

Cross-Compliance Verifiable Standards Summary

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Department of
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AN ROINN
**Talmhaíochta agus
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MÄNNYSTRIE O
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Introduction

1. This booklet provides a summary of the Northern Ireland Cross-Compliance requirements. It is effective from 1 January 2010 and replaces any previous Cross-Compliance guidance issued by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD). A more detailed document that provides further information on the Northern Ireland Cross-Compliance requirements is available at www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance or by contacting the Department on (028) 9052 5549.

Background

2. The Cross-Compliance conditions are designed to promote sustainable agricultural practices in Europe and reflect a number of environmental and other objectives. They are good farm management practices, and encourage responsible stewardship of the land.
3. All European Union Member States have to implement Cross-Compliance. The majority of Cross-Compliance requirements reinforce existing legislation, or form part of existing codes of good practice, and farmers should therefore already be meeting most, if not all of these.
4. All farmers claiming under the following schemes must meet the Northern Ireland Cross-Compliance conditions.
 - Single Payment Scheme;
 - Less Favoured Area Compensatory Allowances Scheme;
 - Aid for Energy Crops;
 - Protein Crop Premium;
 - Organic Farming Scheme;
 - NI Countryside Management Scheme;
 - Woodland Grant Scheme (agreements signed after 1/1/07);
 - Farm Woodland Premium Scheme (agreements signed after 1/1/07);
 - Sustainable Forest Operation Grant Scheme (agreements signed after 1/1/07).

Cross-Compliance Requirements

5. There are two aspects to Cross-Compliance. The first of these is compliance with specific articles contained within 18 European regulatory requirements covering the environment, food safety, animal and plant health and animal welfare. These are known as the **Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs)**.
6. The second aspect of Cross-Compliance is a requirement that all those in receipt of payments in respect of the schemes listed in paragraph 4 maintain all their land in **Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC)**. The Northern Ireland GAEC Measures have been developed from a framework set out by the European Commission to address the following issues:
 - **Soil erosion** – protection of soil;
 - **Soil organic matter** – maintenance of soil organic matter levels;
 - **Soil structure** – maintenance of soil structure;
 - **Minimum level of maintenance** – ensure a minimum level of maintenance and avoid the deterioration of habitats;
 - **Protection and management of water** – protect water against pollution and run-off, and manage the use of water.

7. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) has, as far as possible, used Good Farming Practice standards as a model for the development of GAEC in Northern Ireland.
8. This booklet sets out the requirements you must meet under each of the SMRs (Section 1). All of these requirements are already legally binding on farmers. Member States have no discretion regarding the European laws that have to be applied as SMRs. The booklet also sets out the Northern Ireland GAEC requirements (Section 2). You must comply with the SMR and GAEC requirements as a condition of receipt of funding under the schemes listed in paragraph 4. A breach of these requirements may lead to a partial or complete withholding of payments in respect of these schemes.
9. **You should note that you are still bound by all other environmental and animal health and welfare laws.** You may still be prosecuted in the criminal courts for breaching the SMRs, if the breach is a criminal offence.

General Information

10. Cross-Compliance applies to all land within an agricultural business irrespective of whether it is used to activate payment entitlements. For permanently held land (either owned or under an agricultural tenancy) Cross-Compliance applies for the full 12 calendar months. Cross-Compliance requirements also apply to set-aside land, common land, shared grazing and land taken in conacre.
11. This booklet sets out the Cross-Compliance rules for Northern Ireland. The rules vary across England, Scotland, Wales and the Republic of Ireland. Where your holding crosses a border you may have to make different arrangements on each side of the border. You should obtain copies of all relevant guidance that applies to your farm/holding.

Section 1

Statutory Management Requirements

SMR 1. Conservation of Wild Birds

The aim of these requirements is to protect wild birds, their eggs and nests. They apply to all claimants. If you have land designated as a Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation or Area of Special Scientific Interest extra rules apply.

Verifiable Standards - All Land

- You must comply with the provisions of Articles 5, 7 and 8 of the Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds as implemented by the 1985 Wildlife Order and Habitats Regulations.

In summary these provisions protect all species of wild birds. They prohibit:

- deliberate killing;
- deliberate capture;
- deliberate destruction of nests and eggs;
- deliberate removal and keeping of eggs from the wild; and
- the deliberate disturbance of these birds particularly during the breeding season.

Some of these provisions may be relaxed under licence for some birds. Please contact a Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) Wildlife Officer for further details on 028 90569551.

Verifiable Standards - Areas within Natura 2000 Sites

If you have a Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) on your land, you will have been formally notified by the NIEA and will already be aware of the environmental obligations which exist on your land.

- You must not carry out operations or activities specified in the Area of Special Scientific Interest notification that are likely to damage the interests of the Natura 2000 site and for which NIEA have neither been notified nor consented.
- You must comply with the terms of management agreements.

For further information on the conservation of wild birds please contact NIEA on 028 90569516 or visit their website www.ni-environment.gov.uk

SMR 2. Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna

The aim of these requirements is to protect species of flora and fauna. They apply to all claimants. If you have land designated as a Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation or Area of Special Scientific Interest extra rules apply.

Verifiable Standards - All Land

- You must not destroy, cut, uproot, sell or exchange European protected plant species.

Verifiable Standards - Areas within Natura 2000 Sites

If you have a Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) on your land, you will have been formally notified by NIEA and will already be aware of the environmental obligations which exist on your land.

- You must not carry out operations or activities specified in the Area of Special Scientific Interest notification that are likely to damage the interests of the Natura 2000 site and for which NIEA have neither been notified nor consented.
- You must comply with terms of management agreements.

For further information on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna please contact NIEA on 028 90569516 or visit their website www.ni-environment.gov.uk

SMR 3. Protection of Groundwater against Pollution

The aim of these requirements is to protect groundwater by controlling the discharge or disposal of potentially harmful and polluting materials. They apply to you if you handle, store or dispose of listed substances such as sheep dip, pesticides, ammonia and biocides.

Verifiable Standards

- If you are disposing of hazardous substances to land you must obtain and meet the conditions of a Groundwater Authorisation.
- You must produce on request satisfactory records, as detailed in the Groundwater Authorisation.
- There must be no evidence of the pollution of groundwater by hazardous substances or non-hazardous pollutants.
- You must ensure the proper siting, operation and maintenance of a sheep dipper (as outlined in the Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Prevention of Pollution of Water, Air and Soil).
- You must comply with any Notice served by NIEA under the Groundwater Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009.

For further information on the protection of groundwater against pollution please contact NIEA on 028 92633445 or visit their website www.ni-environment.gov.uk

SMR 4. Protection of the Environment when Sewage and Septic Tank Sludge is used in Agriculture

The aim of these requirements is to ensure that when sewage sludge is used in agriculture there is no risk to human, animal or plant health and no harmful effects on soil. They apply to you if you use sewage sludge on your land.

Verifiable Standards

- Sewage sludge must not be applied to land unless it has been tested in accordance with the Regulations (normally tested by the sludge producer).
- Sewage sludge must not be applied to land unless the soil to which it is to be applied has been tested in accordance with the Regulations (normally tested by the sludge producer).
- The average annual rate of addition to land by means of sewage sludge application of any of the elements listed in the sludge table of the Regulations must not exceed the limit specified in the table.
- The concentration in the soil of any of the elements listed in the soil table of the Regulations must not exceed the limit specified in the table either at the time of using sewage sludge or as a result of applying it.
- Sewage sludge must not be applied if the soil pH is below pH5.
- Sewage sludge must be used in a way that takes account of the nutrient needs of plants.
- Sewage sludge must be used in a way that does not impair soil quality.
- Sewage sludge must be used in a way that does not impair surface water quality.
- Sewage sludge must be used in a way that does not impair groundwater quality.
- No fruit or vegetable crops, other than fruit trees, must be growing in the soil or being harvested at the time of sewage sludge application.
- Grazing of animals or harvesting of forage crops must not occur within three weeks from the date of application of sewage or septic tank sludge.
- Fruit and vegetable crops, which are grown in direct contact with the soil and eaten raw, must not be harvested within ten months from the date of application of sewage or septic tank sludge.
- Where untreated sewage or septic tank sludge has been applied without injection into the soil, it must be incorporated into the soil as soon as practicable.
- If sewage sludge is not applied by, or on behalf of, the sludge producer the controller of the land must provide the sludge producer with details as to the date of application, quantity of the sewage sludge used, address and area of the agricultural unit to which it was applied, and the name and address of the sludge supplier, if different from the sludge producer.

