

**AN ROINN TALMHAÍOCHTA, BIA AGUS MARA  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND THE MARINE**

**MOBILE SHEEP HANDLING FACILITIES**

**The receiving of this specification does not imply approval of a grant application.** However, if written approval is issued, then this specification becomes part of the contract between the applicant and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

This is a minimum specification. Where the word “SHALL” is used, then that standard (at least) **must** be followed in grant-aided buildings. Where a procedure is “RECOMMENDED”, this is advice only on good practice.

Note that all references to other Department Specifications are to the current edition of that specification [available on the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine’s Website ([www.agriculture.gov.ie](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie)) under Farm buildings]. Similarly, references to Standards are to the current edition of the Irish, British or European Standard, as appropriate.

## **1 Safety**

### **1.1 Responsibility for Safety**

Applicants are reminded that they have a duty under the Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act 2005 to provide a safe working environment on the farm, including farm buildings, for all people who may work on that farm. There is a further duty to ensure that any contractor, or person hired to do building work, provides and/or works in a safe environment during construction.

## **2 General**

All mobile sheep handling facilities and equipment must be completed in accordance with this specification.

Mobile sheep handling equipment is defined as being equipment that can be transported using a trailer unit, attachable wheels or tractor three-point linkage. The equipment shall not be concreted, bolted or permanently fixed in place.

## **3 Mobile Handling Equipment:**

### **3.1 Basic Mobile Handling Race**

A basic mobile handling race will consist of a front gate, back gate and sides held together by pins. The handling race can be dismantled for transport. Mobile penning sections are then used to create collection areas at the front and rear of the handling race. The handling race is the section between the front gate and rear gate and may include two pen sections to act as a funnel to direct the sheep into the race. The race shall be a minimum of 2.4m long, when in operation.

Note: for grant-aid purposes mobile penning is considered as a separate investment to a handling race.

### **3.2 Portable Sheep Handling Race with wheels (including footbath)**

A Portable Sheep Handling Race with wheels, either with or without a footbath, will consist of a handling race that is permanently fixed together and mounted on wheels that may be detachable. The handling race may have a guillotine gate at the rear and

drafting gate at the front, non return gates and a footbath along the length of the race which can be covered over when not in use. The handling race is the section between the front gate and rear gate and may include two pen sections to act as a funnel to direct the sheep into the race. The race shall be a minimum of 2.4m long, when in operation.

The unit must be fitted with lights and relevant plating for road transport.

Note: for grant-aid purposes mobile penning is considered as a separate investment to a handling race.

### **3.3 Rollover Crate**

A rollover crate is a system that catches a sheep and enables the sheep to be rolled over for undertaking necessary treatments.

The rollover crate may be included along with the race or may be separate.

Note: for grant-aid purposes, weighing facilities and rollover crates are considered as separate investments to a handling unit and must be applied for separately.

### **3.4 Sheep Weighing Scales – either manual or digital.**

Weighing scales may be either manual or digital. They shall be designed to hold the sheep on the weighing platform without the need for additional restraint. The weighing facilities may be included along with the race, rollover crate or may be separate. A weighing scales shall include either a manual or digital display.

Note: for grant-aid purposes, weighing facilities and rollover crates are considered as separate investments to a handling unit and must be applied for separately.

### **3.5 Batch Footbath**

A “**batch**” footbath is a footbath that is separate from a handling unit and can hold around 8 to 16 sheep at a time. The footbath is surrounded by penning to retain the sheep in the footbath.

### **3.6 Mobile Adoption unit front with penning**

Mobile Adoption unit front with penning is a unit designed to restrain ewes for 1 to 2 days while adopting / fostering lambs with integral penning to keep the lambs close to the ewe. The units must be designed to allow the ewe to stand and lie and must be for the greater good of the fostered lambs and must not cause any unnecessary distress to the ewe. The ewe must have access to both fresh water and feed at all times while restrained in the unit. The units must have a minimum of 3.5m of penning– this 3.5m excludes the adoption unit front.

### **3.7 Mobile Adoption unit front**

A Mobile Adoption unit front is a unit as described above for use with existing penning arrangements.

### **3.8 Mobile sheep penning**

Mobile penning shall be at least **850mm high, but it is strongly recommended to be 970mm high**, and shall have a minimum of 6 rails. Each penning section shall have a system to be connected to other penning sections.

### **3.9 PDA EID tag reader and management software package.**

This is an electronic system that reads the tag numbers of the sheep and additional information (such as weight, sex, No. of lambs, veterinary treatments, management

information, etc) can be recorded on the system “in the field”. The PDA EID tag reader will include a full keyboard (all letters **shown at the same time** on separate keys, **either on screen or as a physical keyboard**) on the reader. It will include a full management package for recording all information about the sheep which can be uploaded to a computer or viewed on the PDA itself.

### **3.10 EID tag reader and software.**

This is an electronic system that reads the tag numbers of the sheep, and has software to enable the numbers to be transferred to a computer. These systems may also be able to record some additional information.

## **4 Protection of Steel**

All steel used for the manufacture of mobile sheep handling equipment shall be protected as follows:

### **SYSTEM I: Hot Dipped Galvanising:**

Hop dip galvanised coating shall be applied after fabrication in accordance with I.S. EN ISO 1461:2009.

Small areas of galvanised coating damaged by any subsequent welding, cutting, or by excessively rough treatment during transit and erection may be renovated by the use of at least 2 coats of "spray-on cold galvanising" supplied by the galvanising company; or at least 2 coats of zinc-rich paint/primer complying with BS 4652: 1995, or 2 coats of 'ZINGA', [Agreement Certificate No. 94/3042].

**Note:** Hot Dipped Galvanising is strongly recommended.

### **SYSTEM II: Shot-blasting, Priming, and Painting:**

All scale and rust shall be removed by shot-blasting to Sa 2.5 or ISO 8501-1:2007. A holding zinc-rich primer of 25 microns shall be applied within 12 hours of shot-blasting. A further 50 microns of primer, and 50 microns of micaceous iron oxide finishing coat, shall provide a total dried coat of minimum 125 microns. (80 microns in two coats of the proprietary paint “ZINGA” can be used as an alternative on shot-blasted steel to the above standard).

## **5 Related Department Specifications**

The current edition of the specifications listed below shall also be followed as required:-

- 1) ‘S136: Minimum Specification for Sheep Dipping and Handling Facilities.’

Copies of these and other relevant Department specifications are available on the department website at: [www.agriculture.gov.ie](http://www.agriculture.gov.ie) under farm buildings or by contacting the one of the local offices of the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

## **Appendix 1: Date of clause revisions and additions**

All changes from the previous version are highlighted in red.

**Version: 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018**

Clauses modified: 2 (portion deleted), 3.4

**Version: 28<sup>rd</sup> February 2018**

New Clauses: 3.9, 3.10

**Version: 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2019**

Clauses modified: 3.8, 3.9