

Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme (SFIS)

Scheme Guide Round 1 (2026)

Please read this guide carefully before completing your application.

Applications must be submitted by 11.59pm Thursday 3 September 2026, via the online application system.

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1. Introduction

This guide is for the Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme (SFIS) and sets out the general rules of the scheme and how it will be administered and controlled to ensure that scheme requirements have been met.

Please read this guide carefully before making an application. Also refer to the Terms and Conditions ([Annex C](#)) and 'How to guides' ([Annex D](#)).

The scheme is open from Tuesday 21 July 2026. **Applications MUST be submitted online by 11.59pm on 3 September 2026.** Letters of Offer will be issued subject to budget availability.

The Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme is part of the Sustainable Agriculture Programme and is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). SFIS is governed by the Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026. It was co-designed through engagement with the Agricultural Policy Stakeholder Group. The scheme aims to support on-farm capital investment for primary food producers to improve their environmental performance and business efficiency.

Support will be based on a list of eligible items ([Annex A](#)) which have been assessed and selected based on their projected benefits. Each item has a "reference price" based on information received from a wide range of suppliers.

This scheme will fund projects between £3,000 and £62,500 (excluding VAT) based on the value of items listed. Some items require multiple buys to reach an item minimum spend – see [Annex A](#). The online application will only permit these items if at least the minimum is selected. Applicants can apply for a number of different items, within the overall maximum project and grant limits.

The scheme will be open for several rounds over the next three to four years (subject to available budget and uptake). A farm business may apply within each round and may receive up to a maximum of £25,000 grant across all rounds of the scheme. **You must apply for at least £1,200 grant support within a round** (that is, select items with a total cost of at least £3,000), **or your application will be ineligible.**

The grant payable for each item is 40% of the eligible claim value which is based on the original item reference price specified in the Letter of Offer (listed in [Annex G](#)), the updated item cost (due to variation), or the amount paid; whichever is lowest.

Any invoice dated, or expenditure (including part payments or deposits) incurred BEFORE the 'Project Start Date' as stated on the Letter of Offer will render the whole item and potentially the entire project ineligible. **Your project must be completed by purchasing the specific item(s) listed in the Letter of Offer, and your claim submitted on the scheme portal by the 'Final Claim Submission Date' provided or the claim will be ineligible.** Only one claim for the complete project can be submitted against each Letter of Offer.

No postal communication will be issued or accepted for this scheme. All scheme transactions will primarily be made through the online Scheme Portal. **All notifications will issue via secure message on the [DAERA Customer Portal](#)** and updates will be online on the Scheme Portal. Secure message notifications will be sent to all members of the farm business registered with DAERA and who have registered a valid email address with Government Gateway or nidirect account (NIDA).

It is important that you check the Scheme Portal ([Start here | Sustainable Farming | DAERA](#)) regularly to view your project and any required actions.

Questions and answers ([Annex B](#)) are available, and will be updated during the application window as necessary.

2. Before applying

Before applying to the scheme, you need to carefully read the scheme documentation and consider your need for any of the capital items listed in the Eligible Item List ([Annex A](#)).

Grant support cannot be used to meet existing statutory obligations or where a project would go ahead without grant support. You will be asked in the application to state why grant aid is required (see [Application Questions](#)).

To apply you will need either a single user Government Gateway account (GG) or a nidirect account (NIDA). If you don't have one, then please see '[Registering for Government Gateway \(GG\) and NIDA accounts](#)' for more information.

You must ensure your farm business details registered with DAERA are correct. Please check your email address is correct before submitting your application, in order to receive your secure message notifications. If your email address is incorrect or no longer associated with the business, then contact your local DAERA Direct Office as soon as possible.

3. Eligibility

3.1 Scheme

The scheme is open to primary food producers – Agriculture and Horticulture (Fruit and Vegetable) sectors. Businesses must have a **DAERA Farm Business Category 1** to apply.

If your business is a primary food producer and you require a DAERA Farm Business Category 1 then information is available online at [New Farm Business | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#) or contact 0300 200 7848.

