register as a FBO. Point C & D there is a requirement to register as a FBO. https://register.food.gov.uk/new
1.8 R T	Health and safety policy in place and effectively communicated to those involved with the shoot activities.	 Health & safety policy in place and is effectively communicated to all involved with the shoot activities e.g., staff/ volunteers, beaters, pickers up, visitors, guns, and guests. Policy statement (hse.gov.uk)
1.9	First Aid kits & eye wash must be available.	 First aid kits and eye wash must be checked to ensure the contents are in date. If applicable, contents must be food grade, including food grade plasters (blue).
1.10	Shoots must demonstrate that they have checked if the shoot is in or near a European Site or site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).	 In relation to activities on SSSI shoots must check the designations relevant to that site and where applicable have the necessary consents in place from the relevant statutory agency such as NE, NRW or NatureScot. European protected sites and SSSIs must be identified on the site map (standard 1.2). https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx
Recommend	ations	
1.11	It is recommended that shoots take part in a regular bird count, e.g. breeding bird survey	
1.12	It is recommended that sustainable or lead free ammunition is used	
1.13	It is recommended that shoot staff are trained in wildfire management	

Section 2 - Bio security

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that systems are in place and if required, equipment and materials will be available to prevent the spread of a notifiable disease.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
2.1	Cleaning and disinfecting facilities should be available for use on the shoot.	 Details for bio-security management will be in the emergency action plan. Defra approved disinfectants and cleaning equipment is planned to be available for use on boots, clothing, vehicles, and facilities. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disease-prevention-for-livestock-farmers#biosecurity-measures Defra, UK – Disinfectants

Section 3 Pest and predator control

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that systems are in place for the effective and responsible control of pests and predators.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
3.1 R T	Shoots must have a documented pest and predator control plan in place. The plan should be reviewed annually.	 Pest and predator control plan will include: A site survey. The types of predators and pests controlled on the shoot. Control measures in place, and reasons for the control being undertaken. Current general licences used with the relevant justifications highlighted. Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) Code of Best Practice must be followed http://www.thinkwildlife.org/crru-code A bait plan in place that identifies: bait used, location, date bait point inspected, date(s) bait replenished or removed, and procedures in place to ensure bait does not contaminate the environment. http://www.thinkwildlife.org/crru-code
Recommendat	ions	
3.2	It is recommended that shoots sign up and complete the GWCT game bag census.	National Gamebag Census - Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (gwct.org.uk)

Section 4 - Grit

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that use of medicated grit is appropriate and in line with sector best practice guidance.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
4.1	Medicated grit/Grit must be purchased from an assured source	UFAS or equivalent
4.2	Grit must be stored securely and be clearly labelled either on the bag or bulk store	Applies to both medicated and non medicated grit
4.3	Grit must be stored in a manner that minimises the risk of contamination	 Shoot can demonstrate to the assessor that contamination from substances, machinery, equipment, birds, predators, dogs and cats etc has been prevented
4.4 R	Shoots mixing their own medicated grit must meet the regulatory requirements	 Record of approval from the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) Records of appropriate prescriptions

Section 5 - Health and welfare

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that their procedures ensure the health and welfare of the game birds.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
5.1	Shoots must ensure adequate picking up resources are in place to ensure that all shot birds are quickly accounted for and wounded birds are dispatched humanely	 Shoots must be able to demonstrate that sufficient pickers up and dogs are present on shoot days Achieved through professional discussion with assessor
Recommenda	ation	
5.2	It is recommended the shoot vet or vet practice is registered with the BVPA.	

Section 6 - Veterinary Medicines

Shoots must be able to demonstrate the responsible and competent use of veterinary medicines and treatments. On the Uplands, this standard includes the use of medicated grit. .

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
6.1	Only authorised veterinary medicines are used. (including in medicated grit)	 POM-V products are prescribed by a vet. POM-VPS products are prescribed by a vet, pharmacist, or Suitably Qualified Person (SQP)/Registered Animal Medicines Advisor (RAMA). Prescriptions for medication must be available to inspect.
6.2	Veterinary medicines must be used appropriately. (including in medicated grit)	 Where medicines are administered this is done so in accordance with the prescription, the manufacturer's, or veterinary instructions. Medicines that have expired or been open and not used within the in-use shelf life must not be used and must be disposed of correctly.
6.3 R	Veterinary medicines must be administered by a competent person. (including medicated grit)	 Confirmation of who is the competent person (and record of training in training record (1.5) Prescription and manufacturer's instructions must be followed .
6.4 R T	Records for all medicines purchased must be kept. (including in medicated grit)	Purchase records must be kept for 5 years and include: • Date of acquisition/delivery. • Name of the product. • Batch number(s) of the product. • Expiry date of the product. • Quantity purchased. • Name and address of the supplier.