If the controller of the land is a sewage sludge producer the following will also apply:

- Sewage sludge must be analysed, before application, in accordance with Schedule 1 of the Regulations. The sewage sludge producer should carry out this analysis at least every six months.
- The soil within the application area must be analysed by the sewage sludge producer to determine the pH and metal concentrations, in accordance with Schedule 2 of the Regulations.

For further information on the protection of the environment when sewage and septic tank sludge is used in agriculture please contact NIEA on 028 92633445 or visit their website www.ni-environment.gov.uk

SMR 5. Protection of Water against Nitrate Pollution

The aim of these requirements is to reduce the pollution of waters caused by nitrates from agricultural sources and to prevent such pollution occurring in the future. They apply to all claimants.

Verifiable Standards

Compliance with Nitrates Action Programme (NAP) measures including:

- Nitrogen (N) fertiliser, chemical and organic (including dirty water), must not be allowed to directly or indirectly enter a waterway or water contained in underground strata.
- N fertiliser, chemical and organic (with the exception of farmyard manure and dirty water), must not be applied to land during the closed spreading periods. There are additional land management requirements on derogated farms.
- All N fertilisers, chemical and organic, must be applied in accordance with the land application restrictions as specified in the Action Programme.
- N fertiliser application must not exceed crop requirement. Additional action is required on derogated farms.
- Nitrogen from livestock manure on non-derogated farms must not exceed 170kg N/ha/yr and Nitrogen from grazing livestock manure on derogated farms must not exceed 250kg N/ha/yr. Additional action is required on derogated farms.
- All livestock manures must be stored in accordance with the livestock manure storage requirements as specified in the Nitrates Action Programme Regulations.
- All farms must carry out crop and soil management to minimise soil erosion and nutrient run-off. Additional action is required on derogated farms.
- Adequate farm records must be kept and made available for inspection, upon request, covering a minimum period of five years or from the operational date of the NAP Regulations (1 January 2007) designation, whichever is lesser, covering a range of information including cropping, livestock numbers, and the use of nitrogen fertilisers and organic manures. Additional action is required on derogated farms.
- Derogated farms must not exceed a surplus of 10kg phosphorus per hectare per year on a derogated holding.
- You must comply with the terms of a notice served under the NAP Regulations.

For further information on the protection of water against nitrate pollution please contact NIEA on 028 92623188 or visit their website www.ni-environment.gov.uk

SMR 6. Pig Identification and Registration

The aim of these requirements is to reduce the risk of pig disease spreading through controlling movements and improving traceability. They apply to you if you keep pigs.

Verifiable Standards

Registration and Identification

You must

- register your details with DARD and obtain a pig holding number, and notify any change of your details as soon as possible.
- by 6 months of age, or before leaving the holding if sooner, correctly identify your pigs with an approved ear tag, tattoo or slapmark in one of the following ways:
 - for breeding pigs (over 6 months of age) with a holding number and an individual number of up to 4 digits, or
 - for other pigs (under 6 months of age) a holding number only (however, finished pigs going to slaughter may be identified with a four-digit curer number).

You must not

- alter, remove, or duplicate any holding number or individual number marked on a pig.

On-farm records

You must

- maintain a record of the number of pigs on your holding.
- make a record of all movements of pigs on and off your holding within 48 hours of the movement. These should specify:
 - name and address of the person keeping the record;
 - date of the movement;
 - identification marks;
 - number of pigs;
 - holding from which the pigs moved, and
 - holding to which the pigs moved.
- ensure that these on-farm records are up to date, are kept for at least 3 years, and are shown to an inspector on demand.
- ensure that movement documents, signed by the keeper, accompany pigs during movements. These should specify:
 - full names, addresses and herd numbers, of both the holding of origin and destination of the pigs;
 - date of the movement;
 - number of pigs moved;
 - identification mark of the pigs, and
 - age of the pigs.

- where pigs are moved off your holding, send a copy of the movement document to DARD as soon as possible and retain a copy for at least 1 year.
- where pigs have arrived on your holding, retain a copy of the movement document for at least 1 year.

For further information on pig identification and registration please contact DARD Veterinary Service on 0845 3044500 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 7. Cattle Identification and Registration

The aim of these requirements is to maintain a system for the identification and registration of cattle to facilitate their traceability, in particular in the event of a disease outbreak. They apply to you if you keep cattle.

Verifiable Standards

Tagging

You must

- double tag with DARD approved ear tags within the following timescales:
 - all calves born on your holding - within 20 days of birth or before the animal leaves your holding, whichever is the earlier;
 - all cattle imported from outside the EU - within 20 days of release from import checks or before the animal leaves your holding, whichever is the earlier.
- replace lost or illegible ear tags within 28 days of discovering the loss or before the animal leaves your holding, whichever is the earlier (where both tags have been lost and two new tags are applied, you must prove the identity of the animal).

You must not

- remove or replace ear tags without permission from DARD.
- alter or deface an ear tag.

Notification of births, movements and deaths

You must

- notify all births of cattle on your holding to DARD no later than 27 days after the birth.
- notify DARD of any movements of cattle onto and off your holding within 7 days of the movement.
- notify DARD of any cattle deaths on your holding within 7 days.
- notify DARD of all cattle imported from outside the EU within 15 days of retagging the animal.

On-farm records (herd register)

You must

- keep an up-to-date herd register for your holding in a format approved by DARD, which includes where appropriate the following details for each animal:
 - ear tag number;
 - if appropriate, any retag number and the date of retagging, or the date a replacement tag is applied;
 - colour, breed, and sex;

- date of birth;
 - if the calf was born on your holding, the dam's ear tag number;
 - date of movements on and off your holding;
 - details of where the animal has moved to or from;
 - date of death.
- complete the herd register within the following timescales:
 - movements – 36 hours of it taking place;
 - birth of a dairy calf – 7 days;
 - birth of any other calf – 30 days;
 - a death – 7 days;
 - ear tag replacement – 36 hours of the replacement.
 - keep the herd register for 10 years from the date of the last entry and make it available on request.

For further information on cattle identification and registration please contact DARD Veterinary Service on 0845 3044500 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 8. Sheep and Goat Identification and Registration

The aim of these requirements is to maintain a system for the identification and registration of sheep and goats to facilitate their traceability, in particular in the event of a disease outbreak. They apply to you if you keep sheep or goats.

Verifiable Standards

Tagging

You must

- identify all sheep and goats with the correct means of identification within 9 months of birth or before they leave the holding of birth, whichever is sooner.
- double-tag sheep and goats with two identical identification tags, including one electronic device, for third country or intra-community trade.
- replace any lost or illegible means of identification within 28 days of noticing their loss or illegibility or before the animal leaves the holding – whichever is the earlier.

You must not

- remove or replace ear tags without permission from DARD, except when replacing lost or illegible tags.
- alter or deface any means of identification attached to an animal.