3.2 Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment (LESSE)

Businesses are only eligible for LESSE items if they:

1. Have not already received funding for LESSE through the Farm Business Improvement Scheme – Capital (FBIS – C).
2. Are not already required to use LESSE under the existing Nutrients Action Programme (NAP) 2019-2022, as funding cannot be used to meet existing statutory obligations. This means that if you had 200 or more cattle livestock units (LU) in the 2025 calendar year and/or a total annual livestock manure nitrogen production of 20,000 kg or more from pigs in the previous 12 months, you will not be eligible to apply for LESSE but may still apply for other Non-LESSE items.

If you wish to calculate your livestock count for cattle or kg N for pigs, see [Annex E](#).

Cattle businesses:

DAERA have assessed NIFAIS (Northern Ireland Farm Animal Identification System) and TB data to determine LESSE eligibility of cattle businesses in advance of the scheme opening. On the 'Scheme details' page in the online application it will state if you are eligible for LESSE equipment.

If DAERA has determined your cattle business is not eligible for LESSE and you feel this is incorrect, for example, if your business temporarily exceeded the limit of 200 or more cattle livestock units due to TB closure; then please email SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk for your eligibility to be reviewed **no later than 10 calendar days before the scheme closing date**. Requests received after this date will not be considered.

Pig businesses:

Please do not apply for LESSE if your pig business exceeds 20,000kg N in the previous 12 months. Following the scheme closing your application will be assessed and, if your business exceeded this limit, your LESSE application will be rejected. If you are not content with DAERA's decision you may request a Review of Decision by emailing SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk no later than 28 days from the date of notification of the decision to be reviewed (see [Review of Decisions](#)).

For further information on the NAP refer to [Nutrients Action Programme | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#).

If your business is eligible for LESSE, please note you can only apply for one item under the LESSE category.

You can only receive funding for one LESSE item across all rounds of the scheme, and will no longer be eligible to apply for LESSE in subsequent rounds. If you applied for LESSE and received a Letter of Rejection ([Annex H](#)) or didn't proceed with your Letter of Offer, then you will be eligible to reapply for LESSE in subsequent rounds if your business is within the NAP limits at the time of application for cattle livestock units and Kg N produced from pigs.

You may apply for Non-LESSE items in subsequent rounds as long as you have not exceeded the £25,000 grant either paid or committed.

3.3 Items

3.3.1 Eligible items

Only the items listed at [Annex A](#) and specified as approved for purchase in a Letter of Offer will receive support.

Applicants must purchase all items within the Letter of Offer term, otherwise penalties may apply to their entire application. If items are not operational at the pre-payment inspection, then your business may receive a post payment inspection.

Items are listed under 13 headings:

- Calf / Lamb / Piglet Management
- Cattle / Sheep – Management
- Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring
- Crop / Grassland – Establishment
- Crop / Grassland – Management
- Fruit / Vegetable / Grain Management
- Guided Weed Control
- Horticulture
- LESSE (Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment) – if applicable
- Pig Management
- Poultry Management
- Resource Management - Energy / Water
- Slurry Management

DAERA have calculated the reference price for each item based on costs that were provided by suppliers. These prices **exclude Value Added Tax (VAT)**. Each price is based on the specification that is detailed against each item, so it is **important that the item purchased meets OR exceeds this specification**.

3.3.2 Ineligible items

Items are **NOT** eligible if:

- not paid for in FULL before claim
- not purchased through a supplier or manufacturer
- any expenditure occurred outside timeframes stated in the Letter of Offer including deposits
- invoice dated before the date of the Letter of Offer
- second hand equipment
- ex-demonstration equipment

- purchased through a supplier or manufacturer that you or your business is part of or linked to in any way
- replacements covered by an insurance claim
- home built items
- they do not meet the scheme minimum specification
- they are not expected to last 5 years following claim
- other grant support has been received or is expected to be received for them

3.3.3 Ineligible expenditure

Expenditure is NOT eligible for:

- Any expenditure outside the Letter of Offer term
- Delivery
- Commissioning costs
- Site works
- Services and fuel supplies
- Training on item use
- Warranties
- Insurance
- Construction of buildings
- Installation costs – unless otherwise stated e.g. tensioned covers, [Annex J](#)
- Computer hardware e.g. laptop, printer
- Professional fees – unless otherwise stated e.g. strengthening rings, [Annex J](#)
- Maintenance, repair and running costs
- Labour costs
- Financial charges and bank interest
- Consumables e.g. feed, fuel, fertilisers, lime, medication or spray
- Investments relating to or purposed for non-agricultural animals
- Projects associated with food processing buildings and equipment
- Amenity horticulture
- Value Added Tax (VAT)
- Subscription costs – unless otherwise stated in item specification that available for one year
- Planning permissions *

*If the item is fixed within a building, the applicant must ensure they have obtained and maintain all the appropriate approvals for the building. If there is a subsequent

enforcement order to remove the building within the scheme retention period, then monies may be recovered for the item(s).

3.3.4 Ineligible methods of payment

Items are **NOT** eligible if purchased outside the Letter of Offer term or using the following method of payment

- cash
- in full or in part by “trade ins”
- purchased using hire purchase or lease hire agreement or any other form of financial arrangement
- purchased by someone not named on the business

4. Application

4.1 How to apply

Applications are made through the online Scheme Portal found at [Start here | Sustainable Farming | DAERA](#). At the start of the application, you will be asked to log into your NIDA or GG account if you haven't already done so. See [Before Applying](#) if you don't have an account.

You will be asked a few questions about the main decision maker in the business, your priorities, and some very simple farm information (depending on the items you select).

For example, if you apply for an automatic slurry scraper, you will be asked how often you currently scrape. The question will give multiple choice options.

Please note that the answers to these questions do not affect your application score (apart from pig numbers in a LESSE application). Your answers will help DAERA develop further support schemes, so it is important that all information provided is accurate and relates to your individual farm business.

You will be able to select items for which you wish to apply for grant from a drop-down list. Detail on minimum or maximum quantity and any requirements is given below each item. The system will calculate the amount of grant you have applied for.

Once you are content with the item(s) selected, you can review your application, and then submit it. Further information on the application process is provided at [Annex D](#).

Each farm business is only permitted to proceed with **one** application per round. There will be no roll-over of applications between rounds of the scheme.

Once you have submitted your application, a secure message will be sent on the [DAERA Customer Portal](#) to all members of the farm business registered with DAERA and who have provided a valid email address. A secure message will also be sent to the agent, if applicable. If you do not receive an email notification or secure message when you submit an application, please email SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk or phone 028 9052 4882.

DAERA will not accept paper applications.

4.2 When to apply

The scheme is open from 21 July 2026, and applications must be submitted by 11.59pm (BST) on 3 September 2026. You can continue to edit your unsubmitted application between these dates, however any applications started and not submitted before the scheme closes will be automatically deleted.

4.3 Nomination of an Online Agent

You do not need an agent to complete an application or claim. The application system will be very easy to use, much like an online grocery or shopping “basket”.

However, if you wish, you can nominate an online agent to make an application on your behalf, or to make a claim if you are successful. This can be done at any stage (during the application window for an application, or before the final deadline for a claim if successful) via the DAERA Customer Portal. It is your responsibility as a member of the farm business to ensure all information provided by the agent is correct.

For an agent to act on behalf of your business the following steps need to be taken:

1. Agent registers to be an online agent for the scheme via the [DAERA Customer Portal](#)
2. You contact agent for their reference number and telephone number
3. You select and nominate the online agent via the DAERA Customer Portal
4. Online agent accepts the nomination

Further information regarding online agent nomination can be found here: [Online Agent Nomination | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

If you have any difficulties nominating an agent, then please contact DAERA Direct.

If you nominate an Online Agent for the Scheme, then the Online Agent will have access to all the information relating to your farm business held on the Scheme Portal, including payment information and will also receive notifications via secure messaging.