Aim to Sustain Game Assurance – Upland (Grouse) shoot standards March 2024

Reference	Standard (Grouse) shoot star	How will the shoot be measured
6.5 R T	Records for all medicines administered must be kept. (including medicated grit)	Administration records must be kept for 5 years and include: • Identity of medicine. • Date of administration (placed on moor). • Quantity administered. • Length of withdrawal period. • Identification of the birds/beat: location of all grit stations (GPS if possible). • Batch number(s). • Number of animals treated. • Date treatment finished. • Date when birds are fit for human consumption. Demonstrate procedures to ensure withdrawal period is completed before shooting starts. • Name of person administering medicine. • Reason for treatment.
6.6 R T	Records for disposal of medicines must be kept. (including medicated grit) All veterinary medicines must be stored appropriately. (including medicated grit)	Disposal records must be kept for 5 years and include: Date of disposal (removed from moor and disposed of). Quantity of products disposed. Name of product. Batch number(s). Route of disposal (licenced contractor). Locked in a storage facility/room. Manufacturer's storage instructions followed.
6.8	Use of HP-CIA antibiotics must only be used as a last resort, under veterinary direction.	 If refrigeration is required and a domestic fridge is used, then medicine must be stored in a container. Use is supported by a veterinary statement outlining the justification for use.

Section 7 - Animal by-products

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that dead birds and shot birds that are damaged or contaminated to the point that they cannot enter the food chain are managed to meet the minimum legal requirement, and to minimise the risk to the environment and spread of disease.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
7.1	Birds found dead must be removed without delay.	 Shoots must be able to demonstrate how dead game is handled correctly. Achieved through professional discussion with assessor.
7.2	Dead birds or those shot and deemed not fit to enter the food chain must be stored correctly pending disposal.	 Shoot must be able to show assessor how dead game unfit to enter the food chain is stored pending disposal.
7.3 R	Dead birds and shot game deemed not fit to enter the human food chain should only be fed to animals where appropriate and safe to do so. Where it is not, they should be disposed of correctly and disposal records kept.	 Dead birds and shot game deemed not fit to enter the human or animal food chain must be disposed of without undue delay. Be collected by or taken to a licenced fallen stock collector/disposal site. Not be burnt on site (unless in an APHA approved incinerator). Not be buried on site (unless the remote area derogation applies - Scotland Only). On farms/shoots, incinerators are covered by species approval document issued by the relevant competent authority. Records are kept for 2 years. Fallen stock and other animal carcases – Animal by-products: disposal guidance – gov.scot (www.gov.scot) Fallen stock and safe disposal of dead animals – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Section 8 - Game handling, transport, and food hygiene (wild game and game meat intended for human consumption)

Shoots must be able to demonstrate that systems and equipment are in place to ensure the safe handling of wild game and game meat intended for human consumption.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
8.1	All shot game unless damaged or contaminated must be regarded as a food product.	 Shoots can clearly demonstrate that shot game is handled in such a way that it meets the requirements of food safety legislation and is safe to enter the human food chain. Shooting activity must not take place on contaminated ground and care must be taken to reduce incidences of contamination when handling shot game. If contamination does occur appropriate action should be taken.
8.2	Shot game must be transferred to the larder at the earliest opportunity after dispatch to allow active chilling to commence as soon as possible.	See annex 1. Origin of wild game. Point A. Where game birds are kept for own consumption or given to friends and family then there is no requirement for a chiller. There is still the requirement to ensure that the game birds are safe to eat. Point B, C and D. There is a requirement for a chiller. • Birds should be transferred into the chiller within 2 hours of being shot. • Provisions in place on high temperature days to transfer shot game to the larder/chiller as soon as possible (and in less than 2 hours).
8.3	Game carts must be suitable and maintain the safe transportation of shot game intended for human consumption.	 Game carts must be designed in such a way to allow game to be transported without risk of contamination. Game to be transported to allow airflow around the birds to allow the cooling process to commence and prevent game heating up in transit. Game to be transported hung or laid out in trays (once cool) and must not be heaped. Effective cleaning and disinfection of game carts to take place before each day's shoot and during the day if contamination requires it. Dogs, equipment, and anything else that might cause contamination must not be transported with the game