Record keeping

You must

- keep up-to-date farm records in a format approved by DARD with the required information, including:
 - an annual inventory of the animals kept on a date between 1 and 5 December;
 - details of the movement of sheep and goats on and off your holding, including:
 - the date of the movement;
 - the number of animals moved;
 - the destination or origin of animals;
 - the transportation details for animals leaving your holding;
 - information on any replacement means of identification;
 - for animals born after 31 December 2009:
 - the identification code of the animals;
 - the year of birth and date of identification of animals born on your holding;
 - the month and year of death of animals on your holding.
- ensure that your farm records are available for inspection on demand.

For further information on sheep and goat identification and registration please contact DARD Veterinary Service on 0845 3044500 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 9. Placing of Plant Protection Products on the Market

The aim of these requirements is to ensure that plant protection products are used correctly and to minimize their risk to humans, animals and the environment. They apply to you if these products are used on your land.

Verifiable Standards

- You must only use approved plant protection products.
- Plant protection products must be used in compliance with the conditions attached to the approval.
- You must follow the principles of good plant protection practice, as set out in the Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products.
- You must consider alternatives to the use of plant protection products, and the principles of integrated control.

For further information on placing of plant protection products on the market please contact Health and Safety Executive on telephone number 0800 0320121 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 10. Food and Feed Law

The aim of these requirements is to ensure the safe production of food for human consumption and food or feed that is fed to food producing animals. They apply to you if you are a food or feed producer, rearing animals for food or producing products of animal origin (for example, eggs or milk).

Verifiable Standards

Food safety, withdrawal and recall

- You must not place food on the market if it is unsafe. Food is considered to be unsafe if it is either injurious to human health or unfit for human consumption.
- If you have reason to believe that you have supplied food that does not meet food safety requirements (it is either unsafe or injurious to health), and it has left your immediate control, then you must immediately initiate procedures to withdraw it from the market and inform the appropriate authorities. The appropriate authorities are Quality Assurance Branch within DARD and the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland.
- Where food may already have reached consumers, they must be informed of the reason for withdrawal. The food must be recalled from the market if there is no other way of achieving a sufficiently high level of health protection.
- Additionally, if you believe that food which you have supplied, or which is in your possession and you intend to sell, could be injurious to health, you must immediately inform the appropriate authorities. You must also inform the appropriate authorities of actions you have taken to prevent risks to the final consumer.

Feed safety, withdrawal and recall

- You must not place unsafe feed on the market or feed it to food-producing animals. Feed is deemed to be unsafe if it has an adverse effect on animal or human health or if it makes the food derived from food-producing animals unsafe for human consumption.
- If you have reason to believe that you have supplied feed that does not meet feed safety requirements, you must immediately initiate procedures to withdraw it from the market and immediately inform the appropriate authorities. The feed must be destroyed unless the appropriate authority is satisfied otherwise. The appropriate authorities are Quality Assurance Branch within DARD and the Food Standards Agency Northern Ireland.
- If your feed product is already with the user of the feed, then they must be informed of the reason for its withdrawal. The feed must be recalled from the market if there is no other way of achieving a sufficiently high level of health protection.

Traceability

- You must put in place systems and procedures related to the traceability of inputs to your farm. Inputs are food, feed, food-producing animals and any other substance intended/expected to be incorporated into feed. These systems must identify;
 - the name and address of your supplier;
 - the nature and quantity of the products that were supplied to you;
 - the date of delivery of these inputs to your farm.
- You must also put in place systems and procedures related to the traceability of your products when they leave the farm. These systems must identify;
 - the name and address of your customer;
 - the nature and quantity of the products that were supplied to that customer;
 - the date on which the products left the farm.
- It is for you to decide upon the system you use for storing information which could be computerised or comprise written records or receipts filed in order. However, it is stressed that the information must be complete, organised and understandable and must be in a readily available format, so that it can be produced when requested.

Hygiene of foodstuffs and feed hygiene

- You must store and handle waste and hazardous substances in a way that prevents contamination of food products or feed. Hazardous substances are any that have the potential to cause an adverse effect on health (human or animal).
- You must store feed correctly and away from chemicals or any other products prohibited for use as animal feed.
- You must store medicated feed and non-medicated feed which is intended for different categories or species of animals in a way that reduces the risk of it being fed to the wrong animals.
- You must also ensure that you handle non-medicated feed separately from medicated feed to prevent cross-contamination.
- You must take adequate measures, as appropriate, to prevent the introduction and spread of contagious diseases transmissible to humans through food. This includes the application of precautionary measures when introducing new animals and reporting suspected outbreaks of such diseases to the appropriate authority.
- If applicable, you must adhere to statutory testing (that is Brucellosis) before sale/removal of animals off farm.
- You must observe the testing frequency required in the legislation for Tuberculosis/Brucellosis or other diseases.
- If you use feed additives, veterinary medicinal products or biocides on your farm this must be done correctly. You must ensure that their dosage, application and use are as stated on the label or as prescribed. This includes ensuring that food you produce does not contain residues of pesticides or veterinary medicinal products that are higher than the permitted maximum residue level for the product or medicine used.

- If you are rearing animals, whether for food or for their products, you must only source and use feed from establishments that are registered and/or approved. This applies to manufactured feed and any substance or product intended to be used for oral feeding to animals. Examples of such products are compound feeds, pre-mixtures, additives and feed materials such as cereals and fodder. This also applies to co-products from the food and drink industry, for example, soya-bean meal, brewers' grains, wheat feed and bakery products.
- In addition to the information required for traceability, records of the following must be kept for the appropriate time if they are relevant to your business:
 - veterinary medicinal products, or other treatments, administered to your animals, the dates of the treatment and the withdrawal period;
 - the results of any analyses carried out on samples taken from food-producing animals or plants, or other samples taken for diagnostic purposes, that have importance for human and animal health;
 - any relevant reports on checks carried out on animals or products of animal origin;
 - use of plant protection products and biocides;
 - any use of genetically modified seeds (in feed production).

Dairy Hygiene Requirements (additional requirements for this sector)

The following additional hygiene requirements apply where you are a producer of raw milk (from any species):

- You must ensure that raw milk must come from animals that;
 - are in a good general state of health;
 - present no sign of disease that might result in the contamination of milk and, in particular, are not suffering from any infection of the genital tract with discharge, enteritis with diarrhoea and fever, or a recognisable inflammation of the udder;
 - do not have any udder wound likely to affect the milk;
 - are not within the prescribed withdrawal period following the administration of authorised products or substances;
 - have not been administered with any unauthorised substances or products.
- You must ensure that raw milk comes from animals belonging to herds/holdings which have disease-free status for Tuberculosis and Brucellosis.
- Where your herd/holding is not free from Tuberculosis or Brucellosis, you may sell milk from your non-reactor animals if:
 - you are selling to a wholesaler who will heat treat the milk before marketing it for human consumption; or
 - the raw milk is from sheep/goats and is intended to be made into cheese that has a maturation period of at least two months.
- Raw milk from any animal not complying with these requirements must not be placed on the market for human consumption.
- The isolation of animals that are infected, or suspected of being infected, with Tuberculosis and Brucellosis must be effective in order to avoid any adverse effect on other animals' milk.

- You must ensure that milking equipment and the premises where milk is stored, handled or cooled is located and constructed in a manner which limits the risk of contamination of milk.
- You must ensure that premises used for the storage of milk
 - are protected against vermin - including birds and birds' nests;
 - are adequately separated from premises where animals are housed; and
 - have suitable refrigeration equipment in order to meet the post-milking cooling requirements.
- Surfaces of equipment that come into contact with milk (for example, utensils, containers and tanks) must be easy to clean and, where necessary, disinfected. They must also be maintained in a sound condition. This requires the use of smooth, washable and non-toxic materials. After use, these surfaces must be cleaned and, where necessary, disinfected.
- Milking must be carried out hygienically, ensuring in particular that:
 - before milking starts, the teats, udder and adjacent parts are clean;
 - you satisfactorily identify animals undergoing any medicinal treatment which is likely to transfer residues to milk;
 - milk from such animals, or any animals that are still within the withdrawal period, is not used for human consumption.
- Immediately after milking, you must ensure that milk is held in a clean place designed and equipped to avoid contamination.
- The milk must be cooled immediately to not more than 8°C if it is collected daily or not more than 6°C if it is not collected daily. You do not need to meet these temperature requirements for cooling if the milk is processed within two hours of milking, or a higher temperature is necessary for technological reasons related to the manufacture of certain dairy products. In such cases, the appropriate authority must have previously authorised the use of a higher temperature.

