

Distribution of New Standard & Rules (2014)

The new Northern Ireland Beef and Lamb, Farm Quality Assurance Scheme (NIBL FQAS) Standard & Rules Book has been distributed to all scheme participants. This publication combines the Product Standard and the Rules books and has been redesigned in order to clarify some of the codes and rules contained in these.

This new Standard & Rules comes into effect immediately and inspectors employed by our contracted certification body will inspect against this publication. There will be a cross-over allowing compliance with both the old and new Standard and Rules versions until 1st October 2014 from which date the previous Standard will become obsolete. The recommendation to all scheme members is to conduct their FQAS membership to this new Standard as soon as you are in receipt of it. This will allow a smooth transition when codes are inspected solely on the new Standard and should ultimately result in fewer non-conformances.

The main changes are outlined below:

- Participants will be asked for a signature in three places as opposed to nine places as previously. Signatures are moved to the back

- of the Standard for convenience.
- Code 3.16, which requires participants to keep an ingredient list for compound feed, is removed.
- Important changes have been made to Section 3, Animal Nutrition (See page 4 – Food Fortress Scheme Launch for further detail)
- Legislation dictates that participants must now also record how they dispose of medicines, the quantity and the date of disposal (if the medicine was not used to treat an animal).
- Standard and Rules is combined into one document.
- New look cover design.
- Insertion of helpful icons adjacent to codes which require participants to take direct action in the form of a signature, record

- or provision of evidence such as a warranty declaration, etc.
 - Shading of the entire code where these icons occur also alerts participants to take direct action.
 - The word 'Amended' is included to designate a change from the previous Standard.
- Please see the three symbols below, which are included to assist producers in identifying codes which require action.

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This symbol indicates that the participant is required to keep a record or a log in a NIBL FQAS publication or another relevant record. Examples include NIBL FQAS Veterinary Medicine Record book, NIBL FQAS Feed Record book, herd/flock book, Animal Health Plan, etc.



This symbol indicates that the inspector requires proof for aspects of the inspection as detailed in the particular code to which it applies. Evidence sought may be in the form of an acceptable warranty declaration, a certificate from an approved haulier, etc.



This symbol indicates that a signature is required. This normally will apply to page 95 in the NIBL FQAS Standard and Rules book.

FQAS Membership Continues to Rise

There has been a 15% increase in FQAS membership over the past 12 months and the Scheme now has approximately 11,000 participants. This is a result of a significant increase in the demand from red meat processors for FQAS assured cattle and the resulting penalty for cattle not attaining this status.

Applications to join the scheme have increased by 1587 over the past 12 months. This uptake in membership and applications received is encouraging for the Scheme and ensures that 99.6% of price reported prime cattle currently processed here is NIBL FQAS approved. Retailers currently demand FQAS approved fresh beef and lamb as this assures consumers about the farm end of the production chain and the Scheme's 3 Key pillars; food safety, care for the environment and animal welfare.

LMC Ad Campaign in Full Swing



LMC's new advertising campaign is now in full swing and has been broadcast on TV, radio, press and outdoor media since January 2014. This is part of a three year campaign to stress the importance of purchasing quality Northern Ireland FQAS

beef and lamb. Lamb activity will be rolled out from the end of May 2014. The FQAS message has also been delivered to over 7000 secondary school pupils across Northern Ireland as part of LMC's school cookery demonstration programme.

FQAS Farmer of the Year Award 2013

In October 2013, LMC were proud to sponsor the **Farming Life & Danske Bank FQAS Farmer of the Year Award 2013**, for the second year running.

The FQAS Farmer of the Year Award presented an excellent opportunity to recognise farming excellence within the FQAS membership. FQAS Farmer of the Year 2013 was awarded to beef farmer Samuel Chesney from Kircubbin who joined the scheme in 1992 and since then has maintained a high level of compliance with the standard. Samuel also demonstrated how he stands out from his competitors and highlighted the merits of being a member of the FQAS.

Gareth and Dianne Clarke from Sixmilecross were awarded "Highly Commended" in this category and were also able to demonstrate enthusiasm for and good knowledge of FQAS.

The LMC would like to congratulate all of the farmers who were nominated for this award and to thank Farming Life and Danske Bank for the opportunity to be involved in this successful showcase event.



Sam Chesney (2nd from left) pictured with Ian Stevenson (LMC CEO), James Mimmagh (LMC FQAS Manager) and Colin Smith (LMC Industry Development Manager)

Common non-Conformances Update

NIBL FQAS is owned by the Livestock & Meat Commission (LMC) on behalf of the beef and sheep meat industries. LMC employs Northern Ireland Food Chain Certification (NIFCC) to inspect against the NIBL FQAS standard and determine whether certification

will be granted. Non-conformances may be raised if a producer does not fully adhere to a specific code contained in the Standard. These non-conformances must be rectified within the timescale provided for the farm to either become assured or retain its Farm Quality Assured status.

