

Guide to the Farm Sustainability Payment Scheme

(includes guidance on the Protein Crop Scheme and the Young Farmers' Payment Scheme)



Department of

**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

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Agricultural & Environmental Schemes
Orchard House
40 Foyle Street
Derry/Londonderry
BT48 6AT

Tel: 0300 200 7848

Email: agriculturalandenvironmentalschemes@daera-ni.gov.uk

Please note - printed farm maps will only be available for customers who have accessibility needs, in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Farm Sustainability Payment (FSP) Scheme (includes guidance on the Protein Crop Scheme (PCS) and the Young Farmers' Payment (YFP) Scheme)

Key Changes for FSP in 2026

While FSP will operate in a similar manner to the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and more recently the Farm Sustainability Transition Payment Scheme (FSTP), its introduction in 2026 will see the inclusion of the following:

- **Historic Years' Requirements**

If a farm business has been notified that it has not met the historic years' requirements it will not be eligible to apply for FSP **in the 2026 scheme year only**.

Ineligible businesses must transfer their entitlements permanently to eligible businesses by 15 May 2026 or they will expire.

- **Conditionality requirements**

To receive the full FSP payment, farm businesses must have registered for the following schemes if offered to them, or penalties will be applied:

- Soil Nutrient Health Scheme (SNHS)
- Bovine Genetics project (BGP)

- **Progressive capping**

Any farm business receiving FSP payments above £60,000, will be subject to progressive capping. Progressive capping will be phased in during the 2026 and 2027 scheme years.

- **New Land Eligibility rules**

New land eligibility rules have been developed to complement the objectives of the FSP, which can be easily understood and robustly enforced.

- **New Farm Sustainability Standards (FSS)**

Seven new FSS are replacing the Cross-Compliance SMRs/GAECs to better meet local needs.

- **Change in how over-declaration penalties are calculated**

No penalty will be applied for small over-declarations which do not exceed 3% of the area determined and 2 ha. If the difference is more than either 3% or 2 ha, penalties will be calculated based on **twice** the difference between the area declared and the area determined.

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Introduction to the Guide

This Guide explains the rules of the FSP Scheme, the PCS and the YFP. You are advised to read it before completing your Single Application (SA). Other guidance booklets are available to view or download from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) website at this link:

[Agricultural & Environmental Schemes | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

The guidance available includes, amongst others:

1. [Environmental Farming Scheme \(EFS\) general information and guidance](#)
2. [Guide to Land Eligibility](#)
3. [Guide to the Transfer of Payment Entitlements](#)
4. [Farm Sustainability Standards Underpinning Requirements](#)
5. [Guide to Business Changes](#)
6. [Guide to DAERA Identification Numbers for Business Customers, Animal Group Number \(AGN\) Keepers | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)
7. [Beef Carbon Reduction Scheme](#)
8. [Suckler Cow Scheme](#)
9. [Farming with Nature Package](#)

You are strongly advised to read the booklets relevant to your application prior to completing your SA.

The booklets are intended as information guides for farm businesses and should not be regarded as a legal interpretation of the regulations governing the FSP and other payment schemes.

Applicants are advised to take independent legal advice, as necessary, to ensure their interests are looked after.

SECTION 1 - General Rules of the Farm Sustainability Payment Scheme

Introduction

The FSP Scheme replaced the FSTP Scheme on 1 January 2026. As with BPS and FSTP, payment entitlements form the basis of the scheme for farm businesses.

The scheme year runs from 1 January to 31 December. Land you claim must remain eligible for the entire scheme year. You are responsible for meeting the Farm Sustainability Standards (FSS) Underpinning Requirements for the entire scheme year and for making arrangements for the land to be accessible for inspectors throughout the year. Failure of either of these commitments may lead to penalties being applied to your claim or all payment being withheld for FSP and other payment schemes.

To claim FSP you must be a farmer carrying out an agricultural activity and submit an eligible application annually to declare all the land that is at your disposal/management control (owned and rented in) by 15 May (except in cases of Force Majeure/Exceptional Circumstances (FM/EC)) and activate at least 3 payment entitlements on at least 3 hectares of eligible land.

In addition farm businesses registered with the Department prior to 31 December 2021 must have met at least one of the **historic years' requirements** in 2020 or 2021, namely:

- (a) have kept cattle or sheep or reared goats registered on APHIS; or
- (b) reared deer for meat and sold that meat commercially; or
- (c) have kept poultry registered with the Department as a commercial flock, or pigs registered on APHIS, combined with selling grass (not including the sale of agistment grazing rights); or
- (d) have farmed at least three hectares of a determined area with an arable or horticultural crop and declared in an application to the Department for either of those years; or
- (e) have been a contract rearer with a contract in place which demonstrated that they managed the livestock and associated grassland, bore the risks in relation to the agricultural activity being carried out and obtained benefits from it.

The historic years' requirements do not apply to an applicant who has registered a new farm business with the Department from 1 January 2022.

Businesses which do not meet the historic years requirements are **not eligible to claim FSP in the 2026 scheme year only**. They may be eligible in future years if they meet the criteria for the scheme.

Farmers applying for FSP must carry out agricultural activity on at least 3 hectares (ha) of land used to activate entitlements. However, where a farmer submits a claim of less than

5 ha, they must carry out agricultural activity on at least 2 ha of land used to activate entitlements.

Agricultural activity is defined as:

- the production, rearing or growing of agricultural products, including harvesting, milking, breeding animals, and keeping animals for farming purposes;
- maintaining an agricultural area in a state which makes it suitable for grazing or cultivation without preparatory action going beyond usual agricultural methods and machineries.

Who is eligible to apply for the FSP?

To be eligible to receive a payment under FSP you must:

- have met the historic years' requirements if your business has been in operation prior to 31 December 2021;
- own or lease at least 3 payment entitlements and have at least 3 ha of eligible land at your disposal on 15 May;
- be carrying out agricultural activity on at least 3 ha of land (or 2 ha if your claim is less than 5 ha) used to activate payment entitlements.
- ensure land on which you claim payment must be at your disposal/management control on 15 May and remain eligible for the full calendar year.
- ensure any individual field you declare to activate payment entitlements must be at least 0.1 ha (except for common land).

Minimum level of agricultural activity

Under the new active farmer requirements for FSP, you must be farming (carrying out an agricultural activity) on at least 3ha of the land being claimed to be eligible to apply for FSP. If your claim is less than 5ha, you will only have to farm 2ha of the land claimed. Agricultural land is only eligible if the vegetation is kept in a state suitable for grazing or cultivation on a significant and consistent basis in the calendar year of the claim.

If an inspection is carried out, evidence of at least one of the following agricultural activities being carried out must be available from its appearance:

- grazing, for example paths made by animals, animal droppings;
- growing and harvesting a crop;
- management of the vegetation such as topping, flailing.

Note: By farming it is meant that you have the decision-making power, obtain the benefits and take the financial risks in relation to the agricultural activity on the land declared to activate payment entitlements

How to apply

You must apply for FSP using the online Single Application and Maps Service by 15 May.

No decision made on allocation of payment entitlements.

If you have not received payment entitlements due to an outstanding decision (including those where a review of decision is in progress) by DAERA relating to a previous scheme year's application(s), and you wish to activate these payment entitlements (if subsequently allocated) this year, then you need to complete a SA online, declaring the land you are farming this year to activate payment entitlements. If you do not submit a SA by the application deadline this year and are subsequently allocated payment entitlements, it will not be possible to activate these payment entitlements (see also Section 7 on confiscation of payment entitlements).

If you are not farming this year, it will not be possible for you to activate payment entitlements this year even if these are subsequently allocated in respect of previous scheme year applications.

If a decision on the allocation of payment entitlements is outstanding on 15 May, the closing date for notification of payment entitlement transfers, it will not be possible for you to transfer payment entitlements for this scheme year. Transfer applications cannot be submitted in relation to payment entitlements which do not exist at the date of transfer.

Land at your disposal / management control on 15 May

To claim FSP you must be able to demonstrate that the land being declared in support of your claim is at your disposal/within your management control on 15 May.

You will be responsible for meeting the FSS Underpinning Requirements relating to the land for the entire calendar year, as well as ensuring the land remains eligible.

Unless land is common land each field parcel can be used only once in any year to claim FSP and two farmers cannot use the same field parcel to claim the FSP at the same time. Where the same field parcel is used to support FSP claims by two different farmers neither will be paid until it is determined who has the right to use the land in support of their claim. The farmer who does not have the right to claim payment on the land may be penalised. It is therefore important that farmers are clear who has the land at their disposal/management control and who is using it to claim FSP.

You must be able to demonstrate you have legal occupation of the land claimed e.g. in the case of land you do not own; you have a lease or conacre agreement enabling you to claim the land.

Where a field parcel is declared by two or more farmers, the farmer who makes the decisions in relation to the activity on that land and who bears the benefits and financial

risks related to those activities will be considered to have the land at their disposal / management control.

What is meant by at the farmer's disposal / management control?

When declaring your land on the SA you must declare only the land that is at your disposal/management control on the 15 May. Land is 'at your disposal' only if:

- you are the owner occupier farming the land, or
- you are the owner paying for it to be farmed under contract (manager in place), or
- you are a tenant who has taken the land under lease or a conacre agreement.

Duplicate field cases

Only one claimant is permitted to activate payment entitlements on each field parcel and where there is any doubt, claimants will be asked to provide evidence demonstrating to DAERA's satisfaction that the requirements have been met. Duplicate field cases will be investigated initially through the preliminary check process and the applicant who is found to be actively farming and/or has management control on the field parcels subject to a duplicate application will be the applicant who can claim their payment entitlements on that field parcel. Financial penalties may be applied to the farm business which has wrongly claimed.

If the Department cannot determine the rightful claimant, payment cannot be made pending resolution of the duplicate field by all claimants.