Egg Hygiene Requirements (additional requirements for this sector)

The following additional hygiene requirements apply if you are an egg producer. These apply to all eggs in shell that are produced by farmed birds.

- While they are on your premises, you must keep eggs clean and dry, free from extraneous odour, effectively protected from shocks and out of direct sunshine.

For further information on food and feed hygiene for farmers and growers, please contact DARD Quality Assurance Branch on 028 90525001 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 11. Restrictions on the use of Substances having Hormonal or Thyrostatic Action and Beta-agonists in farm animals

The aim of these requirements is to prohibit the illegal use in stock farming of substances that have a hormonal or thyrostatic action and beta-agonists, and to prevent the residues that these substances leave in meat and other foodstuffs from entering the human or animal food chain. They apply to you if you keep farmed animals.

Verifiable Standards

You must not

- Give food producing animals restricted substances**, unless given in line with any permitted exceptions.
- Have substances on your farm:
 - which contain oestradiol 17, or its ester like derivatives;
 - which contain beta-agonists to induce tocolysis in cows when calving;
 - with a hormonal or thyrostatic action, unless they have been prescribed by your veterinary surgeon.
- Have food producing animals on your farm to which have been administered any restricted substances, unless given in line with any permitted exceptions.
- Send animals for slaughter to which have been administered any restricted substance, unless given in line with any permitted exceptions.
- Sell meat, or any other animal product, derived from an animal to which any restricted substance has been administered, unless given in line with any permitted exceptions.

You must

- Observe the relevant withdrawal period if your food producing animals have been given any of the restricted substances in line with the permitted exceptions.
- Make veterinary medicinal records relating to restricted substances available to the competent authority on request.

** “restricted substances” means, thyrostatic substances, stilbenes, stilbene derivatives, their salts and esters, oestradiol 17 β and its ester like derivatives and substances having oestrogenic, androgenic or gestagenic action and beta-agonists.

For further information on the use of substances having hormonal or thyrostatic action and beta-agonists in farm animals you should contact your Private Veterinary Practitioner. For information on the proper keeping of records relating to veterinary medicines visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 12. Prevention, Control and Eradication of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE)

The aim of these requirements is to minimize the risk posed to human and animal health by certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). They apply to you if you keep farmed animals.

Verifiable Standards

You must:

- Immediately notify the Divisional Veterinary Officer of any animal suspected of being infected by a TSE.
- On notification of a TSE suspect or confirmed case, fully comply with movement restrictions, including any order to slaughter and destroy the animal(s), or any other notices served by an inspector imposing measures concerning that animal or other animals under the TSE Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2008.
- Not feed to ruminants, any animal protein or any feedstuff, which contains animal protein, except the following (subject to required sourcing and processing):
 - milk, milk-based products and colostrum;
 - eggs and egg products;
 - gelatine from non-ruminants;
 - hydrolysed proteins derived from non-ruminants or from ruminant hides and skins.
- Not feed products containing the following prohibited proteins to any farmed animals (ruminants or non ruminants), or mix prohibited proteins with feedstuffs:
 - processed animal protein (includes mammalian meat and bonemeal, poultry meal, feather meal);
 - gelatine from ruminants.
- Not use the following restricted proteins (i.e proteins which can be fed only to non-ruminants), for on-farm production of feed for non-ruminants unless they are authorised by DARD to do so (applies whether ruminants are present or not):
 - fishmeal;
 - blood products;
 - blood meal, only where fed to farmed fish;
 - dicalcium phosphate and tricalcium phosphate of animal origin, (mineral derived versions are permitted for all livestock and are most commonly used - feed labels not specifying 'animal origin' can be taken to be mineral).
- Not use feed products containing restricted proteins on premises where ruminants are present unless they have registered with DARD as doing so. The registration referred to in this point requires farmers to have adequate on-farm measures, including storage, and feeding arrangements to ensure that feed containing restricted proteins are not fed to ruminants and are kept adequately separated from ruminant feed to prevent contamination.

Note: The authorisation and registration requirement referred to is followed by DARD (QAB) inspection which will confirm permission to use restricted proteins.

- Not export from the UK any bovine animal born or reared in the UK or imported into the UK before 1 August 1996.
- Not place on the market any product consisting of or incorporating any material derived from a bovine animal born or reared in the UK or imported into the UK before 1 August 1996 except for milk or hides of bovine animals for leather production.
- Not place on the market or export progeny which were born to BSE positive animals during the 2 year period preceding or the period which followed clinical onset of the disease in the BSE positive animal.
- Not place on the market the semen, ova or embryos of TSE suspect or infected cattle, sheep and goats without complying with documentation requirements and restrictions applying to sale or export of such products.

For further information on the prevention, control and eradication of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies please contact DARD Veterinary Service on 0845 3044500 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 13. Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease

The aim of these requirements is to control and eradicate Foot-and-Mouth Disease. They apply to you if you keep livestock of a susceptible species.

Verifiable Standards

- The presence or absence of Foot-and-Mouth Disease.

Verification will depend on notification in the event of suspicion of disease or on confirmation of the presence of disease by laboratory testing. Any person who suspects or knows that an animal or carcase is infected with Foot-and-Mouth Disease must notify DARD 'with all practicable speed'.

For further information on the control of foot-and-mouth disease please contact DARD Veterinary Service on 0845 3044500 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 14. Control of Specified Animal Diseases

The aim of these requirements is to control and eradicate the animal diseases listed below. They apply to you if you keep livestock of a susceptible species.

Verifiable Standards

- The presence or absence of a specified disease.

Verification will depend on notification in the event of suspicion of disease or on confirmation of the presence of disease by laboratory testing. Any person who suspects or knows that an animal or carcase is infected with any of the following diseases must notify DARD 'with all practicable speed'. Rinderpest, peste des petits ruminants, swine vesicular disease, epizootic haemorrhagic disease of deer, sheep and goat pox, vesicular stomatitis, lumpy skin disease and rift valley fever.

For further information on the control of the above diseases please contact DARD Veterinary Service on 0845 3044500 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 15. Specific Provisions for the Control and Eradication of Bluetongue

The aim of these requirements is to control and eradicate bluetongue. They apply to you if you keep livestock of a susceptible species.

Verifiable Standards

- The presence or absence of Bluetongue.

Verification will depend on notification in the event of suspicion of disease or on confirmation of the presence of disease by laboratory testing. Any person who suspects or knows that an animal or carcase is infected with Bluetongue must notify DARD 'with all practicable speed'.

For further information on the control and eradication of Bluetongue please contact DARD Veterinary Service on 0845 3044500 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 16. Minimum Standards for the Protection of Calves

The aim of these requirements is to protect the welfare of calves by setting minimum standards for their care and husbandry. If you keep calves, they apply to you in addition to the requirements for the welfare of farmed animals (SMR 18).

Verifiable Standards

Inspection

- You must inspect all housed calves at least twice a day.
- If you keep calves outside, you must inspect them at least once a day to check that they are in a good state of well-being.

