

## POLICY REPORTS

### ANIMAL HEALTH & WELFARE

#### Bluetongue

- Two suspected cases of BTV-3 were identified through routine abattoir surveillance on Saturday 29th November. Two cows from a farm in North Down tested positive through antibody testing and PCR virus testing. A 20km temporary control zone has been established around the herd and NI is also now in a 150km restricted zone.
- Preliminary results of testing carried out by DAERA on a Co Down herd, where two suspected cases of Bluetongue virus were recently identified and confirmed as BTV-3, have revealed suspected presence of the disease in a further 44 cattle.
- Due to this active BTV-3 transmission, the animals will not be culled.
- Surveillance testing will be carried out in herds across the 20km temporary control zone on Thursday 4th December with the first results hopefully being received Saturday 6th December to determine level of infection in the area. Approximately 4000 animals will be tested over the coming weeks.
- Midge surveillance has shown that midges in the area are actively transmitting the virus. Any clinical signs need to be reported to PVPs and DAERA.
- No exports for breeding and production out of NI currently. No movements in or out of the 20km surveillance zone. Only movements for direct slaughter are allowed. Movements for direct slaughter have to be licensed at least 48 hours in advance.
- Bluetongue cases still continue to rise across GB, with 200 farms affected since July 2025. An all-Wales restriction zone was introduced on 10th November which means that there can be free movement of livestock between England and Wales, however there are still restrictions on germinal products. Restrictions are still in place for movement from England to Scotland or GB to NI.

#### TB

- **bTB Costings Project** – An update meeting was held with Andersons mid-October. Approximately 350 responses were received for the TB questionnaire and the responses have started to be analysed. Financial data modelling is almost complete and a meeting is to be set up at the start of December to outline the findings. Stakeholder interviews have been conducted and farmer case studies are being started. Results are positive so far, and the project is on track to be completed January 2026.
- **TBPSG** – The AHW committee agreed that UFU do not support the cross-border regionalisation project and this was relayed to the CVO. This is due to aspects of the project which has not been co-designed, such as the region the project is being rolled out, the method of wildlife intervention, and the lack of communication with the TBPSG. Other workshop discussions in recent weeks have included pre/post movement testing, alternative control herds, and biosecurity assessment design.

#### EU Animal Welfare Laws

- The EU commission has released a consultation on the proposed new animal welfare on farm laws. This is likely to include a ban on cages (including poultry cages and pig farrowing crates), reduced stocking densities, potential ban on beak trimming/castration/dehorning, and changes to slaughter regulations. UFU have been involved in discussions with the other devolved farming unions regarding the proposals with all livestock species covered, and BAB representatives will be drafting up a response in the coming weeks.

### **Avian Influenza**

- The new avian influenza season commenced on 1st October 2025 and to date, there have been 57 cases of HPAI H5N1 across the UK (45 in England, 7 in Wales, 1 in Scotland and 4 in NI).
- Mandatory housing orders for all kept birds and poultry came into force on the 6th November in NI, and England, Wales and ROI are also under housing orders. Bird gatherings are currently suspended and increased biosecurity measures are in place.
- Four cases of HPAI H5N1 have been confirmed in either commercial or backyard flocks in NI. There have also been increased wild bird positives over the past week. In ROI, there have been three confirmed outbreaks in Turkey flocks, with one restriction zone crossing the border into NI. This is the first time commercial HPAI outbreaks have been confirmed in ROI since November 2022. Wild bird positives have been found in four counties in ROI.

## **BEEF & LAMB**

### **ICBF Tully Centre Day Away Trip**

- The committee went to ICBF's Tully breeding centre and Sheep Ireland on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November and the visit.

### **AgriSearch Levy Increase**

- Jason Rankin and Sean Kane from AgriSearch attended the committee meeting and discussed proposals for increased beef and lamb levies.