Landowner/tenant issues including dual use claims

In line with the rules on active farmer, dual use claims involving the FSP and any other payment scheme **are not permitted**.

Land ownership and occupation disputes

DAERA cannot adjudicate land ownership or occupation, where both parties provide evidence to support their claim. In these circumstances no payments will be made to either party, as payments cannot be made where a SA cannot be fully validated.

Conditionalities

To receive full FSP payment you must comply with the following conditionalities if offered to you.

- Participation in the SNHS; farm businesses must have registered for the scheme and completed training offered to them by 15 May 2027 to be compliant.

For those farm businesses that are not compliant by 15 May 2027 a 10% penalty will be applied to their FSP in 2027. The penalty will be increased to 15% for continued non-compliance in 2028 and future years until the conditionality has been met.

- For the Bovine Genetics Project, the conditionality requires that farm businesses with bovine animals must have registered for the project and completed training offered to them by 15 May 2028 to be compliant.

For those farm businesses that are not compliant by 15 May 2028 a 10% penalty will be applied to their FSP in 2028. The penalty will be increased to 15% for continued non-compliance in 2029 and future years until the conditionality has been met.

Farm Sustainability Payment and Agri-Environment Schemes

Environmental Farming Scheme

The Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS) is a voluntary agri-environment scheme that will support farm businesses and land managers to carry out environmentally beneficial farming practices on agricultural land.

Dual use claims for EFS/FSP/PCS will only be permitted for EFS (H) but only in certain circumstances and with prior approval from the Scheme Manager. This will be specifically on UK National Site Network or Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) land, and only where the applicant can demonstrate significant environmental benefit accruing from the arrangement.

Dual use claims are not permitted within EFS (W) as the agreement holder must have management control of the land for the duration of the EFS W agreement.

Applications to the EFS are now closed.

Farming with Nature Package

The Farming with Nature (FwN) Package is the replacement for the EFS and similarly aims to support farm businesses and land managers across all land types to make substantial contributions to environmental improvements and sustainability. The scheme hopes to reverse the trends in nature decline through retaining, maintaining, restoring and creating habitats that are important for species diversity and improved connectivity between habitat areas.

FwN is being delivered using a phased approach starting with the Farming with Nature Transition (FwNT) Scheme which opened for the first phase of farm businesses in June 2025 with five available actions. It is anticipated the second phase of FwNT will open in June 2026 with an increased list of actions available to choose from. More information on phase two will be available at the following link prior to the opening of the scheme.

Dual use claims are not currently permitted within FwNT, farm businesses must have management control of the land for the duration necessary to carry out the selected action, per the specifications, and for any associated retention period, if applicable.

Further information on agri-environment schemes, including the EFS and FwNT, can be found on the DAERA website:

[Environmental Farming Scheme \(EFS\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs \(daera-ni.gov.uk\)](#)

[Farming with Nature Package | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

If you are considering a dual use claim, you should seek further advice by contacting Payment Delivery Branch on 0300 200 7848 or email agriculturalandenvironmentalschemes@daera-ni.gov.uk prior to proceeding with your application.

How we check your claim

It is important that you meet all the eligibility requirements for the FSP and, in line with legislation, we will be undertaking controls to ensure that you do.

We will carry out administrative checks on all claims we receive. Where there is any doubt about your claim you will be asked to provide further information demonstrating, to DAERA's satisfaction, that the eligibility requirements have been met.

You should provide this information within any timeframes that are stipulated to help avoid delays with your payment.

If you do not provide this information, DAERA may process your application on the information available and your application may be rejected.

DAERA may also supplement the administrative checks with rapid field visits or follow-up ground checks if necessary.

In addition to administrative checks DAERA may also carry out inspections to ensure that the eligibility conditions of the FSP/PCS/YFP have been met. DAERA may also send you a request asking you to submit geotagged photographs as part of the checks process. **No payment will be made if you, or others acting on your behalf, prevent any of these checks from taking place.** Section 9 provides further information.

In keeping with the Counter Fraud Strategy and to combat fraud by false representation, DAERA will adopt a 'check first and pay later' culture.

Penalties for non-compliance with the regulations

If you fail to meet the eligibility criteria for the FSP you may incur penalties which could result in a reduction to your payment or your application may be rejected. A false declaration made deliberately or recklessly may also lead to criminal prosecution. See Section 9 for further information on penalties.

Under the regulations we do not have discretion to waive penalties, but in limited circumstances, we may accept that you did not meet the requirements of the FSP because of events outside of your control; this is known as force majeure or exceptional circumstances (FM/EC). Where this is the case, we will not normally apply penalties. See Section 10 for further information on FM/EC.

Payment

Payments will automatically be paid electronically into your bank, building society or credit union account.

Farm Sustainability Standards

From 1 January 2026 the Farm Sustainability Standards (FSS) have replaced Cross Compliance and apply to several payment schemes including the FSP.

There are seven standards that are reflective of the current environmental, public and animal health and welfare issues in Northern Ireland. They are good farm management practices and encourage responsible stewardship of land.

To ensure no reduction to payments under the payment schemes covered by FSS you must meet the Underpinning Requirements of the seven Standards.

We will carry out inspections to verify that all the FSS requirements are being met. Failure to meet these requirements will lead to financial penalties being applied to your payments.

Details of the FSS requirements and information on how FSS penalties are calculated can be found at – [Farm Sustainability Standards \(FSS\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

You should be aware that the land on which you are claiming FSP must be at your disposal on 15 May. You will be responsible for meeting FSS obligations relating to that land for the entire calendar year and you must ensure the land remains in a use and condition which is eligible for FSP. These obligations may remain with the claimant even if land is transferred.

There is one exception to this rule which is when land is transferred (sold, leased or taken in conacre) from or to someone who has also submitted a SA in that calendar year.

If the transferor submits a SA for other land in that calendar year, they will be liable for FSS breaches during the period that the land was at their disposal (that is before it was transferred). Similarly, if you claimed on some land which you then transferred out after 15 May, you would remain responsible for ensuring the FSS requirements relating to that land were met until the end of the calendar year.

You should carefully consider the terms of any contractual arrangements between you and the transferor or transferee if you are transferring land (either in or out) during the year. This is so you can make sure that your interests are protected, and you can produce documentary evidence regarding responsibility for the land if either a FSS breach occurs or access to inspectors is prevented before or after the land transfer. Similarly, you should bear in mind the risks of not having contractual arrangements agreed and in place.

In the case of livestock, the keeper of the animals is responsible for ensuring compliance with the animal related FSS requirements.

The FSS Underpinning Requirements can be found on the DAERA website at:

[Farm Sustainability Standards Underpinning Requirements | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

SECTION 2 - General Rules of the Young Farmers' Payment (YFP) Scheme

The YFP provides an annual top-up to the FSP to those farmers who meet its eligibility requirements. The top-up payment is limited to 90 hectares and the rate per hectare will, if necessary, be scaled back to respect the regional ceiling.

Whilst 2025 was the final year for applications to the Young Farmers' Payment (YFP) Scheme, successful applicants will continue to receive their top-up payment for a period up to five years. It is not guaranteed that payment will continue for this period as it is subject to applicants continuing to meet the eligibility conditions for the scheme. Applicants must apply for, and activate entitlements under, the FSP to be eligible for the YFP.

YFP applicants, applying again in this scheme year, and who continue to meet the requirements of the scheme, should apply on their SA by 15 May.

YFP applicants, applying again in this scheme year, who continue to meet the requirements of the scheme and who have still to provide verification evidence in respect of their previously successful application, should provide this further evidence (accounts and/or taxation information etc.) within the deadline set by DAERA.

DAERA will be writing to these applicants seeking this information. Failure to provide satisfactory follow-up evidence as requested could lead to a delay in payment in this scheme year or a rejection of the previous application resulting in recovery of entitlements allocated from the Regional Reserve and any funds already paid in respect of those entitlements and the YFP. It would also mean that the applicant could not benefit from those entitlements and would not receive the YFP in this scheme year and future years.

Young Farmers who became head of holding of an existing business established prior to 31 December 2021 which does not meet the historic years' requirements, will not be able to submit a claim for FSP in 2026, and therefore will not be eligible to claim YFP in 2026.

Any future support for Young Farmers will be considered in the context of the Farming for the Generations Programme - [Farming for the Generations | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#).

For further information on this scheme contact Rural Support on 028 8676 0040.

SECTION 3 - General Rules of the Protein Crop Scheme

DAERA has provided for a coupled payment for particular nitrogen fixing crops, which are also referred to as protein crops. The PCS is an additional payment to farmers for growing beans, peas and sweet lupins. This scheme has been extended until 2026.

You do not have to claim the FSP to be eligible for PCS, however land used to grow protein crops may be claimed for both FSP and PCS.

Rates of Payment

The payment rate is £330 per hectare (ha). The total area eligible for payment under the scheme will be capped at 1,300 ha. If more than 1,300 ha is determined as eligible, a linear scale back will be applied to the determined area to reduce the total Northern Ireland area paid on to 1,300 ha. Payment will be made on the scaled back area.

Example

Total area determined in Northern Ireland as eligible for the PCS is 1,500 ha. Scale back required to reduce this area to 1,300 ha = $200 / 1,500 = 13.33\%$. A linear scale back of 13.33% would be applied to the determined area of all individual applications. Therefore a determined area of 18ha would be reduced by 13.33% to 15.6 ha and payment made on 15.6 ha.

Who is eligible to apply?