Freedom of Movement

- Each of your calves must be able to stand up, turn around, lie down, rest and groom itself without difficulty.
- You must not tether your calves. The only exception to this requirement is that you may tether group-housed calves, for up to one hour, when you are feeding them milk or milk substitute.
- Tethers must not cause pain or injury to your calves. You must regularly inspect the tethers and adjust them if necessary to make sure they are a comfortable fit. Each tether must avoid the risk of strangulation, pain or injury and allow your calf to lie down, rest, stand up and groom itself without difficulty.
- You must not muzzle your calves.

Accommodation, Environment and Equipment

- You must not keep a calf in an individual stall or pen after the age of eight weeks unless a veterinary practitioner says that its health or behaviour means it needs to be isolated to receive treatment. If necessary, you must isolate sick or injured calves in suitable accommodation with dry comfortable bedding.
- The width of any individual stall or pen for your calf must be at least equal to the height of the calf at the withers, measured in the standing position. The length must be at least equal to the body length of your calf - measured from the tip of the nose to the rear of the pin bone - multiplied by 1.1.
- Individual stalls or pens for your calves (except for those isolating sick animals) must have perforated walls which allow your calves to have direct visual and physical contact with each other. Open fronted pens do not meet this description.
- If you keep calves in groups, the unobstructed space you must allow for each calf must be:
 - at least 1.5 square metres for each calf with a liveweight of less than 150 kilograms (kg);
 - at least two square metres for each calf with a liveweight of 150kg or more but less than 200kg; and

- at least three square metres for each calf with a liveweight of 200kg or more.
- If you keep your calves in a building, the floors must be:
 - smooth but not slippery so as to prevent injury to the calves;
 - designed so they do not cause injury or suffering to calves standing or lying on them;
 - suitable for the size and weight of the calves; and
 - rigid, even and stable.
- You must keep all housed calves (including those you keep in hutches or temporary structures) on, or at all times give them access to, a lying area. This area must be clean, comfortable, well-drained and well-maintained with appropriate dry bedding. It must not affect the calves in any negative way.
- If you keep your calves in an artificially lit building, you must provide artificial lighting for a period which is at least equal to the period of natural light normally available between 9.00am and 5.00pm.
- You must properly clean and disinfect housing, stalls, pens, equipment and utensils used for your calves to prevent cross-infection and the build-up of disease-carrying organisms. You must remove dung, urine and left-over food as often as necessary to reduce smells (as far as possible) and to avoid attracting flies or rodents.

Feed, Water and Other Substances

- You must feed all weaned calves at least twice a day.
- If you keep your calves housed in a group and they do not have continuous access to feed, or are not fed by an automatic-feeding system, you must make sure each calf has access to food at the same time as the others in the feeding group.
- As well as the general requirements for providing drinking water in SMR 18, you must give your calves fresh drinking water at all times in hot weather conditions or when they are ill.
- You must give all calves food which contains enough iron to make sure they have a blood haemoglobin level of at least 4.5mmol/litre.
- You must provide a minimum daily ration of fibrous food for each calf over two weeks old. You must then raise the quantity in line with the growth of your calf at least 100g at two weeks old to at least 250g at 20 weeks old.
- You must make sure that each calf receives bovine colostrum as soon as possible after it is born. This must be within the first six hours of life.

For further information on the minimum standards for the protection of calves please contact DARD Veterinary Service on 0845 3044500 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 17. Minimum Standards for the Protection of Pigs

The aim of these requirements is to protect the welfare of pigs by setting minimum standards for their care and husbandry. If you keep pigs, they apply to you in addition to the requirements for the welfare of all farmed animals (SMR 18).

Verifiable Standards

Freedom of Movement

- Your pigs must be free to turn round without difficulty at all times, including while tethered, where this is allowed. To meet this requirement, the minimum sizes for stalls are set out in the accommodation section below.
- You can only tether pigs for veterinary purposes. You must not tether them at any other time.
- Tethers must not cause pain or injury to your pigs. You must regularly inspect the tethers and adjust them if necessary to make sure they are a comfortable fit. Each tether must avoid the risk of strangulation, pain or injury and allow your pig to lie down, rest, stand up and groom itself without difficulty.

Accommodation, Environment and Equipment

- You must make sure the accommodation for your pigs allows each pig to:
 - stand up, lie down and rest without difficulty;
 - have a clean, comfortable and adequately drained place in which it can rest (including making sure that any bedding is clean, dry and not harmful to the pigs);
 - see other pigs (unless the pig is isolated for farrowing or for veterinary reasons);
 - maintain a comfortable temperature. This means that you cannot keep them in the high temperature/high humidity environment that is known as the 'sweat box system'; and
 - have enough space to allow all the pigs to lie down at the same time.
- For piglets, you must, if it is necessary to meet the requirements above, provide them with a source of heat and a dry and comfortable lying area away from the sow where all of them can rest at the same time.
- Stalls or pens used for holding individual pigs must allow them to turn around at all times. They must have the following measurements:
 - the inside area must be at least the square of the length of the pig;
 - no side inside the stall must be less than 75% of the length of the pig. The length of a pig is measured from the tip of its snout to the base of its tail while it is standing with its back straight.

The paragraph above does not apply under the following circumstances:

- to a female pig for the period between seven days before the predicted day of her farrowing and the day on which her piglets are weaned (including any piglets fostered by her);
- keeping a pig in a stall or pen for veterinary purposes;
- keeping a pig in a stall or pen for the purposes of servicing, artificial insemination or collecting semen;
- keeping a pig in a stall or pen while it is fed;

- keeping a pig in a stall or pen for the purposes of marking, washing or weighing it;
 - keeping a pig in a stall or pen while its accommodation is being cleaned;
 - keeping a pig in a stall or pen while it is waiting to be loaded for transportation.
- The period during which you keep the pig in this way must not be longer than needed for that purpose. The requirements for a minimum size of stall or pen also do not apply if these refer to a stall or pen that the pig can enter or leave when it wants. In this case, the stall must be entered from another stall or pen where the pig is normally kept and which does comply with the minimum standards.
- If you keep your pigs in a building, the floors must be:
 - smooth but not slippery so you prevent injuries to the pigs;
 - built and maintained so they do not injure the pigs standing or lying on them or cause them suffering;
 - suitable for the size and weight of the pigs; and
 - rigid, even and stable (where no litter is provided).
 - If you use concrete slatted floors when keeping pigs in groups, the following measurements apply:

	Maximum width of the openings (millimetres)	Minimum width of slats (millimetres)
Piglets	11	50
Weaners	14	50
Rearing pigs	18	80
Gilts after service and sows	20	80

The flooring requirement applies to you only if your holding was newly built, rebuilt or brought into use for the first time after 1 January 2003. It will apply to all holdings from 1 January 2013.

- As well as the general requirements in SMR 18, if you keep pigs in an artificially lit building, you must provide lighting of at least 40 lux for at least eight hours each day.
- You must not expose your pigs to constant or sudden noise. You must make sure that noise levels above 85 decibels are avoided in the part of any building where you keep your pigs.
- To enable proper investigation and manipulation activities, you must give all pigs permanent access to a sufficient quantity of material such as straw, hay, wood, sawdust, mushroom compost, peat or a mixture of such which does not affect their health in a negative way.
- If you keep weaners and rearing pigs together, you must take measures to prevent fighting which goes beyond normal behaviour. You must isolate, or keep separate from the group, pigs which show persistent aggression towards others or are victims of that aggression.

Feed, Water and Other Substances

- If you keep your pigs housed in a group and they do not have continuous access to feed, or are not fed by an automatic-feeding system, you must give each pig access to the food at the same time as the others in the feeding group. (Specific requirements for sows and gilts are set out on page 34).

