

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.

Non-conformances have been assessed for a 12-month period from 1 November 2013 - 31 October 2014. Within this period, NIFCC conducted 8681 inspections. There were 6731 non-conformance notices issued during this time period. These figures indicate that 21.5% 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 (Spring/Summer 2014 FQAS Newsletter), the most common non-conformance was Code 1.1, the unavailability of Cattle/Sheep Welfare Codes. This non-conformance remains the most common non-conformance on the current list, even though the incidence of this particular non-conformance has decreased from 25% to 21%. Producers are reminded that they must have a copy of the 2012 Code of Practice for the Welfare of Beef Cattle and/or Sheep or, alternatively, may demonstrate that they have access to these welfare codes electronically. 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.lmcni.com/fqas/documentation/

Since the last update, there has been a substantial decrease in non-conformances raised relating to Code 2.4, the Animal Health Plan/Biosecurity Policy, falling from 24% to 16%. This represents the greatest drop in the incidence of

TABLE ONE

Product Standard Code	Non-conformance	% inspections completed where non-conformance occurred
1.1	Availability of Cattle/Sheep Welfare Codes	21
6.2	Livestock transport assurance	18
5.2	Housing - sharp edges	18
1.6	Record of anaesthetic for common vet. operations	17
2.4a	Animal Health Plan/Biosecurity Policy	16
2.14	Veterinary Medicine Records	16
5.1	General standard of livestock housing	12
7.2	Farm Waste Management (minor)	12
4.2a	Herd Records	9
7.1b	General farm tidiness	9

non-conformances raised in this report.

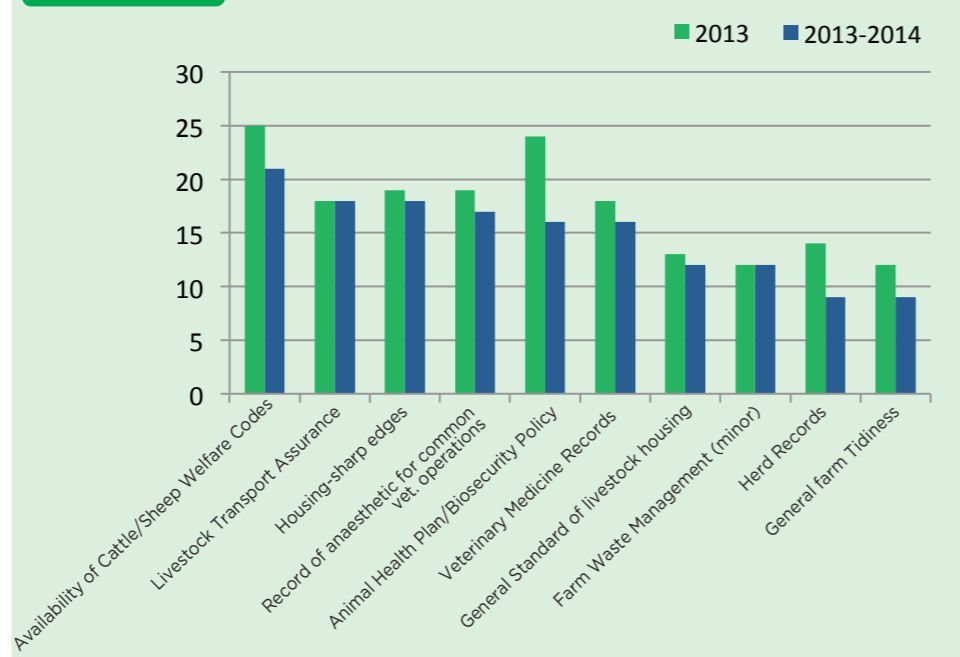
It is evident that scheme participants have focused on ensuring that the Animal Health Plan and Biosecurity Policy is completed. There is also a requirement to review this annually and document the change, if applicable. You can find the Animal Health Plan on page 49 of the FQAS Product Standard & Rules.

There has also been a decrease in all other non-conformances except for Codes 6.2 & 7.2. These have remained constant at 18% & 12% respectively. Non-conformances relating to codes

such as 5.2 - sharp edges on housing and 1.6 - recording of anaesthetic for common veterinary operations have decreased slightly.

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 and Rules, VMR books, feed record books or application packs, contact the above number.

