Devon & Cornwall Police
Rural Affairs
Working in partnership to protect rural communities

Livestock theft

Why is this important?

Livestock theft is one of the most costly crimes for the farming sector. Often linked to organised crime thefts, it can have a devastating financial and emotional impact for farmers and their businesses, as well as causing unnecessary suffering for animals. The illegal transport and slaughter of animals holds the danger of them entering the food chain unregulated.

What do you need to do?

Reduce livestock theft with simple crime prevention measures. Working together, land owners, rural businesses and members of the public should be vigilant reporting any suspicious activity to the police - noting vehicle details, descriptions and an accurate location.

How can you prevent this?

- Where possible, secure gates and block unused entrances.
- Ensure stock is clearly marked with up-to-date records and consider hi-tech prevention solutions.
- Consider the use of signage or other means to prevent cold callers to farms and businesses.
- Do not accept meat from non-reputable sources, be aware of unhygienic and unsafe meat entering the food chain.
- Check stock regularly and varying times and graze away from roads.
- Notify the police using 999 if you suspect an offence is being committed.
- If you have any information about livestock theft please email 101@dc.police.uk, call the non-emergency number, 101 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 783 0137.
- Join Devon & Cornwall Alert, Watch schemes and local social media groups so that you can find out what is happening in your area.

The Devon and Cornwall police rural affairs team have produced a calendar which highlights rural issues throughout the year to focus problem solving activity for police, partners and public with key messages and prevention activity.