<u>Open statement supported by a coalition of professional/scientific organisations and individuals</u>

The Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill presents a significant opportunity to harness our improved understanding of genetic science to help develop better solutions to the urgent global challenges of food and nutrition security, human and animal health, climate change and the conservation of natural resources.

The potential benefits of precision breeding techniques in addressing these challenges apply as much to farmed animals as they do to agricultural and horticultural crops.

In considering the potential implications of the Bill, and in particular the issues affecting farmed animal health and welfare, it is critical that discussions focus on the Bill's provisions, and are based on up-to-date information about modern livestock breeding and production.

The Bill does not seek to replace or change in any way existing farm animal welfare regulations or

Examples of welfare-related traits currently selected for in modern pig breeding programmes include resistance to F18 E-coli, which

the country faces its worst bird flu outbreak ever after the disease over-summered in the UK for the first time, it is important to consider the ethical implications of <u>not</u> embracing and enabling the use of these technologies, both to support improvements in the health and welfare of farmed animals, and to reduce the risk of zoonoses which could lead to future pandemics in the human population.

The UK has established capacity and strengths in academic and commercial research in livestock genetics. Faced with the challenges of climate change and a predicted doubling of global demand for meat protein by 2050, the Precision Breeding Bill presents an opportunity to cement the UK's position as a global leader in productive, sustainable, high welfare farmed animal production.