To be eligible to claim payment under the PCS you must meet all of the following conditions:

1. You must have a DAERA Category 1 Business ID.
2. You must **not** have an approved Nutrient Action Programme (NAP) Derogation. It is a condition of a NAP derogation that you do not grow leguminous (protein) crops. If you do so, you will be in breach of one of the conditions of your derogation and you could face penalties and be ineligible to apply for a NAP derogation in the following year.
3. You must claim a minimum total area of 0.3 ha; with a minimum area in each field of 0.1ha.
4. You may only claim on land planted in protein crops as listed in point 7 below. All crops must be sown in line with normal husbandry practices. This means that you must prepare the land and sow seeds in a manner, and at a seed rate, that would be expected to produce a normal marketable crop. You should keep all records including details of seed purchase and sowing as evidence.

5. If you sow protein crops in a mixture with cereals or other crops, they will not be eligible for the scheme. Under-sowing with grass is not permitted.
6. Protein crops must not be harvested until **after** 31 July. You must maintain the crops in line with normal agricultural practice until after 31 July each year.
7. Protein crops are defined as:
 - NF1 Spring Peas*
 - NF2 Spring Field Beans*
 - NF3 Winter Field Beans* NF4
 - Spring Sweet Lupins*
 - NF5 Winter Sweet Lupins*

**More detail can be found at Annex A Land Use Codes (NF1 – NF5) in the [Guide to Land Eligibility | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#) .*

Note:

The forage crops clover, alfalfa/lucerne are not eligible for aid under this pilot scheme.

How to apply

You must apply for the PCS using the online Single Application and Maps Service using your Government Gateway (GG) or Northern Ireland Civil Service Identity Assurance (NIDA) account details at: <https://www.daera.gov.uk/services/daera-online-services>
Submit your SA on or before the closing date for the scheme which is 15 May each year (except in cases of FM/EC) to avoid any reduction or a delay in payment.

You must select 'Protein Crop Scheme' under scheme selection in your online SA, and enter the total area claimed with the appropriate land use code NF1-NF5 on the land details page for each field you are claiming. The minimum area you can claim for each field is 0.1 ha, and the minimum total claim area is 0.3 ha. Applicants must only claim PCS on the area where the crop has been established. Bare soil margins or headlands should not be claimed.

If you select “Protein Crop Scheme” but do not claim for any area under the land use codes NF1 – NF5, you will not receive any payment.

Farm Sustainability Payment and the Protein Crop Scheme

You can claim both PCS and FSP on the same field parcel, however dual use claims are not permitted, i.e. both schemes cannot be claimed on the same field by different claimants.

You cannot claim PCS on a field or an area of a field and also claim options in the same field or area of a field under the EFS/FwNT schemes e.g. planting under PCS in the margins of the EFS Option 'Creation of 10m riparian buffer – ungrazed' (RBW).

How we check your claim

A proportion of claims under the PCS will be selected for inspection to ensure that the eligibility conditions of the scheme have been met.

If your crop has failed (or part of your crop), you must notify DAERA within 15 working days of being able to do so.

No payment will be made if you, or others acting on your behalf, prevent any of these inspections from taking place.

Penalties for non-compliance with the regulations

Where the area claimed for PCS is over-declared, penalties may be applied.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE HECTARES DETERMINED (FOUND) AND THE NUMBER OF HECTARES DECLARED	LEVEL OF REDUCTION
If the difference does not exceed 3% of the area determined <u>and</u> 2 ha	No penalty applied. Payment is based on the number of eligible ha determined.
If the difference is more than <u>either</u> 3% of the area determined <u>or</u> 2 ha Example 1 below refers	Penalties are calculated based on 2 x the difference between the area declared and the area determined. To avoid a penalty the over declaration must not exceed both thresholds.

Example 1

Declared area – 5 ha
 Determined area – 4 ha
 Over-declaration – 1 ha
 Over-declaration % - $(1 / 4) \times 100 = 25\%$

Area paid on reduced by 2 x the difference between area declared and area determined
 $1 \text{ ha} \times 2 = 2 \text{ ha}$ (penalty area)

Payment

$4 \text{ ha} - (1 \text{ ha} \times 2) = 2 \text{ ha}$
 $2 \text{ ha} \times \text{£}330 / \text{ha} = \text{£}660$

Farm Sustainability Standards – Protein Crop Scheme

Farmers must comply with the FSS Underpinning Requirements to receive PCS payments without reduction.

Details of the FSS requirements and information on how FSS penalties are calculated can be found at - [Farm Sustainability Standards \(FSS\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

Force Majeure/Exceptional Circumstances

If your claim under the PCS is affected by FM/EC such as crop failure, you must notify DAERA within 15 working days of being able to do so. You should keep all records including details of seed purchase and sowing as evidence of FM/EC, otherwise penalties may be applied to your application.

SECTION 4 - Land eligibility and the Farm Sustainability Payment

Introduction

From 2026, we have simplified the land eligibility rules that you must meet to receive FSP payments. Eligible land for FSP now includes:

- previously ineligible soft features e.g. rush, scrub, bracken, heather and bogs to reflect their positive benefits to climate change mitigation and biodiversity and their importance in maintaining soil and water quality;
- discrete areas of woodland currently mapped on the Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS), which are less than 5ha, excluding Christmas trees;
- woodland that is/has been part of a DAERA forestry or agri-environment scheme administered by the Department from 1 January 2009 will be eligible regardless of the 5ha threshold;
- land where the density of scattered stones, scree or rock make up less than or equal to 70% will be eligible.

Ineligible woodland for FSP includes:

- woodland not mapped on the LPIS from 18 November 2025;
- discrete areas of woodland more than 5 ha;
- part of a woodland parcel which is less than 5ha and is contained in a woodland block; or
- state-owned or on state-owned land.

It is vital that you only claim on eligible land and that you understand clearly that it is in your interests, and your responsibility to ensure that your maps are up-to-date and all ineligible areas are removed. If you need help, clarification or guidance please contact your local DAERA Direct Office.

Full details of eligible land for the FSP can be found in the Guide to Land Eligibility at: [Guide to Land Eligibility | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

Minimum Field Size

Any individual field or area within a field that you declare to establish and activate payment entitlements must have an eligible area of at least 0.1 ha.

There is an exception for common land. Provided the Maximum Eligible Area (MEA) of any field is greater than 0.1 ha graziers can still claim their share of that field, even if their share is less than 0.1 ha.

Declaring land under the FSP

You must declare all field parcels you are claiming payment for on the “Your field data” section of your SA. Ensure the Land Type, Usage and the FSP Area (ha) you are claiming is recorded accurately.

Field parcels that **ARE NOT** eligible **DO NOT** need to be declared on the SA. For example, a scrap yard next to the farmyard.

Claiming on land for FSP

You must claim all the eligible land you are farming this year in the field data section FSP Area (ha) column (area to activate for FSP).

You should make sure it is eligible land when you apply and will remain so throughout the calendar year. **If circumstances change or an unforeseen event occurs during the scheme year preventing you from farming all the land you have claimed for, you should contact DAERA immediately for advice and guidance.**

Maximum Eligible Area (MEA)

You must check that the MEA is correct for each of the fields that you declare. The MEA is our assessment of the **maximum** area that you can use to claim FSP for each field based on the boundary and any ineligible features shown on your map. The MEAs on your prepopulated field data sheet have been updated to reflect the new land eligibility rules. It is important that the MEA held on our mapping system is correct to avoid validation errors that may delay the processing of your claim.

Your latest map will show the MEA for each field and areas that DAERA considers as being ineligible.

You must make further deductions to your MEA or areas pre-populated on your SA using the eligibility rules if you consider other areas in your fields do not meet the eligibility criteria. Do not assume that the MEA is correct as things may have changed on the ground since this assessment.

We may apply financial penalties to your claim if we later find that you have claimed FSP on ineligible areas.

The most important things to remember are:

- Do not claim on land if there is doubt about its eligibility.
- Do not assume that you can claim the MEA for your fields. It is possible DAERA’s assessment of the MEA is incorrect. We want you to correct it where that is the case. You must check that all ineligible features have been deducted and only claim on eligible land.

- **Do not claim a larger area than the MEA unless you are very sure that this area is wrong and have reported the change to DAERA.** See information below on how to report changes to your map.
- We will carry out cross checks between the MEA and the area you claim. If you claim a larger area we will have to investigate every difference we identify. This will take time and will impact on our ability to process your claim quickly.
- You can claim less than the MEA and you must ensure that you deduct any other ineligible areas from your claim that we have not included on your map.

How to report changes to your map

Important: Requests for map changes should be submitted as soon as possible to ensure that you receive an updated MEA before the SA period closes. This will prevent delays validating your claim.

You can use the following methods to notify us of a map change.

- Using the Single Application and Maps Service. The SA online service includes your map which you can view, print and submit changes as you complete your application.
- You can request a paper copy of your map by emailing agriculturalandenvironmentalschemes@daera-ni.gov.uk or by phone on 0300 200 7848.
- In exceptional cases you can notify us of changes using a LPIS Change Form that is available by emailing LPIS.Management@daera-ni.gov.uk or by phone on 0300 200 7848.

All map changes should be reported as soon as possible but well in advance of the closing date of 15 May for the receipt of completed SAs. This is to ensure that you receive an updated MEA before the SA closes and to avoid delays validating your application. We will not accept any amendments to increase your claimed area on your application after 9 June (except in cases of FM/EC).

Common land

Common land can be used to claim the FSP providing the land meets the eligibility requirements.

If the common land is part of a Trust Managed Estate (previously known as a Common Land Trust), the MEA of the shares will be provided to the shareholders by the Trustees.

You should use the information provided to you when completing the SA.

The information on your map and your field data table within the Single Application and Maps Service has been taken from our LPIS and reflects all changes applied by November of the previous year. The pre-populated table on your online Single Application **may not** be correct as it may not include the field(s) that are part of a Common that have a share allocation on which you claimed for last year.

If you are farming a share(s) of a common(s) in this scheme year that is not included on your pre-populated SA and you wish to claim FSP for this land you need to add this field(s) to your claim. This can be done using the “Add a Field” functionality on the form side of the SA.