4.4 What happens next – before the closing date

The status and unique scheme reference e.g. SFIS-1234 of your application is available in the ‘Latest application’ box on the scheme homepage accessed via the Scheme Portal.

If you have saved and not yet submitted your application, the status will be ‘In progress’ and you can click on the scheme reference to proceed with your application. If you edit the application, then you must save any changes and accept the declaration ([Annex F](#)) to proceed.

If the application has been submitted, then the status will display as ‘Submitted’. If you select the scheme reference number, you can download your application. Once your application has been submitted, it can no longer be amended. If you wish to make a

change BEFORE the closing date, you must withdraw your application by clicking 'Withdraw' on the 'Latest application' box and reapply. For more information refer to [Withdraw Application](#) and the 'How to guides' in [Annex D](#).

4.5 What happens next – after the closing date

No applications can be made after the closing date.

To view or download a PDF of your application, log into the Scheme Portal. Go to All Applications at the bottom of the Home page. If you applied for LESSE and Non-LESSE items, you have two application reference numbers.

For example: Round 1 (2026), Reference: 1-LE-1234, 1-NL-1234

Click the reference number for your LESSE or Non-LESSE items and the appropriate application dashboard will open. You will see a section titled "Documents", here you can download your application by clicking on the relevant document name.

Following the scheme closure your submitted application will be scored and ranked. You will be sent a secure message on the [DAERA Customer Portal](#) advising you to check the Scheme Portal to view the outcome of your application (See [Application Outcome](#)).

Please note if you applied for LESSE and Non-LESSE items, the application outcomes will be available separately on the Scheme Portal with access via their own unique application reference.

Expenditure (including deposits) on the project must not be incurred before you receive a formal Letter of Offer of Financial Support, if you are successful. We strongly advise that you check the Scheme Portal regularly.

5. Scoring

5.1 Items

Items are all individually ranked high, medium, low or not applicable against the range of objectives below. The first two objectives were each scored out of 3 points, and all the other objectives were scored out of 6 points.

- Animal & Plant Health / Animal Welfare
- Soil health / Biodiversity
- Water Quality or Quantity
- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas / Carbon reduction
- Efficiency (includes automation)
- Innovation (not common in NI market)

This gave each item a score out of 36. We then applied a "cost benefit" weighting to this, based on each item's reference price. This helps to separate out items which have the same benefits but different costs.

Item scores are available in the Eligible Item List ([Annex A](#)) and also in the online application under the item specification.

5.2 Total Application Score and Ranking

Regardless of the item score, it is important to ensure the options selected are suited to the needs of your business. The scheme is competitive and following closure there will be separate ranking of applications for LESSE and non-LESSE items by score. Where the round is oversubscribed a cut off score will be determined based on budget availability. This will result in either a Letter of Offer ([Annex G](#)) or Letter of Rejection ([Annex H](#)) for your Non-LESSE and/or LESSE items.

In the unlikely event of a tie-break situation (i.e. where two or more applications have the same score at the threshold for receiving funding), a random number generator will be used to determine the order of the tied applications.

5.2.1 Non-LESSE

The scoring of applications for non-LESSE items will be based solely on an average of the weighted scores of the items selected.

If multiples of any item are selected, then the score of the item will only be used once to calculate the overall application score.

Example of calculating Non – LESSE application score

Item A x 1 – Item score 18.14

Item B x 25 – Item score 34.07

Application score = 18.14 + 34.07, divided by 2 = 26.11

All applications will be ranked according to their score and receive either a Letter of Rejection or a Letter of Offer relative to the available budget for that round.

Successful applicants for Non-LESSE in the first round will not receive fewer points when applying for Non-LESSE in future rounds.

5.2.2 LESSE

To enable ranking of LESSE applications, the score of the selected LESSE item will be considered along with cattle and pig livestock numbers. This approach will ensure that funding for LESSE is prioritised towards achieving the biggest impact in terms of ammonia emission reduction.

LESSE applicants will receive either a Letter of Rejection or a Letter of Offer depending on the available budget. There will be no roll-over of applications between rounds of the scheme.