### **Anuga Food Trade Fair**

- UFU representatives were invited by LMC to attend Anuga world food trade fair in Cologne, Germany a couple weeks ago. The aim of the trip was to highlight the global context of beef and lamb production around the world. Our message for the trip was resilience for our local supply chains over reliance on imports. At the fair we seen globally how other countries in the world are advertising their beef and lamb products.

### **Bovine EID**

- The committee continue to discuss bovine EID introduction to NI. The UFU recently attended a DAERA meeting on EID. DAERA will launch a consultation in the next couple of months on Bovine EID. The policy officer is part of the industry bovine EID stakeholder group. Discussions include implementing EID with the Bovine Genetics project.

### **Sheep Carcase Classification and Price Reporting**

- The committee discussed the legislation of the sheep carcass classification and price reporting. The legislation will be implemented in 2026.

#### **Future Sheep Support**

- The UFU continues to work on the future of sheep support with the NI sheep industry taskforce. The recent DAERA APSG meeting discussed plans for sheep support.

#### **Future Young Farmers Support**

- The committee continues to discuss issues with previous Young Farmers' Scheme and suggestions for future Young Farmers schemes.

#### **EUDR**

- The UFU continues to monitor the changing policy of the EU Deforestation Regulation that will apply in NI.

#### **FQAS**

- The committee discussed online medicine recording and the challenges that these bring. The committee felt that the current paper-based medicine recording system should still remain an option for farmers.

#### **Carbon**

- The committee continues to raise issues with Carbon Footprinting project with data protection and carbon accounting.

#### **FSA**

- The UFU has a further meeting this week to discuss FSA Meat Discount scheme. The scheme is worth £2 million to NI meat processors. If the FSA remove this discount the cost will be passed back to the farmer.

#### **Capital Investment Scheme**

- The committee considered potential Capital Investment measures items.

### **DAIRY**

#### **Fair Dealing Obligations (Milk) Regulations**

- Following a meeting with the Adjudicator. It has been confirmed that he will be attending the Winter fair, and will be present for a time on the UFU stand.

#### **NAP**

- Following refinement by the Environment committee the proposal was presented to AgriSearch, awaiting a response.

#### **Milk Price Calculator**

- Further progress has been made, continue to develop the calculator with feedback from the committee.

### **Carbon Auditing**

- AFBI to meet with committee, discussion on the use of methane inhibitors and carbon calculating. Date still to be confirmed.

### **Winter Fair**

- Preparations for this year's Winter Fair are underway.

### **UK 4 Unions Meeting**

- Chair and Policy officer to travel to Wales December 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> to meet with counterparts.

### **UK Dairy Roadmap**

- A number of UFU Dairy Committee members attended the farmer workshop as part of the Sustainable Dairy Pathways initiative within the Dairy Roadmap. Feedback was given on the current roadmap and future direction of travel.

### **Fall Milk Price Campaign**

- A press release on falling milk prices went out, achieved good coverage. Campaign to raise awareness of falling farmer prices and rising food inflation continues.

### **Levy Increase**

- Committee discussed the proposal coming from AgriSearch regarding an increase in levy. Committee agreed that before the levy is increased, there needed to be a 100% collection rate achieved across all milk processors. Letter to AgriSearch for processors.

### **Red Tractor**

- Committee expressed their dismay at Red Tractor hosting roadshows across GB but not here in NI. Red Tractor have been approached regarding this issue.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Nutrients Action Programme (NAP) Update**

- The UFU submitted a substantial response to the revised NAP consultation in July. A copy of this can be found on the UFU website – consultations section.

The NAP Task & Finish Group established by the Minister has met twice and agreed a terms of reference for the main group, the science sub-group and a work programme. Detailed discussions on the various measures have not yet started. The UFU continue to challenge the draconian measures put forward by DAERA.

### **Farming with Nature Package**

- UFU representatives continue to attend Farming with Nature Stakeholder Group meetings to attempt to shape the scheme to be practical, simple and financially attractive for farmers.

