BVA calls for action on animal welfare in Scotland

Author :

Categories : General News

Date : June 20, 2012

The BVA has called on the Scottish Government to make progress with secondary legislation under the Animal Health and Welfare Act (Scotland) 2006.

The British Veterinary Association (BVA) has called on the Scottish Government to make progress with secondary legislation under the Animal Health and Welfare Act.

The call to action came from BVA president Carl Padgett at the Scottish Government’s annual dinner, held last night (June 19, 2012) at the Government's building at Holyrood in Edinburgh.

Taking to the podium, Mr Padgett said that despite the act's role in improving Scotland's human attitudes to animals, he is unhappy by the lack of secondary legislation that should have followed as a direct consequence of the act.

"As a member of the Parliament’s cross party group on animal welfare," said Mr Padgett, "we have recently questioned the cabinet secretary on the level of progress made on secondary legislation under the act.

"[It's been] five years since it came into force and we are yet to see proposals from the Government on pet vending, animal sanctuaries, livery yards, riding establishments, boarding kennels, dog breeding and performing animals."
Mr Padgett specifically highlighted the need for a **code of welfare for rabbits** and legislation on dog breeding, which is being progressed in both Wales and Northern Ireland.

"Rabbits are the UK’s third most popular pet and vets are seeing more and more **husbandry-related problems**, including dental disease and obesity – problems that could, in part, be tackled with **improved education and awareness**."

On breeding, Mr Padgett believes that Scotland should identify with **puppy farming** like the rest of the UK, as he believes "it is an area that would greatly benefit from a **consistent approach** that would prevent the problem being exported across borders."

Mr Padgett also stated that Scotland is "**in danger**" of falling behind the rest of the UK in the **compulsory microchipping of dogs**.

"Unlike the **control of dogs** where the Scottish Government led the way with a more preventive approach, here it is in danger of being left behind," said Mr Padgett. "England and Wales are currently consulting on a compulsory system and Northern Ireland is now in its **first year of mandatory microchipping**.

"At the heart of this policy – which the BVA has long championed – is **dog welfare**, the ability to reunite lost dogs quickly and safely with their owners, and **responsible ownership**."

*Photo © British Veterinary Association*