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
8.4 R T	The chiller (if appliable) and game larder area are kept clean and, in a food safe manner.	 Be free from accumulated dirt, dust and cobwebs, mould, rubbish. Be free from chemicals, equipment, and products not in use. Be free from foul odours by maintaining and keeping drains clean and free from blockages and have adequate ventilation. Have means of cleaning available e.g. dedicated hose pipe, brush, food grade detergent. Be kept clear of debris and nonessential equipment, vegetation must be kept short and managed. See annex 1. Origin of wild game. Points B, C & D HACCP plan and food safety management system in place Chiller and larder to be washed and disinfected as soon as possible after game is collected (after each collection). Chiller and larder cleaned with food grade cleaning materials with data sheets available.
8.5	The structures within the chiller (if applicable) and game larder internal and external areas must be sound, suitable and food safe.	 Cleaning records must be kept. Floor and wall surfaces must be maintained in sound condition, easy to clean and disinfect. All fixtures and fittings must be constructed of impervious, nonabsorbent, washable, and non-toxic materials. Surfaces must be well maintained and in good condition. Surfaces In the larder/chiller in contact with food must be made of smooth, washable non-toxic materials. Doors to the chiller units must be well fitting to prevent access by pests and able to be opened from both sides. Larders/chillers must always have adequate natural and/or artificial lighting to allow thorough inspection of the game. Artificial lights must either have protective covers or shatterproof bulbs to avoid the risk of glass contamination.

Reference	Standard	How will the shoot be measured
8.6	Water used within the larder and chiller on internal surfaces must be safe.	Potable drinking water from the rising main. Where the water supply is private: The supply must be tested at least annually to determine the water is safe. Test results available at audit.
8.7	Hand washing and drying facilities are available in the larder/chiller area.	Facilities must include: • Hot and cold water. • Wall mounted hand wash dispenser. • Paper Towel. • Lidded bin.
8.8 R T	Chillers must be managed in such a way as to maintain the safe storage of shot game intended for human consumption.	 Game birds must be stored below 4 °C The size of the larder/chiller must be adequate for the quantity game to be handled and stored to ensure it cools quickly (to below 4 °C). 'In feather' and 'in fur' game must not be stored in the same chiller without a floor-to-ceiling barrier to prevent cross contamination. Processed game must not be stored in the chiller at the same time as 'in fur' or 'in feather' game. Game carcasses unfit for human consumption and awaiting disposal must not be stored in the larder/chiller. No live animals must be allowed into larders/chillers. Smoking/drinking/eating is not permitted in larders/chillers. See annex 1. Origin of wild game. Points C & D HACCP Plan and Food safety management system in place When in use the temperature of the chiller must be recorded at least twice daily.
8.9 R T	Records to allow full traceability of game that goes into the food chain must be kept.	 Records must in include: Customer/destination. Date of supply. Number and species supplied. Total number sold or given to the final consumer e.g. guns, beaters or local retail establishment.

Aim to Sustain Game Assurance – Upland (Grouse) shoot standards March 2024

Ref	erence	Standard (Grouse) shoot standard	How will the shoot be measured
	8.10 R T	Shoots that supply 'in feather' or 'in fur' game to an Approved Game Handling Establishment (AGHE), or which supply wild game meat (i.e. processed) to the final consumer or local retailers must have HACCP plan and food safety management system in place.	See annex 1. Origin of wild game. Points C & D HACCP plan and food safety management system in place. A documented Hygiene Hazard Audit Plan that includes: • Routine hygiene of people handling game and visiting larders and chillers must be documented in a Hygiene Hazard Audit Plan. • Hygiene related management of facilities must also be detailed in the Hygiene Hazard Audit Plan. • Identify and record hazards applicable to the shoot and actions to minimise the risk. • All staff handling game must have access to a copy of the plan and must have signed it
	ommeno 8.11	It is recommended that hand wash basins with hot/cold or mixed water are elbow/knee/foot operated	
	8.12	It is recommended that chillers are serviced at least annually	
	8.13	It is recommended that there is a means of notifying staff in the event of chiller failure to avoid spoilage of the game meat	

Aim to Sustain Game Assurance – Upland (Grouse) shoot standards March 2024 Annex 1 - Game Handling – Legal Requirements and Exceptions

Origin of wild game	Restrictions on Supply	Wild Game Meat Hygiene Course for	Food Business Operator (FBO) Registration Required	HACCP Plan and Food safety management	Official record keeping & traceability
(A) Keeping the in feather wild game carcasses (i.e. unprocessed) for private	The wild game must be kept for your own private domestic consumption or restricted to supply only to family and friends for their private domestic consumption on an occasional basis.	Not required (but encouraged).	No, registration as a food business is not required.	Not required (but encouraged).	Not required (but encouraged).
(B) Direct supply of in feather wild game carcasses (i.e. unprocessed) to the final consumer and/ or local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer	Supply must be by the producer of small quantities of hunted wild game (primary product). Supply must be direct to the final consumer or to a local establishment who directly supply to the final consumer (for example, butchers, restaurants, etc.). Supply from the producer to local retail establishments (who directly supply to the final consumer) must be	Not required (but encouraged).	No, registration as a food business is not required. You are encouraged to contact your LA/EHO to ensure you are eligible for this exemption.	Not required (but encouraged).	Yes, you must maintain traceability records of supply.