6. Application Outcome

All members of your farm business who have provided a valid email address and are registered with DAERA, will receive a secure message on the [DAERA Customer Portal](#). This is to inform that the outcome(s) of your application has been uploaded to the Scheme Portal. If you have nominated an agent, they will also receive a secure message.

Once logged into the Scheme Portal homepage click on your application reference in the 'All applications' section to open the LESSE or Non-LESSE dashboard.

6.1 Letter of Offer

Following assessment of your application, if your business has been approved for LESSE or Non-LESSE items then your Letter of Offer (s) ([Annex G](#)) will be available on the Scheme Portal dashboard(s). You can view and 'Accept/decline Letter of Offer' in the Actions box.

If you applied for both LESSE and Non-LESSE items, the outcome of each of these will be available separately on the Scheme Portal with access via their own unique application reference. Failure to accept the Letter of Offer(s) by the date provided (28 calendar days from the date of issue) will result in your Letter of Offer(s) expiring.

Acceptance of the Letter of Offer declaration ([Annex I](#)) is also available on the Scheme Portal dashboard.

If you have not accepted (or declined) a Letter of Offer by the deadline, then you will receive a secure message on the DAERA Customer Portal to confirm that your Letter of Offer has expired. Grant funding cannot be paid for an application relating to an expired or declined Letter of Offer.

If you apply for both LESSE and Non-LESSE items, the status of each can be viewed on the Scheme Portal.

Grant will not be paid on any items purchased prior to the date of the Letter of Offer. If a deposit is paid or invoice dated before the date of the Letter of Offer, then the full item amount will be deducted from the claim.

You cannot change any of the items listed in a Letter of Offer. The grant amount is allocated to each item listed and if the actual cost of purchasing an item(s) is less than the amount specified in the Letter of Offer, then the balance of grant is not transferable to other items. Variations are permitted at claim stage for some items. For further information see [Variations](#).

If any item in the Letter of Offer is not purchased, a penalty may apply (see [Penalties](#)). If any mandatory component within an item is not purchased, then the whole item may be deemed ineligible.

Providing false or misleading information may result in your application being rejected or grant funding being withdrawn or recovered. If items are not operational at the pre-payment inspection, then your business may receive a post payment inspection. You will be notified through secure messaging if the Department wishes to vary an approval

provided in a Letter of Offer (as per regulation 6(2) of the Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026).

DAERA reserves the right to terminate a Letter of Offer on written notice to the business if you have breached the Letter of Offer, if there is a change in the circumstances affecting your eligibility to receive the Grant, or if your business has failed to repay monies recoverable by DAERA. In such circumstances the business may be required to repay all or part of the Grant and your obligations under the Letter of Offer shall not cease until such repayment has been made.

6.2 Letter of Rejection

Following ranking of your application, if your application has not been successful, you will not receive an offer of grant. The reasons why an application has been unsuccessful are included in a rejection letter ([Annex H](#)) available in the 'Documents' section on the Scheme Portal dashboard.

Although unsuccessful on this occasion you may apply in future rounds of the scheme. Please note if you applied for both LESSE and Non-LESSE items, the outcome of each of these will be available on their own Scheme Portal dashboard i.e. LESSE and Non-LESSE dashboard.

Note that where you have not been successful because your application was below the cut-off point for funding, this decision is final and there is no appeal process. See [Review of Decisions](#) for further information.

6.3 Extension request

An extension to the Letter of Offer 'Final Claim Submission date' will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. For example, if the manufacturer / supplier has advised that they cannot deliver an item before the claim deadline stated on the Letter of Offer. However, since this scheme permits variations at claim for certain items you may wish to consider a different size of the same item if available. For further information see [Variations](#).

To request an extension email SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk 28 calendar days before the 'Final Claim Submission Date'. Evidence may be required to support the need for an Extension. Any approved Extension will update the Final Claim Submission Date on the Scheme Portal. The original Letter of Offer acceptance will be deemed as acceptance of any Extension.