Table 1

Product Standard Code	Non-conformance	% inspections completed where non-conformance occurred
1.1	Availability of 2012 Cattle/Sheep Welfare Codes	25
2.4a	Animal Health Plan/Bio-security controls	24
1.6	Record of anaesthetic for common vet. operations	19
5.2	Housing – sharp edges	19
2.14	Medicine records (VMR)	18
6.2	Livestock transport assurance	18
3.16	Declaration of feed ingredients retained	15
5.1	General standard of livestock housing	13
3.13b	Feedstuff Warranty Declaration available	12
7.1	General farm tidiness	12

Non-conformances have been assessed for a 12-month period from 1 February 2013 – 31 January 2014. Within this period, NIFCC conducted 6850 inspections. There were 5824 non-conformance notices issued during this time period. These figures indicate that 15% of inspections raised no non-conformances. The top ten most common non-conformances are detailed in Table 1.

In the previous update of common non-conformances raised during inspections (Winter 2013 FQAS Newsletter), the most common non-conformance was an unacceptable Animal Health Plan. This non-conformance remains high on the current list, and producers are encouraged to continue to implement an Animal Health Plan. A well-considered Animal Health Plan can help to identify any herd/flock health issues, encourage preventative action, reduce risk of animal diseases and potentially reduce veterinary bills.

Since the last update, there has been a large increase in the number of non-conformances raised against Code 1.1 'Availability of 2012 Cattle/Sheep Welfare Codes'. One in every four farms inspected had a non-conformance related to this code. Producers must have access to these Welfare Codes and the front cover of these codes must be signed and dated. Beef producers must have the 2012 Beef Cattle Welfare Code and sheep producers must

have the 2012 Sheep Welfare Code. Beef and sheep producers must provide both codes. The codes can be obtained from your local DARD Veterinary Office, from the DARD website (www.dardni.gov.uk/index/animal-health-and-welfare/animal-welfare/farmed-animal-welfare.htm) or from the LMC website (www.lmci.com/fqas/documentation/).

There has been an increase in non-conformances associated with codes 1.6 and 2.14 of 5% and 4% respectively.

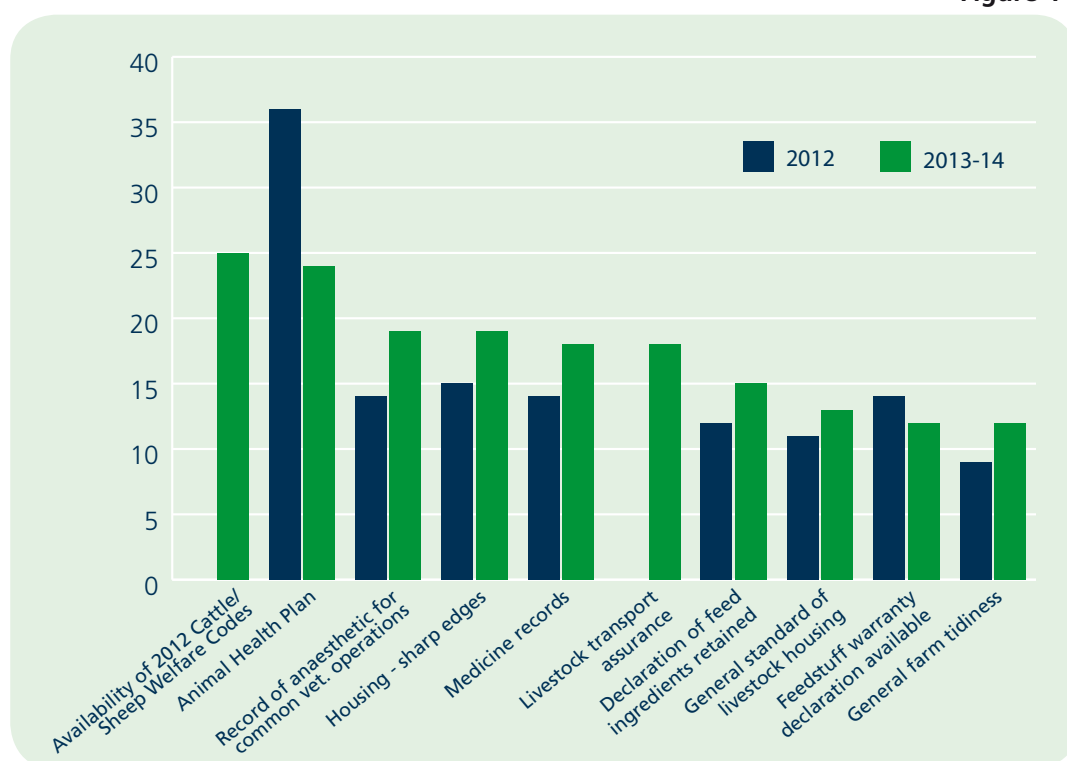
These codes relate to correct recording of veterinary medicines in the Veterinary Medicine Record (VMR) book and the recording of anaesthetic used for common veterinary practices. Producers are reminded to record all medicines, including anaesthetic, in the purchased **and** usage section of the VMR book.