It is important that you check the MEA for the common land is correct. It is your responsibility to check if there are other ineligible areas that we may not have taken into account, particularly for fields with marginal land and temporary ineligible features.

Nutrient Action Programme (NAP) Regulations

Since 2015 the eligible land area determined to activate payment entitlements (your field data) is considered by DAERA to be the agricultural area on your holding. It will therefore be this area that will be notified to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) for the purposes of checking that you have complied with the nitrogen loading limit under the Nutrient Action Programme Regulations. Farm businesses should ensure that any agricultural land area used for the purposes of nitrogen loading calculations meet the criteria as defined under the Nutrient Action Programme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019, despite the changes to land eligibility criteria for Agricultural and Environmental Schemes for 2026.

If you don't use all of your eligible land to activate payment entitlements for payment, then you may find it difficult to comply with the nitrogen loading limit. Fields which are used by another farmer to claim FSP cannot be used by you in relation to the nitrogen loading limit as by definition they are being farmed by someone else.

Non-agricultural activity on eligible land

To be eligible for FSP at least 3ha (or 2ha if your claim is less than 5ha) must be used for an agricultural activity. If agricultural and non-agricultural activities are taking place on the same land the land won't be eligible if the intensity, nature, duration and timing of the non-agricultural activity significantly interfere with agricultural activity.

Some non-agricultural activities and the impact of these on FSP are outlined below.

Category A:

These non-agricultural activities do not significantly interfere with agricultural activity and won't stop you getting paid for the land, as long as it is eligible for FSP. Examples include walking, farm visits by schools, fishing, shooting (game).

Category B:

These non-agricultural activities are allowed, but not for more than 28 days (consecutively or not) in the calendar year. Examples include car parking, country fairs and shows, clay shooting, farm auctions and sales.

Section 5 of the Guide to Land Eligibility outlines a range of ineligible features and land uses that you cannot claim FSP for. This includes situations where the principal purpose of the land is for recreational or other activities, such as golf courses, other permanent sports facilities, racecourses or gallops, land used for solar panels, or land within the curtilage of an airstrip or airport whether used for agricultural activities or otherwise.

Further information can be found in the Guide to Land Eligibility at:

[Guide to Land Eligibility | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

Land temporarily out of agricultural use

If some or all of your land is not available to you on 15 May, or is ineligible for the FSP at any time during the year for reasons of FM/EC, you should tell us when you submit your claim, or if you have already submitted your claim, within 15 working days of the date of being able to do so as you may still be able to claim on that land.

For further information on FM/EC, see Section 10 of this booklet.

Fields cannot be shared

Only fields which are enclosed with DAERA recognised boundaries may be claimed. More than one business claiming a field for the same scheme (that is multiple claimants) will not be permitted. If existing fields are being used by more than one farmer then the field will need to be split by erecting a permanent boundary such as a fence.

The only exception when fields can be shared is in cases where DAERA is satisfied that the eligible land is shared to graze animals by all the businesses involved and it is not practical to fence the land. In these cases we have allocated notional shares by dividing the MEA based on their actual use of the land as agreed with the businesses. These fields have been allocated a 940 Farm Survey Number.

Hemp

It is a criminal offence to grow hemp in the UK for any purpose without a licence.

Areas used to produce hemp shall only be eligible for FSP if the varieties used have a tetrahydrocannabinol content not exceeding 0.2%.

We may penalise you and recover any money you have been paid if you do not meet the conditions of growing hemp.

Official seed labels

For hemp grown on land to claim FSP, certified seed of one of the eligible varieties must be used. The original official seed labels, confirming the variety of hemp grown, must be supplied to DAERA (Agricultural and Environmental Schemes Payment Delivery Branch, Orchard House) by 15 May. These will be receipted by DAERA and returned to you. Where sowing takes place after 15 May, these labels must be submitted **no later than 30 June**. It is recommended that you send your seed labels by recorded delivery.

Further information on hemp can be found in the Guide to Land Eligibility at:

[Guide to Land Eligibility | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

Protection of environmentally sensitive permanent grassland (PGS)

The direct payment regulations contain a requirement to designate permanent grassland in areas, including in peat and wetlands, covered by the Wild Birds Directive and/or the Habitats Regulations and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations which are environmentally sensitive, and which need protection to meet the requirements of the above legislation. From 1 January 2015, ploughing or conversion of permanent grassland in areas designated as environmentally sensitive is not permitted.

DAERA identified permanent grassland fields located in these areas and in January 2015 wrote to all relevant farmers concerned.

If you declared one of these fields in your SA last year, they will be denoted by a coloured badge, in the Field Data Section of this year's SA.

Permanent grassland fields, including peat and wetlands, in these areas are classified as PGS if 10% or more of the field area or an area greater than 0.1 ha lies within the designated areas.

Any permanent grassland field that has been identified as having less than 10% of the field area and not more than 0.1 ha inside the designated area will not be classified as PGS and will not be subject to the ploughing and conversion ban. However, if you have permanent grassland fields that fall into this category, i.e. that are located in the designated areas, but which fall below the area thresholds, you must still observe any management requirements imposed by the NIEA for these sites.

Sites designated under the Wild Birds Directive, the Habitats Regulations and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations are part of the UK National Site Network, which refers to the suite of Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation in the UK's territory that were Natura 2000 sites designated before exit day and any European sites designated after the end of the transition period. These sites may also

have a national designation status such as Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI). You are also subject to the Farm Sustainability Standards requirements for these areas.

Certain fields classified as PGS will only be partly located in the designated areas. In these cases, the ploughing and conversion ban will apply only to the part of the field designated under the the Wild Birds Directive, the Habitats Regulations and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations.

If any of your fields have been classified as PGS, you can find out whether this relates to the entire field or only part of the field by contacting your local DAERA Direct Office or phone Payment Delivery Branch and ask to speak to a TDU or LPIS advisor regarding any designations within a field.

If a PGS classification relates to only part of a field, you will have the following options:

Option 1: Refrain from ploughing or converting the entire field.

Option 2: Erect a permanent fence along the designated boundary and request a mapping change to split the field.

Option 3: The field is not split but you refrain from ploughing or converting the designated area.

Please note that for option 2 and option 3, it will be crucial that you ascertain the precise area that has been designated as environmentally sensitive.

You can do this by contacting your local DAERA Direct Office or phone 0300 200 7848 and ask to speak to a TDU or LPIS advisor regarding any designations within a field. They will be able to advise you on the precise areas within your field(s) that are covered by the Wild Birds Directive, the Habitats Regulations and the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations, the restrictions that apply and the options available to you.

You are advised to be cautious when ploughing close to designated areas and leave a margin to ensure that you do not plough or convert the designated area. DAERA will undertake checks to ensure compliance with these rules. Failure to comply with the above restrictions may result in a penalty being applied to your FSP.

If you are farming land this year that you did not farm last year, you are advised to ascertain whether it is classified as PGS via DAERA's online services e-Map or by contacting your local DAERA Direct Office or phoning Payment Delivery Branch.

Example – Non –compliance with the requirement to protect PGS

A farmer has 2 ha of PSG. At inspection 1 ha was found to have been ploughed. The reduction for non-compliance with the ban on the ploughing or conversion of PGS = 1 ha (i.e. the area found to be non-compliant). No payment will be made in respect of this 1 ha

and this will be regarded as an over declaration and penalties may apply resulting in a further deduction in your payment.

SECTION 5 - Active Farmer requirements

Definition of Active Farmer

Payment under the FSP will only be made to the farmer who holds decision making power, derives benefits and assumes financial risks in relation to the agricultural activity on the land. Only active farmers who have management control of the land shall be eligible to activate payment entitlements in respect of that land. This is referred to as the 'active farmer' requirement.

All four elements - decision making power, benefits, financial risks and management control - must be fulfilled by you.

From 2026 you must undertake agricultural activity on at least 3ha of land where your claim is 5ha or more, or 2ha of land where you claim is less than 5ha.

Land let under conacre and other land tenure arrangements

For the purpose of activating payment entitlements, the nature of the land tenure arrangement is irrelevant (subject to the claimant having the land at his disposal/management control on 15 May). The key issue is the agricultural activity taking place on the land and what is happening in practice, and in particular, who enjoys the decision-making powers, benefits and the financial risk of that agricultural activity.

The active farmer requirements have particular relevance for land let under conacre arrangements. If you are the landowner and you let your land out in conacre, it will generally be the case that it is your conacre tenant who carries out the main agricultural activity on the conacre land and enjoys the decision-making power, benefits and financial risks in relation to this agricultural activity. Therefore, the tenant will be able to claim payments this year on that land, not you as the landowner.

If you consider that there are exceptional circumstances which lead you to believe that you can meet the active farmer requirement, even though the land is let out, then it will be up to you as a landowner to demonstrate how you meet the active farmer requirements.

Selling Grass/Silage

You must be able to demonstrate clearly that you enjoy the decision-making power, benefits and financial risks in relation to the agricultural activity being carried out on the land over the course of the year. This will be much easier to demonstrate if the agricultural activities on the land throughout the year have been carried out by you alone, or by your employee or an independent contractor engaged by you, and the farmer who eventually purchases the silage has had no involvement in its production or storage.

Example 1

The landowner himself purchases and applies all the inputs required to grow the grass crop. The landowner engages a contractor to harvest the grass as round bale silage when it is ready, and the bales are then stored on the landowner's property. After advertising the silage for sale, the landowner sells the round bales to a number of other farm businesses at the best available market price. No other farming activities have taken place on the land over the course of the year. In this scenario, the landowner would be able to make a strong case that he should receive FSP payments because he took all of the management decisions, obtained the benefits from the agricultural activity, carried the financial risks in relation to that activity and there was no other activity on that land over the course of the year.