The claim for the entire application must be submitted within any extended period or it will expire. You will not be able to submit the Claim on the Scheme Portal and the application will be terminated.

6.4 Business Change and Exceptional Circumstances

Your business cannot transfer, assign, novate or otherwise dispose of the whole or any part of the Letter of Offer or any rights under it, to another organisation or individual, without DAERA's prior written consent.

If your business has a notifiable change in circumstance, for example, business merge or split, or any unforeseen events affecting your business following the issue of a Letter of Offer then you must notify SFIS delivery team by email to SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk as soon as possible. It may have consequences for Letter of Offer, Claim and Payment stages.

DAERA is under no obligation to facilitate changes to the Letter of Offer or claim conditions and will consider on a case-by-case basis. DAERA may at its absolute discretion take enforcement action in response, for example to reduce the amount of Grant, withhold payment of Grant, terminate the Letter of Offer, or recover all or part of the Grant.

7. Withdraw Application

You may withdraw your scheme application at various stages:

1. Scheme Application submitted and application window is still open

If you wish to withdraw your whole application (for LESSE and / or Non – LESSE items), then click on the 'Withdraw' button on the grey bar in the 'Latest application' tab on the scheme homepage. You will be asked to confirm your wish to withdraw and if content your application will be withdrawn.

2. Application window closed

If the application window is closed, then you can only withdraw by logging into the Scheme Portal homepage and selecting the application reference to reach the appropriate dashboard for LESSE and / or Non- LESSE.

a. Before outcome determined

If you wish to withdraw your LESSE or Non – LESSE application (or both), then click on the 'Withdraw application' button at the bottom of the 'Application' grey box on the dashboard. If you confirm you are content, then the application is withdrawn and the screen will display an acknowledgement. Your LESSE or Non-LESSE scheme status will then change to withdrawn. Notification will be sent via DAERA Customer Portal secure messenger. If you do want to withdraw both LESSE and Non-LESSE applications (if relevant), you need to go into each dashboard.

b. After outcome determined

If you do not wish to accept your LESSE and / or Non – LESSE Letter of Offer, then click on the 'Accept/decline Letter of Offer' button at the bottom of the 'Actions' grey box. If you click on Decline and confirm, then the Letter of Offer is declined, and the screen will display an acknowledgement.

8. Scheme Conditions

8.1 General

You must act in accordance with the scheme legislation and the Terms and Conditions ([Annex C](#)) as set out in the Letter of Offer. Failure to adhere to the Terms and Conditions could result in cancellation of your Letter of Offer and / or recovery of monies paid, or application of penalties that could result in a reduction in the amount of grant payable.

All items must be purchased and be on the premises at the time of the claim. If items are not operational at the pre-payment inspection, then your business may receive a post payment inspection. All supporting documents including any required certificates are submitted with the claim through the online Scheme Portal.

After the claim deadline, which is stated on your Letter of Offer, the grant offer is no longer available on the Scheme Portal.

You are required to read and understand the relevant scheme rules and guidance notes. You must provide details that are true, accurate and completed to the best of your knowledge on the application, claim and supporting documentation.

Any person who makes a false declaration or fails to notify DAERA of a material change to the information given in the application will incur penalties and may be liable to prosecution. A false, inaccurate or incomplete statement or failure to notify DAERA of any material changes to the information displayed in this application may result in recovery of payments made and exclusion from future rounds of the scheme in line with the penalty guidance.

The business is solely responsible for all business decisions undertaken in relation to an application.

8.2 Statutory Obligations

The responsibility remains with the farm business to ensure that all statutory obligations e.g. planning permissions, statutory licences or control permissions, granted by the relevant authority are in place at time of application for any item that such permissions are required.

You are also responsible for considering the health and safety implications of the item(s) and ensure each item is installed and operated in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

If you apply pesticides, you must have an accredited certificate of competence. If you have applied for grant towards the purchase of a sprayer / fungicide applicator / weed wiper you must upload a copy of your certificate of competence to the Scheme Portal with your claim. If a copy of the certificate of competence is not uploaded with the claim, grant will not be paid on this item, and your claim may be subject to further penalties. The original certificate of competence must be available for examination during any following on-farm inspection visit.