- Farming with Nature Transition Scheme – DAERA have proposed additional options for 2026 FwN Transition Scheme and UFU Environment Committee and Seeds and Cereals Committee have considered the draft specifications for this. This will be another one year scheme funded with plans to eventually progress to a multi-annual scheme.
- DAERA propose to launch a Farming with Nature Landscapes Scheme (for groups of farmers) and a Farming with Nature Priority Areas Scheme in 2026.
- Farmers who applied for the FwN Transition Scheme in 2025 to ensure they are aware of their requirements and the dates for carrying out work. Claims must be made in March and members are encourage to try and ensure that all works are completed by then.

### **Climate Change**

- The UFU Environment Committee has responded to the consultation on draft Climate Action Plan for NI 2023-2027 (CAP) which covers all sectors of society and the Fourth Carbon Budget consultation. UFU has highlighted that the Climate Change (Northern Ireland) Act 2022 is fundamentally flawed and needs to be overhauled.

### **Ammonia**

- The UFU employed a legal team and key experts to submit a response to the DAERA consultation on the ammonia operational protocol in April which is used to determine planning applications and await a response. The Minister has recognised many other environmental issues cannot be improved due to ammonia planning policy but must act to ensure that replacement buildings and betterment are permitted. UFU continue to maintain pressure on the Minister to progress this issue particularly in light of moves in England to allow betterment to be recognised and are frustrated by the lack of progress here. The UFU has scheduled a meeting with our legal team in early December to discuss next steps.

### **Water Quality**

- Farm Water Project – UFU applied to 2025/26 DAERA Environment Fund and have been successful. This fund is supporting the training of CSL staff by the Rivers Trust with the ambition that they will support farmers in key catchments with non-regulatory advice around water quality. A facilitator has been appointed to develop a Farm Water Training Course to assist farmers.
- The UFU Environment Committee have responded to a DAERA consultation on a Fisheries and Water Environment Bill which is proposing to increase powers for enforcement / fines and to allow them to make secondary legislation on spot fines/penalties for all sectors – UFU have opposed increase fines and penalties.

### **Soil Nutrient Health Scheme**

- SNHS applications have closed and will not re-open. 92.5% of all SAF 2024-25 Farm business applications have now registered for SNHS which will be a condition of the new Farm Sustainability Payment. Farmers in zone 4 should respond to contactor emails/ texts to help plan sampling programme in that area.

## **HILL FARMING**

### **AgriSearch Levy Increase**

- Jason Rankin and Sean Kane attended the committee meeting to discuss the AgriSearch proposed levy increase.

### **NI Peatland Strategy**

- Minister Muir recently launched the NI Peatland Strategy however the strategy failed to acknowledge farmers/landowners part in peatlands. The strategy lacks details and information on funding for the peatland works.

### **Wildfire Strategy**

- The wildfire strategy was launched; however it lacks key details. The UFU will continue to work with DAERA on actions in the strategy.

### **NIEA**

- The Hill Farming committee have wrote a letter to NIEA requesting a meeting to highlight past failures of environmental schemes and restrictions e.g. coniferous trees, heather overgrown etc.

### **Forestry Service NI**

- The Hill Farming committee has written to Forestry Service NI requesting a meeting on the issue with coniferous seedlings from government coniferous sites establishing on privately owned peatlands.

### **AFBI data breach**

- The committee raised concerns with the recent AFBI data breach.

### **MV**

- The UFU have submitted a paper to DAERA on behalf of the industry MV stakeholder group. The paper shows a list of action points that needs completed before further action can be taken by DAERA on stopping all current testing and restrictions.

### **Capital Investment Scheme**

- The committee considered potential Capital Investment measures items.

### **Online Medicine Recording**

- The committee discussed online medicine recording. The committee agreed to oppose mandatory online recording until it becomes a statutory requirement, preferring to maintain the current paper-based system.

### **LMC**

- LMC quotes continue to be an ongoing issue and they are now 30-40p difference to price paid.