FIGURE ONE



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FQAS NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND BEEF & LAMB FARM QUALITY ASSURANCE SCHEME

AUTUMN/WINTER 2014

New Consumer Website

LMC have launched a new consumer website which focuses on providing consumers with information relating to Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assured beef and lamb. The site contains quick and simple delicious recipes alongside details of FQAS approved butchers in your area and lots more. The website is designed to enhance our existing campaign promoting FQAS beef and lamb to consumers across Northern Ireland on TV, radio and outdoor advertising sites.

A map of FQAS approved butchers is available to view on our website, providing consumers with information about where you can source FQAS beef and lamb in your area. Delicious FQAS beef and lamb recipes are available, ranging from 'special occasion' recipes to 'meals-in-minutes' recipes. Excellent tutorial videos on preparing these meals are also available.

Here's hoping they turn out looking and tasting as well for you as they do in the video!

Consumers can sign up to our email updates to receive up-to-date information on new FQAS beef and lamb recipes and information on exciting competitions. LMC recently ran a competition giving consumers who signed up to the email alert an opportunity to win £200 worth of local FQAS beef and lamb.

FQAS approved beef and lamb is a 'Guarantee of Quality from farm to fork' and you can read about why we are the 'Natural Choice' for beef and lamb on the website.

For more information please visiting our new website www.beefandlambni.com



Requirement for Recording Disposal of Veterinary Medicines

Since 1st October 2014, participants of FQAS have been required to record disposal of unused and out-of-date veterinary medicines. This requirement applies to the actual liquid contained in these medicine containers.

Accompanying this FQAS Newsletter, you will find a Veterinary Medicine Record (VMR) book. This is an updated VMR book, which includes a section for recording of disposal of veterinary medicine on page 56. This section should be used to record the estimated total quantity of the liquid contained in the used medicine container at the time of disposal. Date

of disposal, and method and place of disposal must also be recorded. It is important to remind scheme participants that they should not, under any circumstances, open the used medicine container and attempt to remove objects, as there may be sharp, dangerous items contained in this.

It is acceptable for scheme participants to continue using the old VMR book until it is finished. If in this time there is a need to record disposal of medicines this can be written at the back of the book, preferably in the 'additional comments' section.



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FQAS Membership Continues to Rise

There has been an 8.3% increase in FQAS membership over the past 12 months and the Scheme now has approximately 11,500 participants. This is a result of a significant increase in demand for farm quality assured cattle and sheep for retail and food service markets in the UK and in export markets.

Applications to join the scheme have increased over the past 12 months. This uptake in membership and applications received is encouraging for the Scheme and ensures that 99.5% of price reported prime cattle currently processed here is NIFQAS 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 three key pillars; food safety, care for the environment and animal welfare.

There are also many benefits for scheme participants to gain FQAS approval for their sheep flock.

These benefits include:

- Widening the marketplace for your lamb, as any lambs entering high value markets such as Great Britain are required to be assured.
- There is no extra initial or annual renewal cost if you are approved for sheep as well as beef.
- FQAS is a recognised equivalent scheme to Red Tractor.
- Keeping your options open for marketing lambs in relation to the fluctuation of the euro. If the euro is weak, as it has been for a large proportion of this year, then lambs will fetch a higher price, when slaughtered in NI, instead of ROI.
- We have a dedicated Farm Liaison Service and FQAS Helpline
- Gives consumers assurances about the source of the product and the standards under which the animals have been raised
- Competitive membership fees in comparison with other schemes in GB

Should you wish to apply for FQAS, increase your scope to cover sheep, or require any FQAS documentation such as lamb verification forms, please call the FQAS Helpline on 028 9263 3024.

FQAS Farmer of the Year

The very popular **Farming Life & Danske Bank Awards** were held in the Ramada Hotel, Belfast in October. Once again, LMC were delighted to sponsor the **FQAS Farmer of the Year Award**.

This is the third year in succession that LMC have sponsored this award, and feel that it presents an excellent opportunity to recognise farming excellence and adherence to the FQAS Product Standard & Rules, throughout the FQAS membership. FQAS Farmer of the Year 2014 was awarded to Nigel Matchett from Birches, Portadown who joined the scheme in 1997 and has since maintained a high level of compliance with the FQAS Standard & Rules and has demonstrated how he stands out from his competitors. He is a keen supporter of FQAS and has highlighted the merits of being a member of FQAS.

