

Tuesday 20 September 2022

Farm Quality Assurance Standards 2022 officially launched

Members of the Northern Ireland Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme (NIBL FQAS) are advised that the FQAS Standard and Rules for 2022, has now been officially launched. The revised standards will take effect from 1st November 2022.

The formal review process which began last Autumn saw the Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC), under the guidance of the FQAS Standard Setting Committee, complete a root and branch review of the scheme.

This comprehensive, routine review takes place every three years with the Committee working to ensure that FQAS continues to develop to meet the needs of the industry and the marketplace it supplies. The FQAS Standard Setting Committee comprises of stakeholders from the Ulster Farmers Union (UFU), Northern Ireland Meat Exporters' Association (NIMEA), Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), National Sheep Association (NSA), National Beef Association (NBA) and Northern Ireland Agricultural Producers Association (NIAPA).

"All stakeholder organisations on the Committee have an opportunity to feed into the process of reviewing standards in line with legislative requirements and industry initiatives," confirmed LMC FQAS manager Gillian Davis.

"The new Standard which was officially launched at a recent meeting of the FQAS board, sets out enhancements to eight main areas: husbandry and welfare, animal health, animal nutrition, animal traceability, housing and handling, transport, environmental care and farm procedures.

"These important and timely revisions will help provide further assurance to customers (abattoirs, wholesalers, retailers and consumers) that beef and lamb sourced from farm quality assured producers continues to be produced to the highest standards."

The subject of animal health and welfare continues to be of paramount importance for the industry. Enhancements to these areas are outlined in the new FQAS Standard.

Gillian explained, "The 2022 FQAS Standard pays careful attention to animal welfare standards with new measures introduced to improve welfare of youngstock. Also built into the reviewed standards is improved guidance around feeding space allowance and updated standards on tethered housing systems.

"These improvements should be viewed as positive developments by FQAS participants and industry stakeholders. It ensures FQAS beef and lamb continues to confidently boast world leading standards for food safety, animal welfare and care for the environment while also

remaining aligned with the other UK beef and lamb quality assurance schemes which are eligible to carry the Red Tractor logo.”

The FQAS Standard and Rules 2022 is available at www.lmcni.com.

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Photo captions

001 – Front Row L-R – Gillian Davis (LMC), Ian Stevenson (LMC)

Back Row L-R – Liam McCarthy (NIMEA), William Irvine (UFU), Edward Adamson (NSA), Sean Fitzpatrick (NIAPA), Mark Scott (DAERA- CAFRE)

002 - Conall Donnelly (NIMEA), Ian Stevenson (LMC), William Irvine (UFU)

Notes to Editor

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