Example 2

The landowner agrees that a farmer who has taken the land in conacre in previous years should take the grass from the field this year. The farmer arranges for delivery of the inputs and applies the inputs required to grow the grass. The farmer subsequently harvests the grass and places it in his silo when ready. The landowner pays for the inputs and pays the farmer for harvesting costs. The farmer pays for the grass and the overall financial outcome is similar to conacre rent.

This scenario would appear to have the same practical and financial impact as conacre. The decision-making powers, benefits and the financial risks of the agricultural activity appear to reside primarily with the farmer and not the landowner.

Therefore, it would be very difficult for the landowner to demonstrate to DAERA that all three of these requirements have clearly been met by him in respect of this activity and, hence, very unlikely that the landowner would be paid FSP in this year.

Contract rearing of livestock

Contract rearing agreements can come in many different forms. If you are the farm business under a contract rearing agreement it is likely that you will be eligible to claim FSP on the relevant land used for that enterprise if you can demonstrate that you manage the livestock and associated grassland (i.e. taking the decisions and bearing the costs in relation to husbandry), bear risks in relation to the agricultural activity being carried out (for example you suffer a financial loss if animals don't meet performance targets, etc.) and obtain benefits from this agricultural activity (for example a payment for rearing the animals).

You should be aware that all 3 conditions must be satisfied and the contract rearing enterprise must be linked to the claimed land. A person who had responsibility under a contract rearing agreement simply to check the animals each day and ensure that they had adequate feed and water would be unlikely to meet the requirements to receive allocated payment entitlements.

Share farming

Under share farming arrangements more than one farm business can be involved in the exercising of agricultural activity on a particular area of land. However FSP can only be paid to the farm business which holds the payment entitlements.

Winter grazing of sheep

The effect of allowing other farm businesses to winter graze your land with sheep depends on individual circumstances.

For example, a dairy farm business who has the land at his disposal on 15 May, takes three cuts of silage from a field plus some aftermath grazing, and then allows another farm business to graze sheep on that field for a month or two over the winter, will be able to claim FSP on that field. That is because the dairy farm business (which has the land at its disposal on 15 May) will be able to demonstrate that for the majority of the agricultural activity being carried out in this year he enjoys the decision-making power, benefits and financial risks.

However, where a landowner carries out very little or no agricultural activity on the land during the year and then lets the field to another farm business for winter grazing, it will be extremely difficult for the landowner to demonstrate that he meets the requirements to receive payment.

Keeping Land in Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition

There is a requirement for FSP claimants to carry out some activity on land being kept in GAEC such as mowing the vegetation, in order to maintain the land in a state suitable for grazing or cultivation. Keeping land in GAEC is counted as an agricultural activity.

If you are simply maintaining the land in GAEC and allow another farm business to carry out agricultural activity on this land (for example winter grazing sheep), then that becomes the primary agricultural activity and means that you will not be able to meet the requirements of the scheme. Equally if you carry out agricultural activity other than simply maintaining the land in GAEC then this becomes the primary agricultural activity.

Purchasing fertiliser, cutting hedges and cleaning sheughs

If someone else is using your land for grazing, silage or cropping activities and your activities are confined to purchasing fertiliser, cutting hedges and cleaning sheughs, then it is extremely unlikely that you will be able to demonstrate clearly that you have decision making powers, benefits and the financial risks of the agricultural activity on land.

Provision of Evidence

DAERA will carefully assess each application received to consider whether the active farmer requirements have been met. The assessment of whether an applicant meets the active farmer requirements will be based on individual circumstances.

Where there is any doubt as to whether the active farmer requirements have been met, further evidence will be requested. The outcome in each case will depend on the evidence submitted which demonstrates what is happening in practice and not just what may be recorded in writing.

The onus is on you as applicant to be able to prove that the land declared on your application to activate payment entitlements is eligible. If you are unable to provide satisfactory evidence when asked to show that you meet the scheme requirements, then the land declared may be deemed ineligible which could result in financial penalties being applied and no payment being made.

The following are examples of evidence that may be required:

- Accounts for the farming business prepared by a qualified accountant
- Receipts relating to output and inputs
- Bank statements showing income/expenditure relating to receipts
- Contract Rearing Agreements
- Share Farming Agreements
- Evidence demonstrating that your agricultural activity has a different practical and financial outcome compared to renting land in conacre
- An explanation of your farming activities, your personal involvement in these and how this can be reconciled with other documentary evidence relating to the farm business

Additional evidence may also be required. It is important that you can demonstrate that you meet the active farmer requirements on all land being used to activate payment entitlements.

Attempting to claim FSP on land on which you carry out no agricultural activity or where the activity is carried out under the control of another farmer is not allowed, even if you are clearly farming other areas of land which you declare. If crops are being grown on the land, you may need to be able to demonstrate that you are growing and harvesting the crops. Therefore, you should retain all evidence that would allow you to do so.

If you are asked to provide evidence, **it is important that you do so within any deadlines specified by DAERA**, otherwise your application may be rejected.

Not actively farming this year

If your farm business is not actively farming in this scheme year you are not eligible to claim FSP (or YFP if applicable). You should not submit a claim as this may result in over declaration penalties.

If your farm business holds payment entitlements but is not actively farming your payment entitlements must be permanently transferred by sale or gift to a business that is farming which may proceed to activate the payment entitlements for payment (see also Section 7

on payment entitlements). If you do not permanently transfer your entitlements they will expire on 16 May 2026.

SECTION 6 - Business structure and separately managed businesses

Introduction

DAERA must maintain a record of the identity of anyone who submits an application to receive funding. Each business must be registered with us and have a unique business identification (ID) number.

Business IDs are mainly used to administer and pay farm based subsidies under the SA. DAERA has controls in place to ensure that, as far as possible, each business ID is allocated to an independent and separate business both in status and in practice. A test is applied to each application for a business ID based on criteria concerning legal status, economic structure/organisation, commercial arrangements, and operational arrangements.

You should ensure that the information we hold on your farm business is accurate and up-to-date. If there is a change to the farm business you must notify DAERA of the change and the reason for it as soon as possible. Basic changes can be made online, updating email address and/or phone numbers.

All other changes should be notified by using the relevant Business Change (BC) Form (see paragraphs below on 'Changes to your business structure').

As with any business it is very important that you ensure that your farm business has a contingency plan in place to enable, where possible, business activities to continue in your absence, or the absence of other key members.

DAERA is reviewing businesses which have had no herd or flock activity and have not submitted applications for payment schemes in recent years. In particular, those businesses that have had no activity for five years or more will be closed. Anyone in that business wishing to re-commence farming would be regarded as a new entrant (unless in the five year period they belonged to another business) and required to apply for a new business ID. They will need to complete form FB1 and go through the full separateness process. If successful they will then be allocated a new business ID.

Business Registration – application for a DAERA Business ID (Form FB1)

We cannot pay you unless you are registered with us as a farm business and have a business ID. If you are a new farm business and are not registered with DAERA, you should contact your local DAERA Direct Office **immediately** to get advice and Form FB1 (Application for DAERA Business Identifier). You can also download this form from our website at: [Farm Business Management Forms \(FB1 and FB3\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

As the registration process can take time, you are strongly advised to do so as soon as possible. This form must be received by us, where possible, before and no later than the date you submit your SA. We should receive your SA by 15 May or penalties may apply and your payment reduced.

Business categories

We have four categories of business ID:

Category 1:

Subject to meeting scheme conditions, a Category 1 business ID enables the business to hold payment entitlements, and to apply for FSP and other payment schemes.

Category 2:

A Category 2 business ID is required if you are a non-farming landowner or have less than 3ha of eligible land and wish to participate in an agri-environment or forestry scheme only.

If the applicant already holds a Category 1 business ID, a separate Category 2 business ID will not be provided.

Category 3:

Those farm businesses that hold a small number of animals are given a Category 3 business ID. If you hold a Category 3 business ID and wish to apply for FSP or other schemes, your farm business will need to be assessed to ensure it meets the separateness requirements for a Category 1 business.

Category 5:

For hobby keepers of equine, cervid, camelid and back yard poultry a Category 5 business ID is allocated. Category 5 businesses are non-agricultural and must never be linked to cattle, sheep, goat, or pig animal group numbers.

Separately managed businesses

You can send in separate SAs for different farm businesses in which you are involved **only** if you manage them as separate businesses according to certain conditions. It is your responsibility to demonstrate that the businesses are separate. In deciding whether they are separate, we may need to seek further information from you.

Associated businesses

DAERA reserves the right to refuse or revoke a business ID where it considers that two or more businesses are not separate.

In previous years, as part of DAERA's assessment of applications to BPS/FSTP, it carried out a number of cross checks aimed at ensuring that only those businesses that are genuinely separate were able to access funding under those and other payment schemes.

DAERA will continue to look at farm businesses that are identified as having an association and farm businesses may be asked to demonstrate that each of the associated farm businesses are separate.

Operational separateness relates to the separateness of cropping, stocking, feed, fertiliser, stock housing, machinery, labour, land for grazing, livestock records, farm plans, registration, herd marks, etc. of a business. Any herds / flocks must operate completely independently of any herds / flocks belonging to another business.

It is expected that each farm business ID will normally be able to demonstrate the following:

- Generally a separate farmyard, separate housing and handling facilities for animals;
- herds / flocks not mixing with animals belonging to another business ID;
- separate machinery (sharing of machinery that would typically occur between separate farms is acceptable but not to such an extent that one business is highly dependent on another business for machinery or in practice there is one set of machinery for both businesses);
- feedstuffs, silage and other inputs are sourced independently and stored separately from that of another business;
- there are normal commercial trading arrangements for transfer of animals and purchase of inputs and capital equipment including with other farm businesses; **and**
- separate legal status (e.g. the business has separate accounts)

Farm businesses that are genuinely separate should be able to demonstrate their separateness with relative ease.

