

# PRESS RELEASE

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Ready for the 2022 season, a group of specialist Gamebird Vets from across the UK have launched TRUSTED GAME, a simple audit-based scheme to ensure the health and welfare of gamebirds on Shoots and Game Farms.

Developed by the Vets working in partnership with their Gamekeeper and Game Farming clients through 2021, and incorporating tried and tested systems from other industries, the TRUSTED GAME project provides a route to achieving high standards through a simple auditing process linked to training and real-world solutions to problems identified. This will provide peace of mind to those shooting and all involved in game meat process including consumers.

Shooting is coming together with some great initiatives, and there has never been a better time for this project, and for everyone to get involved.

We all have to recognise that government is looking for us to evolve a workable system of self-regulation for game rearing and releasing in the UK. Vets Rita Alves of Daltons Game Consultancy, Mark Elliott of South Downs Veterinary Consultancy and Dan King of Sandhill Veterinary Services, looked at other animal production systems, where it is normal for the Vets to be involved in the auditing and setting of standards and set things in motion. Trusted Game aims to avoid an unnecessary, complicated or expensive system imposed from outside, and instead provide a route for fair, equitable self-regulation.

As gamebird vets already have close links with their clients, TRUSTED GAME is intended as an inexpensive straightforward 'add on' to the services they already provide.

Evidence led, TRUSTED GAME acknowledges that there is no one size that fits all due to the diversity and nature of all those projects and businesses involved in Game. Feedback from the trial participants has been overwhelmingly positive, with Owners, Agents and Keepers all enthusiastically backing the scheme

The TRUSTED GAME project is open to any vets in the UK who work with game and is therefore available to all shoots and game farms around the country.

For more information contact Rita, Mark or Dan, or email to [info@trustedgame.co.uk](mailto:info@trustedgame.co.uk)

## **TRUSTED GAME : Common Q&A**

### **We already have an auditing scheme and standards in the UK. How is this different?**

TRUSTED GAME is a partnership between you and your Vet working to nationally agreed standards, with no outside third parties involved in data collection or holding. It is focused on ensuring the Health and Welfare of birds at all stages to release

### **Will the scheme itself be accredited?**

Accreditation by third parties is prohibitively expensive. Our aim is that TRUSTED GAME is accessible and affordable for all shoots and farms, no matter their size. To ensure consistency in process and purpose the Vets involved will voluntarily be re-validated annually by colleagues, much as happens with GP's in the UK.

### **Do you have an idea of cost?**

Agreements will be between you and your Vet, but will have a capped maximum, with the aim being affordability so that all rearing fields and shoots over 3000 birds are audited annually, and smaller shoots every 2 to 3 years.

### **Other schemes are not auditing at that frequency at this time. How will you achieve that?**

Vets are in a unique position as they are already engaged with their clients on a day to day basis, and for many this will just be formalisation and/or enhancement of existing processes into a national recognised scheme. Vets are involved in auditing and standards in much of farming already.

### **You mention training for Gamekeepers and Game Rearers, what does that involve?**

The British Veterinary Poultry Association's Gamebird Working Party has already agreed curricula for education to be provided by specialist practices. Like the TRUSTED GAME project these curricula are available to all Veterinary practices enabling them to provide courses for clients. They launch Spring 2022 as well and we would encourage everyone to get involved. Being evidence led, TRUSTED GAME endorses these courses and will evolve more if need arises.

### **Are you assisting clients with marketing their Game produce**

Not directly, although we are sure in the very near future Game dealers will require some verification of welfare standards to reassure their markets. Most clients currently do not report issues placing their product.

### **I don't use a Specialist Gamebird Vet – can my Vet get involved?**

Yes, the project is open to all Vets that are BVPA Members. All they have to do is agree to the re-validation process to ensure standards are consistent and met, commit to formal Game related CPD annually to update their own training, and submit antibiotic use figures to the annual VMD/RUMA data collection.

### **Where can I find out more?**

TRUSTED GAME has a website [www.trustedgame.co.uk](http://www.trustedgame.co.uk), and email: [info@trustedgame.co.uk](mailto:info@trustedgame.co.uk). You can contact your Vet and, if not already, ask them to get involved. Vets can call Rita, Mark or Dan for more information and join with the practices already getting involved.