## **LEGISLATION**

## **Inheritance Tax**

- The UFU delegation undertook a full programme of engagement at Westminster, meeting MPs and Peers from across the political spectrum to outline the severe consequences of the proposed inheritance tax reforms for Northern Ireland's family farms. Members shared personal testimonies, briefed parliamentarians on the unique NI farming structure, and delivered a signed letter directly to the Treasury calling for urgent changes. The delegation also held a dedicated UFU event hosted by Labour MP Adam Jogee, joined by senior MPs including the NI Affairs Committee chair and the Conservative Shadow Farming Minister, before participating in a public rally demonstrating widespread opposition to the proposals.

## **A5 Western Transport Corridor**

- Meetings continue with landowners. The UFU met with DfI recently to discuss progress, and to put forward landowner concerns strongly. The UFU and DfI have agreed to continue to meet to check on progress, with a weekly dashboard sent to the UFU on progress on land reinstatements and compensation packages. The appeal on the court case will be heard in December, with a verdict not expected until 2026.

## **Immigration**

- From 11<sup>th</sup> November, horticulture workers (who have seasonal crops) are able to work in the UK for up to six months within any 10-month period. Previously, this was six months in any 12-month period. UFU Legislation Committee has setup a subgroup to consider immigration changes in the UK Government's White Paper, *Restoring Control over the Immigration System*, which increases the entry requirements for foreign workers from RQF 3-5 (A Levels) to RQF 6+ (degree) and raise the salary threshold to approximately £38,000. The only way to bypass these changes is if industry is included on the new temporary shortage list.

## **Good Jobs Bill**

- The UFU is considering its position on the *Good Jobs Bill*.

## **Agricultural Wages Board**

- The UFU continues to prepare its submission to the Agricultural Wages Board for the pay negotiations in January. The Board heard from a DAERA Economist on the state of the industry.

## **Kilrea Bridge**

- The UFU is incredibly concerned about the closure of the Kilrea Bridge, which is causing havoc for farmers, businesses and families. The UFU is engaging with DfI to seek clarity on the timetable for repair and mitigations.

## **PORK & BACON**

### **Educational Engagement**

- CAFRE has agreed to meet with the committee. To discuss the opportunities for enhancing education around the pig sector and promoting its inclusion within the curriculum.

### **Fair Dealing Obligations (Pig) Regulations**

- Following the implementation of the FDOP Regulations, the Adjudicator has agreed to meet with the committee. Date to be confirmed.

### **Red Tractor**

- Red Tractor have agreed to meet with the committee. To provide an overview of the current assurance scheme, along with an introduction into the concept of tiered welfare labelling. Date to be confirmed.

### **Pig Slurry Utilisation**

- Committee met with Dr J Young of the Mid Ulster Biorefinery Project. Discussion focused on the utilisation of livestock slurries within anaerobic digestion (AD) and further treatment for carbon and nutrient recovery. A site visit to a pig unit with onsite AD facilities, provided an overview of the process and the practical solutions available on farm and at a greater scale.

### **Meeting FSA**

- FSA have agreed to meet with the committee, to discuss the requirements of Trichinella Inspections. Date to be confirmed.

### **Legislation Subcommittee - UK Government's White Paper**

- Following confirmed changes to the seasonal workers scheme, the legislation committee formed a subgroup to consider immigration changes in the UK government's white paper. Pork and Bacon Committee have nominated a representative to participate.

## **POULTRY**

### **Avian Influenza**

- The new avian influenza season commenced on 1st October 2025 and to date, there have been 51 cases of HPAI H5N1 across the UK (39 in England, 7 in Wales, 1 in Scotland and 4 in NI).
- Mandatory housing orders for all kept birds and poultry came into force on the 6th November in NI, and England, Wales and ROI are also under housing orders. Bird gatherings are currently suspended and increased biosecurity measures are in place.



