

The National Association of Cattle Foot Trimmers: The UK's representative body for professional cattle foot trimmers

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Objectives

The National Association of Cattle Foot Trimmers (NACFT) works to increase the credibility and professionalism within the foot trimming industry. Additionally, The Association hosts a range of continuing professional development events with the aim of sharing best practice with its members.

Materials and methods

NACFT was initiated by a group of trimmers, vets, academics, and other interested professionals in 1997. Since its initiation, the NACFT and its organizational committee have been involved in a wide range of knowledge exchange with both farmers and trimmers alike. These have ranged from the promotion of the "Healthy Feet Programme" (A lameness control programme developed by the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB)) through to the running of an annual UK lameness conference which is open to farmers, trimmers, vets, and anyone interested in cattle mobility. The NACFT now has approximately 150 trimmers listed as members on its website from across the UK with a range of affiliate members (from aligned professions mostly) also listed. Throughout this, the key goal has been to promote the positive welfare of dairy cattle, the improvement of the UK dairy herd's lameness status, and to ensure all trimmers are working to a high and safe standard.

Results

The NACFT works with a range of organizations including the British Cattle Veterinary Association (BCVA), the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) and other bodies to ensure that trimmers are represented at meetings discussing principles and legislation surrounding cattle foot health. In the past 12 months, The NACFT has begun to run its own "continuing professional development" (CPD) days which are open to its members where current best practice is disseminated with regards to animal handling, lameness control and professionalism (among many other topics). The aim is to run a number of these days across the UK throughout the year to promote best practice throughout our membership.

Furthermore, the NACFT is working to collaborate further; this is with respect to both groups it currently works with and those with whom new links are being drawn. Within this collaboration, the NACFT hopes to not only represent the trimmer in important discussions occurring at a national herd level, but also improve the mobility of dairy cattle throughout the UK.

Conclusions

Through collaboration and promotion of best standard practices, the NACFT works to promote the improvement of the UK dairy herd's mobility. Working with other industry bodies and individuals is key to ensure consistent dissemination of best practice lameness management is being disseminated.