Figure 1 shows that similar non-conformances are accruing each time a report is conducted. These include absence of a feedstuff warranty

declaration, sharp edges on livestock housing and general standard of livestock housing.

Producers wishing to get assistance with non-conformance rectification or preparation prior to an inspection can call the Farm Liaison Officer on the **FQAS Helpline number on 028 9263 3024**. The Helpline is open Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm. To obtain copies of FQAS Standard, Rules, VMR books, feed record books or application packs, contact the above number.

Figure 1



Butchers Questionnaire

FQAS would like to thank all butchers that gave up their time to partake in this survey.

Following distribution of FQAS posters, 'Look for the Logo' leaflets, and recipe books and cards to butchers, FQAS conducted a survey to gain feedback on the popularity of this promotional material among butchers and customers. This feedback has been excellent as butchers have been very happy with the documentation received. Butchers who are registered with us recognise the value of being Farm Quality Assured and can pass this assurance onto consumers.

Consumers have expressed interest in ensuring that their butcher is sourcing Farm Quality Assured beef and lamb here in Northern Ireland, realising the potential of FQAS to deliver quality, locally sourced beef and lamb for the dinner table.

Butchers will be happy to advise customers on cut choice and cooking methods, so call in and enjoy some tasty beef and lamb!

A list of FQAS approved butchers in your area is available on our website at www.lmcni.com

FQAS will issue invitation for renewal of licences to all current FQAS butcher members for 2014-15. If you are a butcher who does not currently possess a FQAS butcher licence, and would like to, **please call LMC on 028 9263 3000.**



Clayton Moore and family of M&W Farm Meats, Portadown, receiving last years' promotional certificate

'Look Out' – Only butchers who have a valid certificate and licence are eligible to carry the FQAS logo. If you see the logo and don't see the certificate or licence please let us know.

Food Fortress Scheme Launch

The Industry Feed Assurance Group (IFAG) report was launched in January 2011. This is the result of a united industry response to the Dioxin crisis of December 2008, and is intended to alert all food and feed businesses to the commercial risks that arise from feeding contaminated feed to livestock or poultry.

Since the report was launched representatives from across the Northern Ireland agri -food industry have been working on implementation of the report's recommendations and the beef and lamb industries have now agreed their mechanism for delivery.

From 1st October 2014 FQAS members will be asked to source all animal feedstuffs from an assured source with the exception of forage crops, alternative forage crops and straw as outlined in Table 1 below. In addition, from 1st October 2014 all externally sourced

manufactured feedstuffs must be from an assured manufacturer and/or merchant. The manufacturer must be certified under an AIC Universal Feed Assurance (Compounders) Scheme and adhere to the Q.U.B. Institute of Global Food Security best practice guidelines as outlined in

the Food Fortress Scheme or a scheme that has an agreed equivalent standard.

It is envisaged that the vast majority of compounders in Northern Ireland will be compliant and therefore there should be a minimal impact on FQAS members.

Bought In / Home Grown Feedstuff	Sourced From
Compound Feeds	UFAS/FEMAS Approved Source
Food by products from human food/drink manufacturers	UFAS/FEMAS Approved Source
Distillers Grains, Rapeseed etc.	UFAS/FEMAS Approved Source
Vitamin / Mineral In-Feed Premixes	UFAS/FEMAS Approved Source
Cereals	UFAS/FEMAS Approved Source or Approved Cereals Assurance Scheme member*.
Forage crops/alternative forage crops	Approved Assurance Scheme member* or with an Acceptable Warranty Declaration
Straw	No documentation required
Vegetables/vegetable waste	Approved Assurance Scheme member*

*A record must be kept of the assurance scheme membership number/s of any assured farm from which feed material is sourced. Examples of recognised assurance schemes are: NIBL FQAS, QMS, FAWL, Red Tractor Farm Assurance, NIFQACS, Soil Association Farm Assurance, and Quality British Turkey.

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