Origin of wild game	Restrictions on Supply	Wild Game Meat Hygiene	Food Business Operator (FBO)	HACCP Plan and Food safety	Official record keeping & traceability
Direct supply of wild game meat (i.e. processed carcasses) to the final consumer and/or local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer.	Supply must be of small quantities of wild game meat. Supply of wild game meat must be direct to final consumer or local retail establishments directly supplying the final consumer (i.e. butchers, restaurants, etc.). Supply to local retail establishments can be no further than your own Local Authority (LA)/EHO, a	Not required (but encouraged).	Yes, registration with your LA/ EHO as a food business is required.	Yes, you must have a food safety management system based on HACCP principles.	Yes, you must maintain traceability records of supply.
(D) Supply of in fur/ feather (i.e. unprocessed) wild game carcasses to an AGHE.	None.	Yes, Wild Game Meat Hygiene Course for small game status.	Yes, registration with your LA/ EHO as a food business is required.	Yes, you must have a food safety management system based on HACCP principles. You are also required to comply with the criteria set	Yes, you must maintain traceability records of supply.

Annex 2 - Record Keeping Requirements

Records must be available to the assessor at the time of the audit and can be kept in paper or electronic format.

Reference	Standard	Legal requirement	Minimum time records to be kept	A to S Template
1.2	A site map of the shoot must be in place.	No	NA – up to date	No
1.3	The shoot key contact list and an emergency action plan must be in place and displayed.	No	NA – up to date	Yes
1.4	A complaints procedure must be in place.	No	NA – up to date	Yes
1.5	Training records must be kept.	Yes	2 years*	Yes
1.6	Shoots supplying game to an Approved Game Handling Establishment (AGHE) must have a "trained person present to examine the game throughout every shoot	Yes	NA	Yes (1.5 training records)
1.7	Shoots that are supplying 'in feather' or 'in fur' game to an AGHE, or which supply wild game meat to the final consumer or local retailers, are legally required to register with their Local Authority (LA) / Environmental Health Office (EHO) as a Food Business Operator (FBO).	Yes	NA	No
1.8	Health and safety policy in place and effectively communicated to those involved with the shoot activities.	Yes	NA – up to date	Yes
3.1	Shoots must have a documented pest and predator control plan in place. The plan should be reviewed annually.	No	NA – up to date	Yes
4.4	Shoots mixing their own medicated grit must meet the regulatory requirements. (VMD Approval)	Yes	NA	No
6.3	Veterinary medicines must be administered by a competent person. (including medicated grit).	Yes	NA	Yes (1.5 training records)
6.4	Records for all medicines purchased must be kept (including medicated	Yes	5 years*	Yes
6.5	Records for all medicines administered must be kept. (including in-feed and soluble medication, vaccines).	Yes	5 years*	Yes
6.6	Records for disposal of medicines must be kept for a minimum of 5 years.	Yes	5 Years*	Yes

7.3	Dead birds or shot game deemed not fit for the food chain must be disposed of correctly and disposal records kept.	Yes	2 Years*	
8.4	The chiller (if appliable) and game larder area are kept clean and, in a food safe manner.	Yes	Record of last cleaning available.	Yes
8.8	When in use the temperature of the chiller must be recorded at least twice daily.	Yes	12 Months	Yes
8.9	Records to allow full traceability of game that goes into the food chain must be kept.	Yes	12 Months	Yes
8.10	HACCP Plan and a documented Hygiene Hazard Audit Plan.	Yes	Must be kept up to date	Yes

^{*}Is the minimum legal requirement for time records must be kept.

Annex 3 - Useful Links

- https://www.codeofgoodshootingpractice.org.uk/.
- https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/poultry-including-game-birds-registration-rules-and-forms).
- https://www.food.gov.uk/our-work/guidance-for-primary-producers-and-food-business-operators-on-the-hygienic-production-of-wild-game
- https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/V7%20Guidance%20-%20supply%20of%20wild%20game%20for%20human%20consumption.pdf
- https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/downloads/FSS_Wild_Game_Guide-_December_2021.pdf
- https://register.food.gov.uk/new
- Policy statement (hse.gov.uk)
- https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx.
- https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disease-prevention-for-livestock-farmers#biosecurity-measures
- <u>Defra, UK Disinfectants</u>
- http://www.thinkwildlife.org/crru-code.
- National Gamebag Census Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (gwct.org.uk)
- http://www.bvpa.org.uk
- https://www.gwct.org.uk/advisory/guides/medicated-grit-best-practice/checklist/
- Fallen stock and other animal carcases Animal by-products: disposal guidance gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
- Fallen stock and safe disposal of dead animals GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)