For further information on the rules for allocating a business ID and assessing if a farm business is separate from another farm business you should refer to the DAERA guidance at

[Guide to DAERA Identification Numbers for Business Customers, Animal Group Number \(AGN\) Keepers | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

If you consider that your farm business may not meet the requirements to be regarded as a separate business, then you should consider completing form BC3 to merge the associated businesses. This is especially the case if your herd/flock is associated with a herd/flock belonging to another business. Form BC3 can be obtained by accessing:

[Business Merger Application Form \(BC3\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

A merger is unlikely to have any practical impact on the operation of your farm business as it is possible to have more than one Animal Group Number (AGN) under one business ID and payments received from DAERA can be divided among partners as they decide.

If you are thinking about applying for a business ID you need to consider whether you are setting up a separate farm or becoming involved in/taking over an existing farm business. If it is the latter a new business ID will not be allocated, and you should become a member of the existing farm business.

Changes to your business structure

There are a number of Business Change (BC) forms and if you have a change in your business details you need to notify us by completing the relevant BC form.

Form BC1 - to notify us of a change to the membership of a business (including trading title and change of address).

Form BC3 – to notify us of a request for a business merger and request that payment entitlements held by those businesses are merged into one farm business.

Form BC4 – to notify us of a request for a business scission and request that payment entitlements held by the original farm business are divided and transferred to the new businesses created as a result of the scission (split).

Further information can be found in the 'Guide to Business Changes' booklet at: [Guide to Business Changes. | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

What to do if a member of the business dies

If a member of a farm business dies (either a sole trader or a member of a multi-member business) it is important that the Personal Representatives or the Authorised Person (AP) acting on behalf of the farm business, contact us in writing as soon as possible.

In the case of a sole trader (that is there is only one person in the business) a business ID cannot be passed onto someone else. Should the sole trader state in their Will that they wish to leave their business to another person he/she will have to apply to the Department for a new business ID.

In the case of multi-member businesses we will continue to keep the business active and deal with the remaining members. It is for the Executors and remaining members to agree on the management of the business. **Executors must notify the Department if there is a dispute involving the farm business.**

We will continue to deal with the Personal Representatives of the business. In order to submit a SA on behalf of the business, the Personal Representative can opt to:

- Engage an AP to submit the SA on behalf of the business.

or

- Register as an AP and submit the SA on behalf of the business. To register as an AP, the Personal Representative will need to obtain a DAERA Customer ID. This can be obtained by contacting their nearest DAERA Direct Office to apply for their Customer ID; on receipt of a DAERA Customer ID they may then contact Online Services and complete the necessary paperwork to apply to become a registered AP.

If you do not notify us of the death of a business member we will not be able to transfer payment entitlements to the beneficiaries of the estate and any payment that may relate to the payment entitlements held by the deceased may not be paid.

Beneficiaries must be a registered farm business with us and must hold any inherited payment entitlements on the 15 May of the given scheme year in order to claim FSP. **If this business is not in place by 15 May you should arrange to have the SA completed online by the AP.**

Transfer of payment entitlements because of a business change

Where a BC means a transfer of payment entitlements from one business to another by gift, sale or lease, you can transfer using DAERA's online transfer service at www.daera-ni.gov.uk/services/daera-online-services. You will need to do this on or before the trading deadline which is **15 May in each scheme year**.

If you encounter any difficulties using the online services you should contact Payment Delivery Branch on 0300 200 7848 between 9am and 5pm to request help and guidance.

In the case of inheritance (actual or anticipated), a paper form TE1 **MUST** be completed and received by 15 May. If your application is received after the deadline it will not be accepted in this scheme year and will roll into the next unless FM/EC applies. We are not responsible for forms being lost or delayed in the post. It is important that you ensure the correct postage has been paid. Proof of postage is not proof of receipt.

Where there is a BC that requires a transfer of payment entitlements because of a business merger or scission, form BC3 (merger) or BC4 (scission) must be completed to transfer any payment entitlements as a result of the business merger or scission. These forms are available by accessing:

[Business Merger Application Form \(BC3\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

[Business Scission Application \(BC4\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

If you want the transfer to take effect for this scheme year, the closing date for completion of online transfers or receipt of paper applications using form TE1, together with any supporting documentation, is 15 May.

Further advice can be found in the 'Guide to the Transfer of Payment Entitlements' and the 'Guide to Business Changes' booklets at:

[Guide to the Transfer of Payment Entitlements | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#) – will be available when decision made on unit value of entitlements

[Guide to Business Changes. | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

If you have any questions in relation to the inheritance of payment entitlements and how to notify us of a death, you should telephone 0300 200 7848 and ask to speak to someone in Farm Business Management and Review Branch.

SECTION 7 - Payment entitlements

Introduction

Important changes to the Farm Sustainability Payment (FSP) Scheme in 2026 concerning your entitlements.

You are advised to pay particular attention to this Section to make sure you are aware of the rules on activation and confiscation of payment entitlements for FSP in 2026.

The transfer of payment entitlements by lease will be limited to one year in 2026.

While you own the payment entitlements, access to the FSP will depend on you activating (using) your payment entitlements and declaring an equivalent number of eligible hectares in order to claim FSP. You must also meet the active farmer requirements which are set out in Section 5 of this Guide.

It is also possible for you to receive more payment entitlements by lease or purchase from a farm business which currently holds payment entitlements and wants to lease or sell them. See 'Transfer of payment entitlements' below for further information.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- If you received a letter from us stating that your farm business **has not met the historic years' requirements it will not be eligible to apply for FSP in 2026**. You must transfer your entitlements permanently by sale or gift by 15 May 2026 or they will expire.
 - You can only transfer your entitlements to an eligible farm business registered with the Department before 18 November 2025.
 - This restriction does not apply to the transfer of entitlements by actual inheritance.
 - If you leased your entitlements before 2025 to an eligible farm business for a period ending after the 2026 scheme year, your entitlements will expire at the end of the lease. Alternatively, you have the option to terminate the lease in 2026 and transfer your entitlements permanently to an eligible farm business by 15 May 2026.
 - If you leased your entitlements before 2025 to an ineligible farm business for a period ending after the 2026 scheme year, your entitlements will expire on 16 May 2026. Alternatively, you have the option to terminate the lease in 2026 and transfer your entitlements permanently to an eligible farm business by 15 May 2026.

Note: The signatures of both the transferor and transferee are required to terminate a lease.

- If your farm business has not received a letter about the historic years' requirements, **it will be eligible to apply for FSP in 2026 if it meets the FSP eligibility criteria.**
 - **You must submit an eligible FSP application by 15 May 2026 and activate at least 3 entitlements for payment on at least 3 ha of eligible land to retain all the entitlements you hold.** For example, if you hold 50 entitlements and activate 3 entitlements for payment, you can lease the remaining 47 entitlements to another eligible business in 2026.
 - You must be actively farming and undertake agricultural activity to be eligible to apply for FSP. If your claim is for 5 hectares or more, you must carry out agricultural activity on at least 3 ha of land used to activate entitlements. However, where you submit a claim of less than 5 hectares, you must carry out agricultural activity on at least 2 ha of land used to activate entitlements.
 - If your farm business no longer claims subsidies and leases out all its entitlements each scheme year, **you will need to act in 2026.**
 - If you are not actively farming and do not want to apply for FSP, you must transfer your entitlements permanently by sale or gift by 15 May 2026 or they will expire.
 - If you do not submit an eligible FSP application in 2026 and leased your entitlements before 2025 to an eligible farm business for a period ending after the 2026 scheme year, your entitlements will expire at the end of the lease. Alternatively, you have the option to terminate the lease in 2026 and transfer your entitlements permanently to an eligible farm business by 15 May 2026.
 - If you do not submit an eligible FSP application in 2026 and leased your entitlements to an ineligible farm business for a period ending after the 2026 scheme year, your entitlements will expire on 16 May 2026. Alternatively, you have the option to terminate the lease in 2026 and transfer the entitlements permanently to an eligible farm business by 15 May 2026.

Note: The signatures of both the transferor and transferee are required to terminate a lease.

Activating your payment entitlements, confiscation and the 2-year rule

Payment entitlements may be confiscated for non-usage. In 2026 the 2-year usage rule will be reset for all eligible farm businesses. This means that 2026 will be considered as Year 1 and 2027 as Year 2 of the usage period.

You must activate all of your payment entitlements in at least one scheme year over any 2-year period, except in cases of FM/EC.

Any payment entitlement (or fraction of payment entitlement) that remains unused for 2 consecutive years is automatically taken off you (confiscated).

If you transfer payment entitlements by lease to an eligible farm business and that farm business does not activate those payment entitlements for 2 consecutive years, i.e. 2026 and 2027, they will be confiscated under the 2 year rule and will not be returned to your farm business. It is in your interests to obtain an assurance from the farm business that you have leased payment entitlements to, that all payment entitlements have been activated at least once in every 2 years. **Leases on a yearly basis to the same business for 2 years or more will also result in the confiscation of any non-activated entitlements.**

In accordance with scheme rules DAERA must activate the highest value payment entitlements held by a farm business. So, if you hold a payment entitlement of a lower value this will not automatically be activated by us for payment this year just because it was not activated last year. Also, we do not make any distinction between those owned by your farm business or leased in from another.

Therefore, if this year you hold 'leased in' payment entitlements which were higher in value than those 'owned' by your farm business, we will activate the leased in payment entitlements first and the payment entitlements 'owned' by your business may be at risk of confiscation next year if they are not activated.

Transfer of payment entitlements

You may sell or lease your surplus payment entitlements. To do this you should use the online Entitlement Transfer Service. If there are exceptional circumstances which have been agreed by the Payment Delivery Branch staff you can complete a paper TE1 transfer application.

