

# FARMING STANDARDS

Issue 3: June 2005

- Do you need advice regarding compliance under current Animal Health & Welfare legislation?
- Wrexham County Borough Council has a help desk based at Trading Standards Offices, Ruthin Road, Wrexham
- Office hours are 8.45 am to 4.45 pm. The office is closed between 12.30pm and 1.30 pm for lunch.
- Telephone: 01978 296076
- Fax: 01978 290961
- **Starter Pack.** Available from the Ruthin Road offices. The pack is aimed at those new to farming or those wishing to make themselves more aware of current requirements. It includes
  - General Licence
  - Movement Licences
  - Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock
  - Examples of medicine records and ATC's
  - List of contacts for agencies linked to farming and the welfare of livestock.
  - On Farm Mixing leaflet

## Raising awareness and standards

**WELCOME TO THE SUMMER EDITION OF FARMING STANDARDS.** A number of articles in this edition have been written in the light of the measures imposed by the Single Farm Payment and questions raised at the last Wrexham Animal Health Enforcement Forum (WAHEF) which was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> June. Further information on any articles contained in the newsletter can be obtained from the helpdesk or your local union representative.



### Tir Cynnal – an overview

At the last WAHEF Mr. Martin Price from the Environment Agency gave an overview of Tir Cynnal, which is the new Entry Level Agri Environment Scheme for Wales and is open to all farmers with holdings over 3 hectares.

The purpose of the scheme is to present an opportunity for farmers to get on to the agri-environment ladder and **receive payment for their participation**. No capital works are funded and it is more of a maintenance type of scheme rather than the Tir Gofal scheme, which is more prescriptive. There are no stocking controls involved and the scheme involves the following elements.

A farm map is drawn up identifying such things as water features (streams, wells etc), historical features and other wildlife habitat areas, which could, for example, be a streamside habitat, woodland or scrub. The aim is to identify some 5% of the farm as "habitat" and this will be agreed with the Assembly. There is no need to fence off these areas if not currently fenced off, just maintain them in their current status.

The farmer then draws up a Farm Resource Management Plan and various parts of the plan include identifying where there may be issues that need to be addressed. These include such things as reducing slurry volumes by better clean and dirty water separation, ensuring staff have the appropriate qualifications to undertake spraying or sheep dipping activities and other sensible management controls that also help towards Cross Compliance. Often these also show a cost benefit by addressing the issues so there is a "win:win" situation.

It is anticipated that the scheme will be launched in September following approval by the EU for the funding aspects and the aim is to get around 60% of Wales into the scheme within the next 10 years.

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## Farmers Markets and Trading Standards

The last few years have seen an increase in the number of Farmers Markets being held in the region, as local producers see the benefits of selling their produce direct to the public. The following advice aims to help you comply with Trading Standards laws which apply to Farmers Markets. It is a general introduction and doesn't cover all products that might be sold, e.g. honey, home made cakes/sweets, gifts, cosmetics etc.

### Weights and Measures

**Equipment** – If you sell goods by weight, volume or length you need to use equipment e.g. weights, weighing machines etc which have been approved by a Trading Standards Officer. If you pre-pack goods these must be packed in metric quantities using a suitable metric scale.

**Goods** – Non pre-packed – the general rule when selling goods loose (non pre-packed) such as fruit and vegetables, meat and cheese is that they should be sold by net weight. All goods must now be sold in metric quantities using an approved metric scale. Countable produce such as apples, cauliflower, onions, beetroot etc. can be sold by number. Carrots, spring onions, radishes and watercress can also be sold by the bunch.

