



**Press Release: 13 November 2012**

## **LMC Disappointed by Sainsbury's decision to remove FQAS Logo**

LMC's Chief Executive Ian Stevenson has expressed his disappointment at Sainsbury's decision to remove the Northern Ireland Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme (FQAS) logo from their retail packs.

Mr Stevenson said, "After seeking clarification from Sainsbury's, LMC, who own and manage FQAS on behalf of our local beef and sheep meat industry, have received confirmation from Sainsbury's UK headquarters that the FQAS logo will, as with the red tractor logo, be removed from retail packs in Sainsbury's stores across Northern Ireland. This is very disappointing news for our domestic industry."

Sainsbury's believe that having too many logos on pack can be confusing for customers and therefore have taken the decision to remove the FQAS logo. The LMC believes this move will deny Sainsbury's customers the opportunity to look for the FQAS logo and the assurance it provides. The FQAS logo assures the consumer that Farm Quality Assured beef and lamb has been produced on farms certified to designated assurance standards. FQAS farms are independently inspected and certified by an approved Certification Body operating to accredited European Standards for product certification.

Mr Stevenson added, "The LMC welcomes Sainsbury's commitment to retain the FQAS standard as a fundamental requirement of their sourcing policy but by removing the logo at point of sale on their retail packs they are removing a very clear indicator of independently accredited assurance.

The LMC remains committed to educating consumers about the food they eat and would encourage consumers to look for the FQAS logo which is still widely carried, and to ask retailers about the assurance of their beef and lamb. The LMC is about to embark on a consumer advertising campaign focussed on FQAS and will work with the beef and lamb supply chain to ensure that consumer expectations about the assurance of their beef and lamb continue to be met.

LMC's message to consumers is very simple, beef and lamb in packs carrying the FQAS logo is guaranteed to be from an independently inspected and certified farm in Northern Ireland."

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### **Notes to Editors**

More information on FQAS can be found at <http://www.lmcni.com/fqas/>