If you want the transfer to take effect for this FSP scheme year, the closing date for completion of online transfers or receipt of paper applications using form TE1, together with any supporting documentation, is **15 May**.

Note: If your paper application is received after the deadline, it will not be accepted unless FM/EC applies. We are not responsible for forms being lost or delayed in the post. It is important that you ensure the correct postage has been paid. Proof of postage is not proof of receipt.

Payment entitlements can be transferred:

- by sale or gift;
- by lease;

- through inheritance (actual or anticipated)
- as the result of a merger or scission of a business.

Payment entitlements can only be transferred within the region of origin.

Payment entitlements can only be transferred to a farm business which has land located in Northern Ireland except in the case of actual or anticipated inheritance. In all cases payment entitlements can only be activated using land located in Northern Ireland.

If you are considering transferring payment entitlements, you should read the [Guide to the Transfer of Payment Entitlements](#) . If you have any problems understanding these rules, please contact Payment Delivery Branch.

Adjustments to the gross value of your payment

The payment you receive will be based on the number of payment entitlements you hold and the value of those payment entitlements for that scheme year.

The unit value of payment entitlements for the Farm Sustainability Payment (FSP) in 2026 depends on the 2026-27 Budget which has not yet been agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive. The Minister of Finance's Draft Budget 2026-29/30 proposals suggests that funding for agriculture, agri-environment, fisheries, and rural development will remain at last year's levels for 2026-27. However, this is not yet confirmed. If the final agreed Budget is lower, a reduction in the unit value of payment entitlements may be required.

In 2026 progressive capping will be introduced over a two year period in respect of the FSP payment. Payment will be capped at £60,000 .

Payments may be subject to other reductions. Payments may have to be reduced to because of administrative penalties if scheme conditions have not been met.

The order of reductions is:

- over-declaration penalty (if applicable);
- late claim penalty (if applicable);
- conditionality penalty (if applicable);
- deductions to respect financial ceilings (if applicable);
- Cross-Compliance and/or Farm Sustainability Standards penalty (if applicable) and
- offset penalties from previous years (if applicable).

Details on entitlement values in 2026 can be found on from the DAERA website when known:

[Agricultural & Environmental Schemes | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

Progressive capping

The progressive capping of FSP payments will be phased in over a two-year period from the introduction of FSP in 2026.

Payment Band	Capping reduction in first year of FSP (%)	Capping reduction in second year of FSP (%)
£190,000 +	100	100
£150,000.01 - £190,000	40	80
£100,000.01 - £150,000	30	60
£80,000.01 - £100,000	20	40
£60,000.01 - £80,000	10	20
£0 - £60,000	0	0

Example

Farm Business A - Payment Due before capping percentages are applied is **£191,000**.

In **Year 1** – the following percentage capping reductions are applied.

Progressive Capping applied (Year 1) Payment Band	Capping reduction in first year of FSP (%)	Business A Payment falling into band	Payment following capping percentages applied
£190,000.01 +	100	£0	£0
£150,000.01 - £190,000	40	£40,000	£24,000
£100,000.01 - £150,000	30	£50,000	£35,000
£80,000.01 - £100,000	20	£20,000	£16,000
£60,000.01 - £80,000	10	£20,000	£18,000
£0 - £60,000	0	£60,000	£60,000
Final Payment			£153,000

Year 2 - Payment Due to Business A before capping percentages are applied is £191,000.

Payment Band	Capping reduction in second year of FSP (%)	Business A Payment falling into band	Payment following capping percentages applied
£190,000 +	100	£0	£0
£150,000 - £190,000	80	£40,000	£8,000
£100,000 - £150,000	60	£50,000	£20,000
£80,000 - £100,000	40	£20,000	£12,000
£60,000 - £80,000	20	£20,000	£16,000
£0 - £60,000	0	£60,000	£60,000
Final Payment			£116,000

The final payment to Business A in Year 2 following % reductions = £116,000

SECTION 8 - Amendments, preliminary checks, corrections or withdrawals of single applications (SAs)

Introduction

To avoid any delay in payment or to avoid being penalised you should ensure you complete your application accurately. If we have already told you about a problem with your application or if we have given notice that an inspection will be carried out and this inspection then reveals an irregularity, you **cannot** withdraw or change the part of the application affected by the irregularity.

Amendments to your Single Application

You can make amendments to your SA online (**up to and including 9 June without penalty**) if you submitted your SA by 15 May to increase the area you have claimed. For example, to add fields if you are using them to support a claim for FSP. You can also make changes regarding use and aid scheme **for fields already included in the application**.

Preliminary Checks

From 2026 we will only carry out preliminary checks on your submitted SA to identify if any of the land included on your SA has also been declared by another claimant. If we discover any potential issues, we will notify you of these providing details of the relevant field parcel. You will then have an opportunity to request an amendment to your SA accordingly.

We will issue letters by SMS text under 'Preliminary Checks' on 10 June 2026. If you receive a letter under 'Preliminary Checks' and you wish to change your SA for the fields shown in the letter you will have until 19 June 2026 to respond. Please note any replies received after 19 June 2026 cannot be accepted and over-declaration penalties may be applied.

Under 'Preliminary Checks', we can only give you an opportunity to avoid potential discrepancies or non-compliance. The deadline of 19 June 2026 cannot be used to increase your claim. .

Obvious errors

DAERA has limited scope to correct claims where there are 'obvious errors,' that is where they can be straightforwardly identified during a check of the SA. The scope of 'obvious error' is itself limited under guidance but DAERA takes a 'common sense' approach to cases within these limits.

Decisions on whether or not to apply obvious error depend on the overall facts and circumstances of each individual case, and we must be satisfied with the obvious nature of the error involved. We cannot consider such errors in a systematic manner but must examine each and every case individually.

We would consider the following list to be obvious errors:

- Mistakes due purely to an inputting error, which are obvious during a simple examination of the claim.
- Incorrect statistical information.
- Mistakes found as a result of conflicting information, which is clear during a more in-depth examination (manual or computerised) of the claim, which compares information, including supporting documentation, such as maps.
- Mistakes in calculations.
- Anomalies involving field numbers or references which we find during cross checking of the claim with databases such as the field identification system.
- Figures reversed (for example, farm survey number 169 instead of 196).

We will not apply penalties for obvious errors if we are satisfied that you have acted in good faith and there is no risk of fraud. You can amend obvious errors at any time but such errors do take time to resolve and can lead to substantial delays to your payment. You should make sure that you complete your application form completely and accurately and avoid errors. Not all mistakes can be described as obvious errors and may result in penalties being applied to your payment.

The regulations maintain that the farm business is responsible for the claim and is expected to take steps to ensure that the claim is accurate, even where an agent is involved.

Notified errors

After 9 June you may realise that you have made a mistake in your application form but cannot make any amendments online. You can correct your application form at any time as long as you let the Agricultural and Environmental Schemes Payment Delivery Branch know, **in writing, before** we tell you about an on-farm inspection and provided we have not already told you about an error in your application.

Generally SAs cannot be amended after 9 June to increase areas claimed. If you notify us of additional land after that date, we will record this on your application but **you will not receive payment on the additional land.**

If we have already told you about a problem with your application, or we have given you notice that an inspection will be carried out which then reveals an irregularity, you **cannot amend, withdraw or change the part of the application affected by the irregularity.**

Withdrawal of land

You can choose to withdraw all or part of your application for payment from any aid scheme at any time, as long as we have not told you about any mistakes in your application or undertaken an inspection on your farm business. You must make your

application to withdraw **in writing** to the Agricultural and Environmental Schemes Payment Delivery Branch (see Annex B Contact Details).

You are still obliged to provide us with details of all the eligible land you farm, even if you are not claiming for that land. If you are withdrawing a field or fields from your application for payment, **you should only withdraw from the aid scheme you no longer wish to claim for.** In other words you should amend the FSP (ha) to zero but not from the previous columns on “your field data” to avoid possible penalties.

SECTION 9 - On-the-spot checks (OTSC) and penalties

OTSCs (inspections)

In addition to administrative checks, the Department may carry out OTSCs. By submitting a SA you agree to permit DAERA to carry out an OTSC with or without prior notice at any reasonable time. These will take the form of a classic OTSC when an inspector will visit your farm.

No payment will be made if you, or others acting on your behalf, prevent any of these checks from taking place.

Inspection report

Every inspection will be the subject of a final report. Where irregularities have been identified you will be given the opportunity to make comments on the inspection findings.

It is not possible for an inspector to advise of the effect on your claim of ineligible areas or non-compliances detected at inspection. If penalties are to be applied to your claim you will be notified by Agricultural and Environmental Schemes Payment Delivery Branch at a later date.

How Single Applications are selected for an eligibility check

We may carry out inspections to check eligibility for FSP/YFP.

Approximately 1% of applicants will also be selected for verification of the FSS requirements that come under the responsibility of each of the authorities designated to undertake FSS inspections.

Examples of how penalties are applied to Single Applications

If you do not meet the eligibility criteria for the FSP you may have a penalty applied to your SA. The following examples explain the circumstances when you may be penalised.

Penalties for late applications (received after 15 May)

If we receive your SA on or between 16 May and 9 June we will reduce your payment **under all the schemes you have claimed on the SA by 1% per working day**, except in cases of FM/EC. No applications will be accepted after 9 June except in cases of FM/EC.

Over-declaration of land

If, as part of our administrative and OTSCs checks, we find you have claimed on more land than you should have, we will apply over declaration penalties.

Circumstances when we may apply over declaration penalties include:

- If we find you have claimed on ineligible areas.
- If we find you claimed on land which is not at your disposal/management control.

- If you duplicate fields or land areas with another farm business.