8.3 Specification Obligations

Items listed have the most appropriate specification to meet objectives (MASMO) in the scheme. This may not be the lowest or highest specification available for a particular item. You must purchase at least this minimum specification. You may purchase a higher and/or more expensive specification, but the additional cost is at your expense.

All components of an item whether within a package, system or individual item must be purchased otherwise the whole item is ineligible.

Some items have other conditions and evidence of these must be uploaded at claim e.g. certificate of competence, engineers' certificate, tanker manufacturer's letter, ammonia certification, health and safety signage; or they are deemed ineligible.

Minimum and maximum numbers of each item are built into the application for all rounds and are available on the Eligible Item List ([Annex A](#)). Item quantity, area or volume selected at application must be purchased and claimed, otherwise penalties will apply (see [Penalties](#)).

Further information regarding a number of item specifications is found in:

- [Annex J](#) - Tensioned covers for above ground stores and additional works to strengthen metal rings
- [Annex K](#) for LESSE
- [Annex L](#) for Umbilical
- [Annex M](#) for Crush

You should ensure animal handling facilities are suitable for the type of animal being handled to ensure both the safety of the handler and that of the animal. The race should facilitate low stress handling, improve flow and enable easy entry to the crush. When selecting a squeeze crush you should ensure the crush provides good restraint and safe, easy handling; reducing stress on the animal and providing full access for TB testing.

8.4 Item Relationships

8.4.1 Exclusive Relationships (EXCL)

For some items, the maximum quantity is one, and when an option is selected then other item options are no longer selectable. For example, if a small sized item is selected, then medium and large size options of the item are no longer selectable. This is also applicable across rounds. This applies to the following items:

Application grouping	Item	Item Code
LESSE (Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment)	Any LESSE: DRIBBLE BAR, TRADITIONAL RIGID TRAILING SHOE, FLEXI TRAILING SHOE SHALLOW INJECTOR	DBP, TRTSP, FTSP, SIP, DBS, DBM, DBL, TRTSS, TRTSM, TRTSL, FTSS, FTSM, FTSL, SIS

Application grouping	Item	Item Code
Cattle / Sheep - Management	SINGLE AUGER Diet feeder with weighing system MINIMUM 10 cubic metres capacity	SADF
	TWIN AUGER OR PADDLE Diet feeder with weighing system up to and including 19 cubic metres capacity	TPDFM
	TWIN AUGER OR PADDLE Diet feeder with weighing system greater than 19 cubic metres capacity	TPDFL
Crop / Grassland - Establishment	Cover crop roller (minimum 3m working width)	CCR3
	Cover crop roller (minimum 6m working width)	CCR6
Crop / Grassland - Management	Tractor mounted sprayer with sectional and boom height control and GPS ready (MINIMUM boom width <u>15 metres</u> , MINIMUM tank capacity <u>800 litres</u>)	TMS15
	Tractor mounted sprayer with sectional and boom height control and GPS ready (MINIMUM boom width <u>18 metres</u> , MINIMUM tank capacity <u>1000 litres</u>)	TMS18
	Tractor mounted sprayer with sectional and boom height control and GPS ready (MINIMUM boom width <u>24 metres</u> , MINIMUM tank capacity <u>1200 litres</u>)	TMS24
Crop / Grassland - Management	Mounted grass tedder (minimum 4 rotors)	MGT4
	Trailed grass tedder (minimum 6 rotors)	TGT6
Fruit / Vegetable / Grain Management	Grain crimper roller with additive applicator (output 5-9 t/hr)	GCRAS
	Grain crimper roller with additive applicator (output 10-14 t/hr)	GGRAM
	Grain crimper roller with additive applicator (output 15-20 t/hr)	GCRAL
Guided Weed Control	Precision camera guided INTER row hoe (minimum 3m working width)	CGH3
	Precision camera guided INTER row hoe (minimum 6m working width)	CGH6
Resource Management - Energy / Water	Standard gasketed plate cooler for cooling milk	SGPC
	Industrial gasketed plate cooler for cooling milk	IGPC