**Goods** – Pre-packed goods (made up in a container before sale) must be marked with the net weight in metric quantities. Some goods are required to be made up in 'prescribed' quantities i.e. specific amounts e.g. potatoes, jams and marmalade, honey, dried fruit and vegetables

**Food Standards** - Trading Standards Officers deal with the labelling of food, its composition and most cases of chemical contamination. Generally speaking foods sold loose or pre-packed for direct sale are only required to be marked or labelled with the name of the food. This must indicate the true nature of the food and avoid confusion with similar products. However you may also need an indication of additives. The following types of additives must be declared if they are present in the food:

- Anti-oxidants, colours, flavour enhancers
- Sweeteners, flavourings, preservatives

For this purpose it is sufficient to state the type of additive as listed above. However we advise the inclusion of its full name or E-number, for customer information purposes

In the case of meat products a percentage Quantitative Ingredients Declaration (QUID) is required in relation to meat content

**Business Names** – As a general rule it is good practice to have your name and address prominently displayed on your stall.

**Prices** – Prices must be clearly displayed on the items themselves, on relevant boxes or containers, or on a list in close proximity to the goods. It will be acceptable to have one price list detailing all the goods and prices providing it's clear and legible and easily seen by customers at the stall.

Most fruit and vegetables, meat and cheese will require a unit price to be displayed. The unit price is your price per kilogram, litre, metre square or metre. It may also be the price of one item of goods sold by number.

**Special Requirements** – Some goods such as eggs are covered by specific legislation, if you require advice on the sale and labelling of eggs (whether free range or not) or other products not covered by this fact sheet please contact the Trading Standards Office, Commerce Section on 01978 296060, where we have a range of leaflets available free of charge on all aspects of Trading Standards legislation including Food, Weights and Measures, Consumer Safety and Animal Health.

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## New Sheep & Goat Identification Regulations

From July 9<sup>th</sup> this year new rules regarding sheep identification come into force throughout the European Community.

However the U.K. government, after consultation with their stakeholders has applied for derogations from certain parts of the regulations (most notable double tagging). Therefore the majority of changes, if we fail to obtain derogations, will not occur until later this year.

The one major change, which will occur in the U.K. from July 9<sup>th</sup> 2005, is the use of the sheep and goat movement document or AML1.

- New forms will be issued and old forms must not be used
- Section B hauliers details will become compulsory
- The keeper of the sheep must complete haulier's details (If sheep are moving off your premises then you are the keeper and you must complete these details).

When we receive notification regarding the outcome of the application for derogations we will endeavour to keep you informed.



## Farm Plastics

Farms produce more than 80,000 tonnes of waste plastic a year. It includes plastic packaging, such as fertiliser bags, animal feed bags and agrochemical containers, as well as non-packaging plastics, like

silage films, crop covers and tunnel films. The disposal of such waste can be a problem for the majority of farmers who are environmentally aware and is an issue that all farmers will have to address under the new Single Farm Payment. When the proposed Agricultural Waste Regulations are introduced farmers will no longer be able to dispose of waste in an unregulated way. There are a few companies currently offering a collection service in Northeast Wales and they are listed below in no particular order.

Second Life Plastics	Tel: 01558 824590	or email <a href="mailto:birch@slpw.freeserve.co.uk">birch@slpw.freeserve.co.uk</a>
Farm Plastics Recycled	Tel: 01531 640381	
Solway Plastics	Tel: 01387 730666	

Additionally a site has opened in Lampeter called LAS Waste. However this is a collection point and farmers will have to take their plastics to this recycler.

Tel: 01570 421421

Further information on Agricultural Waste can be obtained from the Environment Agency website [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk)

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## Reminiscences of an ageing Animal Health Inspector



During the late 1970's sheep scab reappeared in mainland Britain. It was thought the disease was brought onto the mainland from sheep moved from Ireland and within a short period the disease had established itself throughout the U.K. The Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food responded by introducing supervised compulsory sheep dipping. The idea being that every sheep in the UK had to be treated by dipping, during a six to eight week period in September and October.