Mutilations and Interventions

- You must not carry out any procedures on your pigs that result in damage to or loss of a sensitive part of the body or which change bone structure, except for reasons of treatment or diagnosis. There are some exceptions shown overleaf.
- The procedures which are allowed may only be carried out under hygienic conditions by:
 - a veterinary practitioner; or
 - a person who is legally allowed, has been trained in line with the appropriate laws and is experienced in carrying out the procedures.
- The procedures allowed are:
 - castration of male pigs - as long as the method used does not involve tearing tissue. If this is carried out after the pig is seven days old it must only be performed by a veterinary practitioner;
 - boars' tusks may be reduced in length where necessary to prevent injuries to other animals or for safety reasons;
 - nose ringing – but rings must not be put in animals kept continuously in indoor husbandry systems;
 - ear tagging or ear notching when carried out for identification purposes.
- The following two procedures must not be used routinely, but only if there is evidence that injuries to sows' teats or to other pigs' ears or tails have taken place:
 - evenly reducing the corner teeth of piglets by grinding or clipping. This must take place no later than seven days of age and must leave an intact smooth surface;
 - docking a part of the tail. If docking is carried out after the pig is seven days old, it must only be performed under anaesthetic by a veterinary practitioner and the pigs should receive prolonged pain relief for as long as necessary.
- Tooth reduction or tail docking must not be carried out unless you have already taken other measures to improve environmental conditions or management systems to prevent tail biting and other vices.

Specific Requirements for Boars

- You must place and build boar pens to allow the boars to turn round and to hear, see and smell other pigs. The pens must also contain clean resting areas and the lying area must be dry and comfortable.
- The minimum unobstructed floor area for an adult boar must be six square metres. However, when boar pens are also used for natural service, the floor area must be at least 10 square metres and must be free of any obstacles.

Specific Requirements for Sows and Gilts

- If necessary, you must treat pregnant gilts and sows against internal and external parasites.
- If they are placed in farrowing crates, you must thoroughly clean pregnant sows and gilts.
- In the week before the expected farrowing time, you must give sows and gilts enough suitable nesting material unless it is not technically practical because of the slurry system you use.
- During farrowing, an unobstructed area behind the sow or gilt must be available for the ease of natural or assisted farrowing.
- If you keep sows loose in farrowing pens, there must be some method of protecting the piglets, such as farrowing rails.
- In the week before the expected farrowing time and during farrowing, you may keep sows and gilts out of sight of other pigs.
- You must keep sows and gilts in groups except during the period between seven days before the predicted day of farrowing and the day on which the weaning of piglets (including any piglets fostered) is complete. The pen where you keep the group must have sides greater than 2.8 metres (m) in length, except when there are fewer than six in the group. In this case, the sides of the pen must be no less than 2.4m in length. On holdings of fewer than 10 sows, you may keep sows and gilts individually as long as their accommodation keeps to the general requirements for pig accommodation.
- The total unobstructed floor area available to each female pig after service, when you keep them in groups, must be at least 1.64 square metres for each gilt and 2.25 square metres for each sow. When you keep these animals in groups of fewer than six, you must increase the unobstructed floor area by 10%. When you keep these animals in groups of 40 or more, you can reduce the unobstructed floor area by 10%. A part of this - equal to at least 0.95 square metres for each gilt and at least 1.3 square metres for each sow - must be continuous solid floor. Up to 15% of this area may be for drainage openings.
- The requirements relating to the size of stalls and flooring area described in the above paragraphs apply to you only if your holding was newly built, rebuilt or brought into use for the first time after 1 January 2003. It will apply to all holdings from 1 January 2013.
- As well as the requirements of the paragraph entitled Feed, Water and Other Substances on page 33, you must feed sows and gilts using a system which means each pig can get enough food even when other pigs are competing for food.
- You must give all dry pregnant sows and gilts enough bulky or high-fibre food as well as high-energy food to satisfy their hunger and need to chew.

Specific Requirements for Piglets

- A part of the total floor where you keep the piglets must be large enough to allow the animals to rest together at the same time, and must be solid or covered with a mat, or be littered with straw or any other suitable material.
- If you use a farrowing crate, you must give the piglets enough space to be able to be suckled without difficulty.
- You must not wean piglets from the sow at an age of less than 28 days unless the welfare or health of the dam or piglets would otherwise be affected negatively. You may wean them up to seven days earlier if you move them into specialised housing which you empty and thoroughly clean and disinfect before you introduce a new group and which is separate from housing where you keep sows.

Specific Requirements for Weaners and Rearing Pigs

- The unobstructed floor area available to each weaner or rearing pig reared in a group must be at least:

Minimum unobstructed floor area (square metres)	Average weight of pigs in the group (kilograms)
0.15	10 or less
0.20	Greater than 10 but less than or equal to 20
0.30	Greater than 20 but less than or equal to 30
0.40	Greater than 30 but less than or equal to 50
0.55	Greater than 50 but less than or equal to 85
0.65	Greater than 85 but less than or equal to 110
1.00	Greater than 110

- You must place pigs in groups as soon as possible after weaning. You must keep them in stable groups with as little mixing as possible.
- If you have to mix pigs that are unfamiliar with one another, you should do this at as young an age as possible, preferably before or up to one week after weaning. When you mix pigs, you must give them enough opportunities to escape and hide from other pigs they are not familiar with.
- Tranquillising medication, used on pigs in order to help with mixing, must not be used unless there are exceptional conditions and only after you have consulted a veterinary practitioner.

For further information on the minimum standards for the protection of pigs please contact DARD Veterinary Service on 0845 3044500 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

SMR 18. Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes

The aim of these requirements is to protect the welfare of farmed animals by setting minimum standards for their care and husbandry. They apply to you if you keep any species for farming purposes.

Verifiable Standards

Staffing

- You must make sure that your animals are cared for by sufficient staff who have the appropriate ability, knowledge and professional skills.

Inspection

- You must inspect your animals thoroughly at least once a day to check that they are well if kept in husbandry systems where their welfare depends on frequent human attention. In systems other than this, you must inspect them at intervals which will avoid them suffering. You will find the specific requirements relating to calves in SMR 16.
- You must have enough lighting so that you can carry out a thorough inspection at any time. This lighting may be fixed or portable.
- If any of your animals appear ill or injured, you must care for them immediately. If they do not respond to this care, you must get veterinary advice as soon as possible. If necessary, you must isolate sick or injured animals in suitable accommodation with dry comfortable bedding.

Keeping Records

- You must keep a record of:
 - any medicinal treatment given to your animals; and
 - the number of deaths found when the animals are inspected.
- You must keep these records for at least three years under animal welfare laws (from the date on which the treatment was given, or the date of the relevant inspection for deaths). You must make the records available to any authorised person at an inspection or when otherwise asked for.

Veterinary medicine records that you currently keep for other purposes are acceptable for this requirement, providing they meet the minimal requirements set out by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD).

Freedom of Movement

- You must not restrict your animals' freedom of movement if this causes them unnecessary suffering or injury. You should take account of the species of animal, established experience and scientific knowledge. Where appropriate you should also note the requirements for calves (SMR 16) and pigs (SMR 17).
- If your animals are continuously or regularly tethered or confined, you must give them enough space to avoid unnecessary stress. You must also allow them to exhibit their normal behaviour in line with established experience and scientific knowledge. Where

appropriate you should also note the requirements relating to tethering - for calves (SMR 16) and pigs (SMR 17).