Victor Patterson from Ballygawley was awarded "Highly Commended" in this category and deserves special mention for his exemplary dedication to FQAS and enthusiasm for agriculture.

LMC wish to congratulate all beef and lamb producers who were nominated for this award and wish to thank Farming Life and Danske Bank for the opportunity to be involved in this successful showcase event.



FQAS Farmer of the Year Nigel Matchett (2nd from left) pictured with Ian Stevenson (LMC CEO), James Mimmagh (LMC FQAS Manager) and Colin Smith (LMC Industry Development Manager)

FQAS Embarking on Butcher Audits

As of 1st November 2014 FQAS has reintroduced butchers' audits. This is an audit of a randomly selected group of butchers, to check that these food businesses are adhering to the relevant FQAS butcher's standard.

An independent company will conduct these audits on behalf of the Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC). The aim of these audits is to provide a traceability check on these businesses to ensure the

FQAS logo is being used correctly and that the beef and lamb which the butcher is presenting for sale as FQAS assured is such.

It is not LMC's intention to duplicate any checks or audits which food businesses are already subject to and it is our sole intention to focus on traceability and correct use of the logo. The audits will take a short time and the roll out of these audits is to further enhance the

FQAS butcher's scheme in providing assurances to consumers about the quality and traceability of the beef and lamb which they purchase. Our new website www.beefandlambni.com has a section on FQAS butchers and directs consumers to their nearest licensed butcher.

If you are a butcher who is not currently a member of FQAS and would like to be, please call FQAS on 028 9263 3000.

New Standard & Rules have come into Effect

FQAS participants are reminded that the new FQAS Standard & Rules (April 2014) have now solely come into effect as of 1st October 2014. This new Standard & Rules is a single combined book encompassing the FQAS Rules and FQAS Standard into a single document and it can be distinguished from the previous version by its distinctive blue and green colour.

The aim of this new document is to clarify wording of certain codes and to make the document more user-friendly. Some ways in which this was done was to move the majority of signatures to page 95 and to provide helpful icons to demonstrate action required for certain codes. The substantial changes were outlined in the Spring/Summer 2014 FQAS Newsletter which is available on our website at www.lmcni.com/fs/doc/publications/14-04-25-fqas-newsletter-final.pdf

One of the most significant changes from 1st October was the requirement of FQAS participants to source manufactured feed from AIC Universal Feed Assurance Scheme (UFAS) approved feed compounders who have signed up to Queen's University of Belfast (QUB) Global Institute of Food Security best practice guidelines as outlined in the Food Fortress Scheme or a scheme that has an agreed equivalent standard.

Please consult www.nigta.co.uk for further information. Please also refer to Code 3.15 in the FQAS Standard & Rules (April 2014).

Recording of disposal of Veterinary Medicines was also required from the 1st October. This applies to the estimated total quantity of the liquid contained in the used medicine

Home Mixing Requirement

FQAS participants are reminded that they are required, in accordance with Code 3.10, to be registered or approved by DARD as required by legislation, if they are 'Home Mixing'. For example, should a scheme participant be mixing a bought-in compound feed containing vitamins and minerals, e.g. beef nuts, with another feed ingredient, then they are subject to registration with DARD. The same applies if a scheme participant is adding vitamins and minerals to the mixing process.

Approval as a 'Home Mixer' with DARD is required if medicated feed or medication is included in the mixing process.

Scheme participants needing further information on 'Home Mixing' can call FQAS on 028 9263 3000 or should they wish to download the application form, they can do so by visiting the DARD website at <http://www.dardni.gov.uk/index/farming/animal-feed-primary-production-hygiene/animal-feed.htm> or the LMC website at <https://www.lmcni.com/fqas/documentation>

Further information on this or to request a copy of the form posted out can be done by calling Gerard Higgins at DARD on 028 9076 5379.

For a digital version of the FQAS Standard & Rules visit www.lmcni.com/fs/doc/FQAS_Standard_and_Rules_April_2014.pdf



container at the time of disposal. A section is added to the new Veterinary Medicine Record (VMR) books to reflect this requirement, but a hand written declaration in the current VMR book outlining date of disposal, estimated total quantity disposed and method and place of disposal is acceptable if you are using a current VMR book. Please consult the separate article contained in this Newsletter for further information on this requirement.

Should you require a FQAS Standard & Rules book, please call the FQAS Helpline on 028 9263 3024.