You will not be penalised if you declare more eligible land than you need to activate all the payment entitlements you are claiming, and we find the area is equal to or more than the number of payment entitlements you are activating.

For example:

Number of payment entitlements held = 10

Number of eligible ha declared = 15

Number of ha found = 12

You will be paid on all 10 payment entitlements because you have sufficient ha available to support your claim.

Penalty thresholds

How the penalty regime works

- Small over declarations that are up to 3% of the area determined and 2 ha are not penalised, but the payment is reduced and based on the area determined by us.
- Where the over declaration is more than either 3% of the area determined or 2 ha the payment is calculated based on the area determined as eligible by us and reduced by 2 times the area of the land that has been over declared. The penalty shall not exceed 100% of the amount payable based on the area declared.

Over-declaration penalties for FSP/YFP/PCS are limited to 100% of the amount due based on the area determined.

You should take care when completing your SA to ensure that it is accurate and avoid over declaration penalties.

If you appoint an agent to complete your SA it is still your responsibility to ensure the land declared on the SA is correct.

SECTION 10 - Force majeure or exceptional circumstances

Definition of force majeure or exceptional circumstances

FM/EC is defined as 'unusual circumstances, outside the control of the trader, the consequences of which, in spite of the exercise of all due care, could not have been avoided except at the cost of excessive sacrifice.' A farm business may experience a FM/EC incident that impacts on his ability to meet the requirements for the FSP.

Cases of FM/EC are determined against their particular circumstances and on an individual basis.

Late applications

Regulations allow us to consider cases of FM/EC as a reason for not submitting or amending your application on time.

Land taken out of production due to force majeure or exceptional circumstances

You should always notify DAERA at the earliest possible opportunity of any FM/EC situation that renders a portion of land out of agricultural use **even if only for a short time.**

So, if for reasons of FM/EC some, or all, of your land is not available to you on 15 May, or is ineligible for FSP or any other agricultural or environmental scheme, at any time during the year, **you should tell us when you submit your claim or if you have already submitted your claim you should tell us within 15 working days of the date of being in a position to do so.**

If you do not, and we later discover that the land was not eligible at any time during the year, we may consider that there is an over-declaration of land and apply a penalty to your claim.

For us to consider FM/EC, the land must be unavailable to you on 15 May in the scheme year or ineligible for FSP for at least some part of the calendar year.

The land must be able to be returned to agricultural use or become eligible for FSP. You must provide clear documentation indicating when the land is likely to become eligible.

If your land is ineligible for FSP for the whole year, and is removed permanently from your control, we will not consider FM/EC. Should this happen you will have to obtain other eligible land to claim payment of FSP in such circumstances.

Land temporarily removed

An example of an eligible FM/EC event will be those that temporarily remove the land from the farmer's business, e.g. land vested by a utility for work where the land is returned to the farmer after the work is complete, for example, pipe laying.

FM/EC will be considered if you have signed an agreement or are similarly committed to permitting work to take place but the consequences of not doing so would be that a vesting order would be applied. You will be required to provide evidence of when you were made aware of the work or the intention to apply for a vesting order.

If your land has been purchased as part of a vesting order we may accept FM/EC in relation to your claim for FSP **for that year only**.

Land permanently removed

The payment of FSP in relation to land becoming ineligible is dependent on whether the land is permanently removed from your control or whether it will be returned at some point.

If you have land that is permanently removed from your control for example, land that is actually taken up by a new road, it is possible to pay FSP on this area in the year in which the land became ineligible. After this you need to make other arrangements to have eligible land to support activation of your payment entitlements.

If the land is to be returned to your control it is possible to claim payment using the land during the period it is not in agricultural use.

Such areas would normally be set aside for storage of materials and equipment used in the construction of road works and then returned to your control.. However, the period of removal would have to be reasonable, for example, 2 years.

Roads Division Guidelines

Roads Division within the Department for Infrastructure has produced guidelines, with the assistance and input from the Ulster Farmers' Union, to inform and advise farm businesses and landowners of the development processes that Roads Division normally adopts when bringing forward proposals for a major road improvement scheme. These guidelines can be found at:

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidelines-acquisition-landproperty-majorroad-development-northern-ireland>

Notifying a force majeure/exceptional circumstances event to DAERA

Should you consider FM/EC applies to your application because of any unforeseen event, you are advised to contact Agricultural and Environmental Schemes Payment Delivery Branch immediately for advice. You should be aware that for us to consider a case of

FM/EC we need to be told in writing at the same time as **you submit your application online (prior to or on the closing date of 15 May) or if you have already submitted your application you should tell us within 15 working days of the date of being in a position to do so.**

When you tell us of a FM/EC event you will be asked to complete a paper form FML1 application available on the DAERA website and return it to Agricultural and Environmental Schemes Payment Delivery Branch. We will look at each request on a case by case basis and where we agree that FM/EC has been demonstrated, we will not normally apply penalties.

You will have to prove that, despite taking all reasonable measures to counteract their effects, the FM/EC event prevented you from meeting your obligations. You must be able to provide information, supported by documentary evidence, of the steps you have taken to prevent or lessen the effect of these circumstances.

It is important that you do not wait until the Review of Decisions stage to notify DAERA of FM/EC, as this will normally be considered to be outside the 15 working day notification period.

SECTION 11 - Review of Decisions

Under the Review of Decisions procedure applicants have a right to request a review of a decision made by DAERA in relation to their area-based scheme claims. This procedure includes the FSP.

The review process is intended to provide applicants with a fair, impartial and transparent assessment of DAERA's decision against the framework of National Regulations and Scheme rules. The aim of the procedure is to ensure that the decision made is correct and in line with the appropriate Regulations and Scheme rules.

Further details can be obtained on the Department's website:

[Review of Decisions | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

Annex A - Legislation

Regulations governing FSP

1. The Conservation (Natural Habitats, Etc.) (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019
2. Direct Payments to Farmers (Legislative Continuity) Act
3. The Financing, Management and Monitoring of Direct Payments to Farmers (Amendment) Regulations 2020
4. The Rules for Direct Payments to Farmers (Amendment) Regulations 2020
5. The Direct Payments to Farmers (Penalty Simplification) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020
6. The Agriculture Act 2020
7. The Direct Payments to Farmers (Simplifications) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021
8. The Direct Payments to Farmers (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021
9. The Direct Payment to Farmers (Review of Decisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021
10. The Direct Payments to Farmers (Simplifications) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022
11. The Direct Payments to Farmers (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022
12. The Farm Sustainability Payments to Farmers (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025
13. The Farm Sustainability (Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025
14. The Farm Sustainability Standards Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025
15. The Farm Sustainability Payment Scheme (Eligibility etc) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025
16. The Farm Sustainability Standards (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2025

17. Regulation 1306/2013 on the financing, management and monitoring of the common agricultural policy;
18. Regulation 1307/2013 establishing rules for direct payments to farmers under support schemes within the framework of the CAP; as amended by Regulation 2017/2393
19. Commission Delegated Regulation 639/2014 supplementing Regulation 1307/2013 establishing rules for direct payments;
20. Commission Delegated Regulation 640/2014 supplementing Regulation 1306/2013 with regard to the IACS and conditions for refusal or withdrawal of payments and administrative penalties to direct payments, rural development support and Cross-Compliance;
21. Commission Implementing Regulation 641/2014 laying down rules for the application of Regulation 1307/2013
22. Commission Implementing Regulation 809/2014 laying down rules for the application of Regulation 1306/2013 with regard to IACS, rural development measures and Cross-Compliance. This Regulation was amended by Regulations 2333/2015, and 2018/746.

All references to regulations above refer to the latest version of the regulation i.e. as amended.

You can find the relevant EU legislation as assimilated in UK law together with domestic legislation at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/>

Annex B - Contact details

Contact Us:

If you have a specific query you can contact us using the email addresses or telephone number below. If you have a farm business ID please quote it on all correspondence or have it to hand before you call.

Email: agriculturalandenvironmentalschemes@daera-ni.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 200 7848

Useful Addresses: If you wish to send your query by post you should send it to:

Agricultural and Environmental Schemes Payment Delivery Branch
Orchard House, 40 Foyle Street
Londonderry
Derry/Londonderry BT48 6AT

Or you can visit your local DAERA Direct Office as listed below.

DAERA Direct Public office opening hours are 9.00am - 4.00pm each working day (excluding 12:30 to 1:30, closed for lunch).

Armagh	Ballymena	Coleraine
Atek Buildings Edenaveys Industrial Est Newry Road Edenaveys Co Armagh BT60 1NF	Academy House 121A Broughshane St Town Parks Ballymena Co Antrim BT43 6HY	Crown Buildings Artillery Road Millburn Coleraine Co Londonderry BT52 2AJ
Downpatrick	Dungannon	Enniskillen
Rathkeltair House Market Street Demesne of Down Acre Downpatrick Co Down BT30 6LZ	Crown Buildings Thomas Street Drumcoo Dungannon Co Tyrone BT70 1HR	Inishkeen House Killyhevlin Ind Estate Killyhevlin Enniskillen Co Fermanagh BT74 4EJ

Mallusk	Magherafelt	Newtownards
Castleton Hs 15 Trench Road Grange of Mallusk Mallusk Newtownabbey Co Antrim BT36 4TY	Units 36-38 Meadowlane Shopping Cntr Moneymore Road Townparks of Magherafelt Magherafelt Co Londonderry BT45 6PR	Sketrick House 16 Jubilee Road Corporation South Newtownards Co Down BT23 4YH
Newry	Omagh	Strabane
Glenree House Unit 2, Springhill Road Carnbane Industrial Est Carnbane, Newry Co Down BT35 6EF	Sperrin House Sedan Avenue Lisnamallard Omagh Co Tyrone BT79 7AQ	Government Offices 18 Urney Road Strabane Co Tyrone BT82 9BX