In the Northeast of the county of Cheshire is the high ground which borders the Peak District and it was in this area that the main sheep flocks of the county were situated. It was not my favourite area for carrying out my duties as it always seemed to me to be at least 10 degrees colder, wetter and foggier than the rest of the county. During winter months the snow fell earlier than most areas and roads were closed for long periods. Anybody who knows me is aware that I like the sun on my back and the idea of spending 7 days a week stood by a sheep bath, watching and timing sheep being dipped, cheered me up no end.

At 6.30am on a Monday morning after enjoying a party the night before, I arrived at a farm to supervise the treatment of 1200 ewes. The weather was in fact very pleasant and the family was most hospitable. Coffee and a bacon sandwich in the warmth of the kitchen left me feeling quite revived from effects of the previous evening and life didn't seem too bad.

A start was made and everything proceeded uneventfully but as time passed the warm feeling of contentment began to disappear to be replaced by a headache and an "iffy" stomach. (The question was, did the sheep dip or excesses of the previous night cause my condition?)

At about 11.00 o'clock we returned to the farmhouse where we had more coffee and sandwiches and I sat by the window overlooking a beautifully kept walled garden. The lawn was well maintained and the borders contained a superb showing of plants. Whilst appreciating the scene I noticed in one corner an animal helping itself to the plants. The animal was quite large with big ears and resembled an oversized mouse.

I turned away not quite believing what I had seen and took a large mouthful of coffee. I turned back to look through the window but the animal was still there moving down the row of plants but this time it had its back to me and I could see a large thick tail. Turning around and grabbing my coffee cup I glanced up at the farmer and his family who had all been watching my reaction, each one of them grinning.

The farmer looked at me and said, "Don't worry lad its only one of the wallabies".

"Before the Second World War an Estate down the road used to have a herd of them but during the war the iron railings were removed and some of the wallabies escaped. A small number of them are living wild although the numbers are now down to single figures. We don't bother with them, but it does have quite an effect on visitors".

## Horse Passports

The "Horse Passport (Wales) Regulations 2005" came into force on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2005. Such legislation is needed to protect human health in countries where horsemeat is eaten. Officers will be visiting shows, competitions and sales to ensure all horses are accompanied by passports and giving advice on regulations.

The following is a brief overview of the regulations

- ▶ Passports must be applied for on or before 31<sup>st</sup> December of the birth year or by 6 months after it's birth whichever is the later.
- ▶ Only the owner can apply for a passport
- ▶ Passport declaration
  - For human consumption
  - Not for human consumption

Owner must complete and sign and if the declaration states "Not for human consumption" this cannot be changed.

- ▶ Horses (any age) must be accompanied by a passport if they are moving for sale, competition, breeding or moving outside the U.K.
- ▶ Persons administering veterinary medicinal products must enter the details on the relevant section of the passport.
- ▶ If you purchase a horse you must re-register under your own name and address within 30 days.

For further advice contact an Animal Health Officer at the address given.

## Making Contact (Not of the alien kind)



One of the proposals that came out of the latest WAHEF was the creation of an e-mail newsgroup which would provide the latest information on legislative changes, news on consultation documents that you may wish to offer an opinion on and news of local initiatives and events. If you feel that receiving such information in an electronic format would be of use to you, please send your e-mail address to [andrea.mach@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.mach@wrexham.gov.uk).

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Where dairy farmers in particular have been unable to get enough points to get into Tir Gofal in the past, the Tir Cynnal initiative will doubtless provide an agri-environment opportunity. The anticipated maximum annual payment is around £3550 based upon a farm size of 200 hectares however, payment is made on a sliding scale

First 20 Ha.....	£45/Ha/yr
21-50 Ha.....	£30/Ha/yr
51-100 Ha.....	£25/Ha/yr
101-200 Ha.....	£5/Ha/yr
200 Ha+.....	£0/Ha/yr

Payment will be made annually on the anniversary of the signing of the agreement meaning that payments could start in autumn 2006. There has already been a great deal of interest in the scheme with indications that in excess of 25% of farmers returning their SPS forms have expressed an interest.

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**If you would like a copy of this newsletter in Welsh, please contact the helpdesk.**