- Four cases of HPAI H5N1 have been confirmed in either commercial or backyard flocks in NI. There have also been increased wild bird positives over the past week. In ROI, there have been three confirmed outbreaks in Turkey flocks, with one restriction zone crossing the border into NI. This is the first time commercial HPAI outbreaks have been confirmed in ROI since November 2022. Wild bird positives have been found in four counties in ROI.

#### **RSPCA Assured**

- Concerns that RSPCA assured wanted to continue carrying out audits during the housing order in NI. RSPCA reps were contacted and they said that audits would be halted until the housing orders are lifted.
- Laying hen industry setting up a task force to discuss options for developing a new independent assurance scheme to replace RSPCA Assured.

#### **RHI**

The UFU continue to engage with DfI and other stakeholders on the proposed closure of RHI. The consultation closed on Monday 24th November and it is expected that the Minister will update the NI Assembly shortly. Information on the proposals can be found here: <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/consultations/closure-northern-ireland-non-domestic-renewable-heat-incentive-scheme>

#### **Conferences**

- Members of the committee attended the NI Poultry Conference on 28th October at CAFRE Loughry, with Deputy President J McLenaghan chairing the morning session.
- K Ashton-Meek attended the Egg and Poultry Industry Conference in Newport, Wales over 2nd-4th November.
- Both conferences were very informative with speakers covering avian influenza, vaccination trials, sustainability, and current and future challenges. Opportunities for networking were also highly beneficial.

### **RURAL AFFAIRS**

#### **Women in Ag Conference**

- WiA conference was held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October at Loughry Campus. It was a highly successful, sold out event, with 3 key speakers and 3 breakout sessions held across the day. A meeting was held with the sub-committee on 20th November to go over feedback and plans for the next year.

#### **Women in Agriculture Leadership Programme**

- K Ashton-Meek and programme participants spoke with Katrina Godfrey at the WiA conference and she updated on the progress of the proposal. DAERA have responded about setting up a taskforce in relation to the leadership programme and further initiatives. Meeting with Veronica Morris to discuss the next steps and how we move forward in relation to the vote of no confidence.

#### **Meeting with Rural Support**

- The Rural Affairs committee are in the process of arranging a wider update meeting and discussion with Rural Support. The committee are happy to have some further

involvement with Rural Support and are keen to re-develop the link between UFU and RS over the coming months.

#### **Food Strategy Framework at Hillsborough Castle**

- The rural affairs committee attended a focus group with FoodNI to discuss the new NI Food Strategy Framework. The evening included dinner at Hillsborough Castle, a tour of the castle and focus group discussions. Discussions focused on links with education, links with health, how farmers on the ground can help push forward improvements and suggestions of how to incorporate local products into wider industry.

#### **IFA/UFU Joint Brussels Outing**

- Nina Carberry MEP has invited members of the IFA Farm Families Committee and the UFU Rural Affairs Committee to be hosted in Brussels over 30<sup>th</sup> November – 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2025. 10 members from each of the committees will be attending.

### **RURAL ENTERPRISE**

#### **Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)**

- The UFU continue to engage with DfI and other stakeholders on the proposed closure of RHI. The consultation closed on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> November and it is expected that the Minister will update the NI Assembly shortly. Information on the proposals can be found here: <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/consultations/closure-northern-ireland-non-domestic-renewable-heat-incentive-scheme>

#### **SONI**

- Represented on the SRP27 Stakeholder Advisory and Challenge Group to advise on their Review of Prices 2027-2032. They will submit their Business Plan for submission to the Utility Regulator in March 2026. We continue to attend their meetings to raise landowner concerns strongly and ensure the appropriate framework is in place to work with landowners and respect their concerns on its various projects.

#### **Renewable Obligation Scheme**

- The UK Government and devolved administrations are jointly consulting on changes to inflation indexation on the Renewable Obligations scheme, moving from Retail Price Index to Consumer Price Index. The UFU will be considering its position and responding accordingly.