Accommodation, Environment and Equipment

- Materials used in building accommodation must not be harmful to your animals. This would include, for example, lead paint or excessively rusting metal. This particularly refers to the pens, cages, stalls and equipment which your animals may come into contact with.
- You must use materials that can be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.
- You must build and maintain accommodation so that there are no sharp edges or anything that sticks out and could injure your animals.
- You must keep air circulation, dust levels, temperature, relative air humidity and gas concentrations within limits which will not harm your animals.
- When you keep animals in buildings, you must not keep them in permanent darkness.
- You must provide enough artificial lighting if there is not enough natural light in a building to meet the animals' biological needs and normal behaviour. In this case, you must also give them an appropriate period of rest from artificial lighting.
- Where appropriate you should also note the requirements for calves (SMR 16) and pigs (SMR 17).
- You must, if necessary, give animals protection from adverse weather conditions, predators and risks to their health when not kept in buildings. At all times, they must have access to a well-drained lying area.
- If you have any automated or mechanical equipment that is essential for the health and wellbeing of your animals, you must inspect it at least once a day to check that there are no faults with it and that no parts of the equipment have become seriously worn. If you discover any faults or you find parts of the equipment that have become seriously worn, you must correct these immediately. If this is impossible, you must take appropriate steps to protect the health and wellbeing of your animals until you can get the fault rectified. These steps may include using other methods of feeding and watering and methods of providing and maintaining a satisfactory environment.
- If the health and wellbeing of your animals depends on an artificial ventilation system, you must have an appropriate back-up system which, if the main system fails, guarantees enough air renewal.
- You must thoroughly inspect the ventilation back-up system at least once every seven days and test each alarm system at least once every seven days to check that they work. If you find any faults (whether at inspection or at any other time), you must put them right immediately. If you have an audible alarm, you must respect the requirement relating to exposure of pigs to noise (SMR 17).

Feed, Water and Other Substances

- You must feed your animals a wholesome diet which is appropriate to their age and species. They must receive enough food to keep them healthy, meet their nutritional needs and promote a positive state of wellbeing.
- You must give all animals access to feed at intervals appropriate to their biological needs (and, in any case, at least once a day). This applies unless your vet has told you otherwise. Where appropriate you should also note the requirements for calves (SMR 16).
- You must give all animals either access to a suitable water supply and enough fresh drinking water each day or they must be able to get enough fluid in any other way.
- You must not give your animals food or liquid in a manner, or containing any substance, which may cause them unnecessary suffering or injury.
- You must design, build, place and maintain feeding and watering equipment so that you minimise any contamination of food and water and the harmful effects of competition between animals.
- You must not administer a substance which is harmful to your animals' health and welfare apart from those given on the advice of a veterinary practitioner for treatment or preventative reasons.

Mutilations and Interventions

- The general rule regarding mutilations and interventions is that you should not carry out such actions on your animals.
- However, some procedures may be justified because of the overall welfare benefit obtained through performing them. Where such an acceptable mutilation is carried out on livestock species, it must be done so with a local anaesthetic in accordance with United Kingdom law and by an appropriately trained person. Where United Kingdom law requires a veterinary practitioner to carry out a mutilation, it must not be done by anyone else.

Breeding Procedures

- You must not carry out natural or artificial breeding or breeding procedures which cause, or are likely to cause, suffering or injury to any of your animals (such as inappropriate mating with an immature or unsuitably sized female). This does not prevent you from using natural or artificial breeding procedures that are likely to cause minimal or momentary suffering or injury, or that might require interventions which would not cause lasting injury. You can continue using procedures that are currently allowed under existing law.
- You must not keep animals for farming purposes unless it can reasonably be expected, on the basis of the normal genetic and physical characteristics of their breed, that you can keep them without any negative effects on their health or welfare.

For further information on the minimum standards for the protection of animals kept for farming purposes please contact DARD Veterinary Service on 0845 3044500 or visit the DARD website www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance

Section 2

Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition Standards (GAEC)

GAEC 1. Soil Management

The aim of these requirements is to protect soil from erosion, maintain soil organic matter and protect soil structure. They apply to all farmed land.

Verifiable Standards

- You must protect soils from erosion and maintain soil structure by preventing land from being severely trampled or poached.
- You must comply with the Nitrates Action Programme (NAP) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 relating to land use management.
- After harvesting a crop of cereals (other than maize), oil seeds, grain legumes (for example, peas or beans), you must ensure that from harvest until 1st March in the following year one of the following conditions is met on that land at any time:
 - the stubble of the harvested crop remains in the land; or
 - the land is sown with a crop which will take up nitrogen; or
 - the land is left with a rough surface, ploughed or disced to encourage the infiltration of rain.
- *You will not be in breach of this requirement if you have prepared the land as a seedbed but are unable to sow the crop within 10 days (because to do so would result in a breach of the GAEC standard on waterlogged soil) or because severe weather conditions make this impracticable. In either case, the land must be sown as soon as practicable.*
- Residues of crops harvested late (after 1st November), such as maize and potatoes, must be left undisturbed until just before sowing the following spring.
- You must not carry out any cultivations if water is standing on the surface, or if the soil is waterlogged. Cultivations include any mechanical field operation, for example, harvesting, manure spreading, ploughing and discing.

Exceptions

Exceptions will be granted where one or more of the following applies:

- The soil is waterlogged only within five metres of a gateway or other access point and access is required to an area of land that is not waterlogged;
- The area is an established track to land that is not waterlogged;
- Mechanical operations are required to improve the drainage of the land;
- Mechanical operations are essential for the welfare of humans or animals;
- It is essential to harvest a crop of fresh vegetables and/or fruit to meet contractual deadlines, or where the quality of the produce would deteriorate if not lifted;
- It is necessary for the protection of animal welfare during periods of extreme weather conditions;
- DARD has granted a temporary exemption from this rule because of extreme weather conditions, in which case you will need to comply with any conditions that are attached including reinstatement requirements.

Further information on GAEC 1 can be obtained from www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance or by contacting DARD Countryside Management Branch on 0845 3044502.

Further information on the Nitrates Directive can be obtained from NIEA on telephone number – 028 92623188 or visit the NIEA website www.ni-environment.gov.uk

GAEC 2. Supplementary Feeding

The aim of these requirements is to protect soil from erosion and to protect semi-natural habitats, archaeological sites and water quality. They apply to all farmed land.

Verifiable Standards

- Supplementary feeding sites / sacrifice areas are not permitted on:
 - semi-natural habitats. These include broadleaved woodland / scrub, species-rich grassland and moorland (semi-natural habitat definitions are listed in Annex 1).
 - within 10 metres of the boundary of an archaeological feature or site.
 - within 10 metres of a waterway, or 50 metres from a borehole or well (irrespective of its current use), or 250 metres from any borehole used for a public water supply.
- Supplementary / winter feeding sites and sacrifice areas should be rotated and managed to prevent excessive trampling, poaching or vehicle rutting to minimise soil erosion and must not cause run-off to waterways. Sacrifice areas must be ploughed and sown in the following spring. Natural regeneration (recovery of the sward) and surface seeding will be permitted provided there is at least 90% grass/crop coverage by the end of spring.

Exceptions

This measure will not apply to areas within five metres of gateways and farm tracks. This is provided sites are not located on a semi-natural habitat, or archaeological sites, or 10 metres from waterways, or 50 metres from boreholes or wells (irrespective of current use), or 250 metres from boreholes used for a public water supply.

Exceptions from the above measure will only be permitted where it is necessary for the protection of animal welfare during periods of extreme weather conditions.

Further information on GAEC 2 can be obtained from www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance or by contacting DARD Countryside Management Branch on 0845 3044502.

GAEC 3. Overgrazing

The aim of these requirements is protect grassland, semi natural habitats and archaeological sites from overgrazing. They apply to all farmed land.

Verifiable Standards

- You must avoid overgrazing grassland, semi-natural habitat, or archaeological sites with livestock in such numbers which would damage the growth, quality or species composition of vegetation on that land to any significant degree (that is, where there is no vegetative cover and/or there is evidence of run-off or standing water), or cause damage to an archaeological feature.