#### **Anaerobic Digestion**

- The UFU will attend the national Anaerobic Digestion and Bioresources Association conference in December.

#### **Renewable Electricity Support Scheme**

- The Department for the Economy has launched the Renewable Electricity Price Guarantee (REPG), Northern Ireland's version of Contracts for Difference, to help meet the legal target of 80% renewable electricity by 2030. The first auction, due in 2027, will support large-scale onshore wind, solar PV, and hybrid projects over 5 MW, with successful bidders receiving 15-year CPI-linked contracts. While this will stimulate investment, it excludes most farm-scale renewables.

## RURAL DEVELOPMENT

### New Rural Policy Framework

- DAERA continue to develop a new Rural Policy. DAERA held a bespoke engagement session for the UFU Rural Development and Rural Affairs committees, where members engaged with DAERA policymakers at the start of this policy development process. The UFU will watch the policy development process closely to ensure that farm families are represented in any new rural policy. We will meet with DAERA in the coming weeks for a progress update on key themes found within their research and outreach.

## ARABLE & HORTICULTURE

### New Support Pilot scheme for Horticulture

- UFU continue to support and issue CAFRE text messages.
- The Horticulture Pilot Scheme is made up of three individual elements, *Note only one & three open.*
- Pilot one: Sustainable Sector Growth Groups
- Pilot two: Innovation Driver and Support Scheme
- Pilot three: Growers' Training and Support Pilot Scheme
- Expressions of interest for pilot schemes closed on September 30, 2025. *Note:* still happy to receive expressions of interest.
- Extension for application for sustainable sector growth group applications: 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026

### Producer Organisation(s) Update

- 2 applications currently sitting with RPA for recognition and approval (one mushroom only and other veg, top fruit (apples) and mushroom) reports suggest a new interest from group of apple growers and large-scale field veg producer(s). Awaiting RPA decisions. NO progress to-date.

### CAFRE – Production Horticulture open day

- Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> October. Senior Policy Officer attended. Concern – no peat alternative

### HTA – invitation Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November

- HTA cancelled – local trade did not support registration

### Quality Assurance review

- All UFU Arable & Horticulture viewpoints have been fed into UFU template to aid progressing the UFU formal response.

### **Arable Conference 2026**

- No arable conference in January 2026.
- New exciting on-farm event for arable on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2026 (details will follow)

### **Horticulture Strategy**

- QUB Prof Mark Emmerson – UFU Arable and Horticulture chairs approached to host and attend a briefing update – in hand no date confirmed.
- No real support coming through any UFU chairs for this strategy. UFU Chair observing on the ground activity within the industry. A strong focus on market gardening not a commercial scale is causing concern.

### **Seed Potato Inspections**

- UFU have requested a report on the 2025 seed potato DAERA inspection findings. Awaiting full report.

### **Cider & Perry Marketing Standards**

- Top Fruit (Bramley Apple) / UFU Considering Copa Cogeca cider and perry marketing standards however UFU NI Armagh Bramley Grower Association members reluctant to engage in the discussion. An additional challenge for the industry is the big crops with reported supply chain concerns. Labour reported as an issue at meeting on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November growers updated on PPP transition from paper to electronic and confirmed no press on harvest and yields.

### **Proposals for Fair Dealings Regulations in the Fresh Produce Sector**

- UFU Response submitted a response endorsing the need for transparent and functional supply chains.

### **UFU and IFA Meetings**

- Cereal meeting held Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2025, City North 11am. Constructive meeting and same issues as North however frustratingly ROI have money and NI not.
- Potato meeting – no date confirmed.

### **DAERA Arable protein meeting**

- UFU had a productive meeting committee asked to identify gaps and business asks for next DAERA meeting. Discussions remain on going about who should progress this piece of work.