Exceptions

This measure does not apply on land where these requirements conflict with the management required by:

- Areas of Special Scientific Interest or Natura 2000 Sites (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation). Contact NIEA Conservation Designations and Protection on 028 90 569515 or www.ni-environment.gov.uk for further information.
- Agri-environment scheme agreement – contact DARD on 0845 3044502.

This measure does not apply to areas within five metres around gateways/laneways provided this land is not a semi-natural habitat, archaeological site, within 10 metres from waterways, or 50 metres from boreholes or wells (irrespective of current use), or 250 metres from boreholes used for a public water supply.

Exceptions from the above measure will only be permitted where it is necessary for the protection of animal welfare during periods of extreme weather conditions.

Further information on GAEC 3 can be obtained from www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance or by contacting DARD Countryside Management Branch on 0845 3044502.

GAEC 4. Undergrazing

The aim of these requirements is protect farm land from undergrazing including infestation from invasive species and noxious weeds.

Verifiable Standards

- You must avoid undergrazing (to such an extent where the land cannot be returned to agricultural production by the end of the next growing season) by using appropriate grazing or cutting management.
- You must prevent encroachment by invasive species such as Rhododendron, Giant hogweed, Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam which degrade the agricultural and environmental value of the land.
- You must prevent the infestation of noxious weeds (listed in Annex 1) through compliance with the Noxious Weed Order 1977.

Exceptions

This measure does not apply on land where these requirements conflict with the management required by:

- Areas of Special Scientific Interest or Natura 2000 Sites (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation). Contact NIEA Conservation Designations and Protection on 028 90 569515 or www.ni-environment.gov.uk for further information.
- Scheduled archaeological sites. Contact NIEA Historic Monuments Unit on 028 9054 3168 or www.ni-environment.gov.uk
- Agri-environment scheme agreement. Contact DARD on 0845 3044502.

Further information on GAEC 4 can be obtained from www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance or by contacting DARD Countryside Management Branch on 0845 3044502.

GAEC 5. Field Boundaries

The aim of these requirements is to retain field boundaries and prevent cutting during the bird nesting season. They apply to all farm land.

Verifiable Standards

- You must not remove field boundaries (dry stone walls, ditches, hedges, earthbanks) except by prior written permission from DARD. This includes infilling or laying drainage pipes in open sheughs.
- Hedge, tree or scrub cutting (including trimming, coppicing and laying) is not permitted between 1 March and 31 August.

Exceptions

Hedge cutting between 1 March and 31 August will be permitted where health and safety is an issue, for example, roadside hedges.

Hedgerow trees may be removed if there are health and safety reasons unless a tree preservation order is in place.

Hedgerow trees may be removed on rotation for timber, provided young saplings are left to grow as replacement trees in the hedge.

This measure does not apply to permanently dry sheughs/ditches or to field boundaries within, or marking the boundary of non agricultural land (for example a dwelling-house or building site).

Further information on GAEC 5 can be obtained from www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance or by contacting DARD Countryside Management Branch on 0845 3044502.

GAEC 6. Protection of Habitats (Wildlife Areas), Archaeological Sites and Permanent Pasture

The aim of these requirements is to protect semi natural habitats, archaeological features and permanent pasture. They apply to all farm land.

Verifiable Standards

Protection of Habitats and Archaeological Sites Measure Requirements

- You must retain and do not damage semi-natural habitats, including broadleaved woodland, scrub, moorland, wetlands and species-rich grasslands. Reclamation of semi-natural habitats is only permitted where prior written permission has been obtained by DARD.
- You must not infill or extract peat, sand or gravel on semi-natural habitats without permission from DOE Planning Service.
- You must not damage archaeological features, earth science sites and trees protected under a Tree Preservation Order.
- You must comply with the DARD Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.
- You must not burn heather, gorse, whin or fern between 15 April and 31 August (Game Law Amendment Act (Northern Ireland) 1951).

Permanent Pasture Requirements

- No restrictions on the conversion of permanent pasture (defined in Annex 1) to arable cropping will be imposed providing the national area of permanent pasture is not reduced by more than 5% of the total agricultural area.
- If there is a 5% decrease in the Northern Ireland level of permanent pasture, DARD will put in place a control mechanism to ensure the 10% tolerance level is not breached.

Further information on GAEC 6 can be obtained from www.dardni.gov.uk/cross-compliance or by contacting DARD Countryside Management Branch on 0845 3044502.

GAEC 7. Irrigation Authorisations

The aim of these requirements is to manage the use of water for irrigation. This applies to anyone abstracting or impounding water for irrigation.

Verifiable Standards

- If you are abstracting or impounding more than 10m³ but less than 20m³ in any 24 hour period you must have an authorisation and adhere to the requirements of the authorisation.
- If you are abstracting or impounding more than 20m³ in any 24 hour period you must hold an abstraction license and adhere to the requirements of the licence.

Information on GAEC 7 can be obtained from

**Abstraction and Impoundment Licensing Team
Northern Ireland Environment Agency
17 Antrim Road
Lisburn
BT28 3AL**

Tel: 028 9263 3482

Fax: 028 9267 6054

Email: AIL.Team@doeni.gov.uk

Website: http://www.ni-environment.gov.uk/water-home/water_resources/abstraction.htm

Annex 1

Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition Standards (GAEC)

Definitions

ANNEX 1

Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) Definitions

Moorland

Areas of bog, dwarf shrub, heath and montane habitat.

Wetlands

Areas of naturally high water table including fen, marsh, swamp, standing waters, saline lagoons, rivers and streams.

Species-rich grasslands

Areas of neutral, acid, wet and calcareous grassland (including limestone pavement). These have a low productive sward. Ryegrass, Timothy and white clover comprise less than 25% of the sward.

Broadleaved Woodland

Areas where vegetation is dominated by broadleaved trees containing less than 15% conifers.

Scrub

Areas which contain shrubs, stunted trees or brambles. Scrub may be open or dense and contain hawthorn, blackthorn, gorse (whin), bramble, honeysuckle, dog rose, bushy willows (sally) or stunted hazel with few or no mature trees present.

Coastal habitats

Areas of maritime cliff and slopes, sand dunes, vegetated shingle, saltmarsh and all areas below high water mark.

Archaeological features/sites

Historic or archaeological sites which have been identified by the Department of Environment in the Sites and Monuments Record. These include megalithic tombs, standing stones, stone circles, cairns, barrows, hillforts, raths, cashels, churches and castles.

Earth science sites

Areas of bedrock (both natural and made exposures), surface deposits, static landforms and active process sites that provide important evidence of the patterns, processes and dating of geological and biological events from the beginning of the Earth's history to the present day.

Waterways

Any river, stream, watercourse, inland water (whether natural or artificial) or tidal waters and any channel or passage of any kind (whether natural or artificial) through which water flows. It also includes the channel or bed of a waterway, which for the time being is dry. This is as given in the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 and subsequent amendments.

Noxious weeds

Are as listed under the Noxious Weed Order 1977 and include:

Wild oat	Avena fatua L.
	Avena ludoviciana Durieu
Thistle	Cirsium vulgare (Savi) Ten.
	Cirsium arvense (L.) Scop.
Dock	Rumex obtusifolius L.
	Rumex crispus L.
Ragwort	Senecio jacobaea L.

Field Boundaries

Field boundaries include dry stone walls, ditches, earth banks, hedges and rows or trees.

Ditches

Ditches are sheughs/open channels with water for at least part of the year.

Waterlogged

This occurs when the watertable rises into the root zone of the plant and the soil is saturated with water. The soil is boggy under foot.

Permanent Pasture

Permanent pasture is defined as permanent grassland which is over five years old which has been declared on the Area Aid application in 2003. Land which has been ploughed and reseeded within the same year may be defined as permanent pasture.



Department of
**Agriculture and
Rural Development**

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Forbartha Tuaithe**

MÄNNYSTRIE O

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