### **New EU electronic PPP record keeping requirement Jan 2026**

- No progress. 2 DAERA meetings for clarity. Crop lists had been circulated to all arable & hort chairs regarding EU Codes over the summer. Meeting two was widened out to include UFU environment and grass-based input. DAERA progressing clarity on the roll out detail. Is Windsor Framework related with 100% compliance reported as necessary. UFU has negotiated and secured a soft transitional window from 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2026 with full compliance from Jan 2027. Negotiations and discussion on going date of next meeting to be confirmed and in the interim DAERA to share draft PR with Stakeholders including UFU

### **AHDB winter program update**

- New structure in NI will move around farms for discussion on specialized area of production including finance and environment. Greater participation in AHDB

benchmarking needed. Committee reported CAFRE benchmarking is not fit for purpose.

#### **DAERA UFU meeting to discuss arable support**

- It was a frank meeting and both arable and potato chairs/vice attended as potato also sits in the DAERA arable portfolio. Interesting meeting and a report with gaps and solutions sought this work is in hand.

#### **UK/EU rebalancing**

- PPP discussions around timelines and impact on N Ireland. NFU NFUS wish for long transition UFU short swift alignment would be more beneficial for NI and remove window for greater confusion and administrative burden.

#### **Grain Price**

- UFU and chairman monitoring AHDB price reporting. Note: no signals coming through for a lift in price. Meeting also being considered Irish Grain Trade. Not progressed

#### **Asian Hornet**

- One detection in N Ireland confirmed, UFU met with Ulster Beekeepers Association representative to agree a communications strategy. Awaiting correspondence UBA.

#### **The Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020**

- The OCR applies to all professional users including farmers of plant protection products (such as insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, molluscicides, and plant growth regulators), across all sectors including agriculture, horticulture, amenity and forestry.
- You are required to comply with the OCR if as part of your work / business activity you: store professional use plant protection products (PPPs); apply professional use PPP's yourself; or have professional use PPP's applied by a third party / contractor on your behalf.
- The OCR also applies to businesses involved in the supply chain of PPP, their components and adjuvants.
- Operators and businesses may be inspected under the powers given by The Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 to ensure they comply with existing PPP legislation, including The Plant Protection Products Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011 and The Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012.

#### **Why register my details with the Competent Authority?**

- If your business activity involves plant protection products (pesticides) you must comply with the [Official Controls \(Plant Protection Products\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2020.](#)
- Registration is your way of confirming to DAERA that you are complying with the regulations. **A farmer is a professional user.**
- Separate registers have been compiled by Defra for businesses located in Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland).

#### **What information is being requested?**

- Section 5(1) of The Official Controls (Plant Protection Products) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 requires that each operator notify the Competent Authority (DAERA) of the

following information: name and legal form; activities carried out; address(es) of the premises on which those activities are carried out.

- You are also asked to estimate the quantity of pesticides stored, manufactured, processed, distributed, sold or used in a typical year. For professional users this includes farmers the pesticides that you apply, and any pesticides you have applied for you by third parties.
- The online system allows you to register your farm business address and the addresses of all premises under your control where pesticides are used.
- Farmers can access the registration link on the DAERA website. This link is currently live and has been operational for some time.
- UFU are currently in discussions with DAERA regarding transitioning from current paper record keeping official control records to mechanical readable (electronic) official control records.

#### **Equine registration requirement update**

- From 1 February 2026, Registration of Equine Establishments (obtaining an Equine Establishment Number (EEN) will be required when you apply for a horse passport, apply to update an existing horse passport, or apply for a replacement/duplicate horse passport.
- You should therefore ensure that you register your equine establishment now in advance of this date to avoid any delays in your passport application(s). It is a legal requirement to hold a valid, up to date passport for your equine.
- You may be unable to sell, buy, move, transport or export your equine if you cannot provide a valid EEN and keep your passport up to date. Moving your equine to Great Britain, Ireland or other countries for competitions, shows or other activities requires an up-to-date passport and possibly an export health certificate (subject to export destination), which requires an EEN. Full details on DAERA website

#### **PARLIAMENTARY UPDATE**