Application grouping	Item	Item Code
Resource Management - Energy / Water	Heat recovery unit to preheat water - heat recovery tank up to and including 500 litres	HRUS
	Heat recovery unit to preheat water - heat recovery tank over 500 litres	HRUM

8.4.2 Required Relationships (REQ)

For some items, if an item is selected then a matching item must also be selected. This information is available in the item specification. This applies to the following items:

Application grouping	Item 1	Item 1 Scheme Code	Item 2	Item 2 Scheme Code
Cattle / Sheep – Management	Electronic Cow (Beef/Dairy) Heat AND Health Detection System - Base Unit	HHDB	Electronic Cow (Beef/Dairy) Heat AND Health detection System - devices (collars / ankle transponders / boluses)	HHDD

8.4.3 Inclusive Relationship (INCL)

For some items, the main Item 1 can be selected on its own or with an optional Item 2. However, the optional Item 2 cannot be selected without a main Item 1. If you select Item 2 first, you will be prompted to select which Item 1 you also wish to select (if there is more than one main Item 1). For example, you can apply for an automated calf rearing system with or without an additional feed station. But you cannot apply for the additional feed station by itself.

This applies to the following items:

Application grouping	Item 1 (main item)	Item 1 Scheme Code	Item 2 (optional item)	Item 2 Scheme Code
Calf / Lamb / Piglet Management	Automated calf rearing system with washing facility and notification alerts	ACRS	Additional calf feed station with washing facility compatible with programmable calf milk feeder	ACFS
Cattle / Sheep - Management	Automated IN parlour feeding system to include IT link with the capability to "feed to yield" - Controller and one hopper	IPFCH	Automated IN parlour feeding system - additional hopper	IPFAH
Cattle / Sheep - Management	Automated OUT of parlour feeding system to include IT link with the capability to "feed to yield" WITH backing gate - control unit / base and one station	OPFGBS	Automated OUT of parlour feeding system - additional station WITH backing gate	OPFGAS

Application grouping	Item 1 (main item)	Item 1 Scheme Code	Item 2 (optional item)	Item 2 Scheme Code
Cattle / Sheep - Management	Automated OUT of parlour feeding system to include IT link with the capability to "feed to yield" WITHOUT backing gate- control unit / base and one station	OPFBS	Automated OUT of parlour feeding system - additional station WITHOUT backing gate	OPFAS
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Electronic weigh crate with electronic weigh system for sheep CAPABLE of linking to EID device	SEWS	FIXED sheep handling system including pens and race with footbath	FSHS
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Automatic WEIGHING AND DRAFTING sheep crate - includes automatic drafting crate, control system with automated entry and exit gates, weigh bars, weigh scale and EID panel reader	WDSC	FIXED sheep handling system including pens and race with footbath	FSHS
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Sheep Individual electronic weigh package (two electronic load bars and electronic weigh scale) CAPABLE of linking to EID device(s)	SIWP	FIXED sheep handling system including pens and race with footbath	FSHS
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Electronic weigh crate with electronic weigh system for sheep CAPABLE of linking to EID device	SEWS	MOBILE sheep handling system for a minimum of 100 adult sheep - including pens and race with footbath on an integrated road legal trailer	MSH33
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Automatic WEIGHING AND DRAFTING sheep crate - includes automatic drafting crate, control system with automated entry and exit gates, weigh bars, weigh scale and EID panel reader	WDSC	MOBILE sheep handling system for a minimum of 100 adult sheep - including pens and race with footbath on an integrated road legal trailer	MSH33
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Sheep Individual electronic weigh package (two electronic load bars and electronic weigh scale) CAPABLE of linking to EID device(s)	SIWP	MOBILE sheep handling system for a minimum of 100 adult sheep - including pens and race with footbath on an integrated road legal trailer	MSH33
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Electronic weigh crate with electronic weigh system for sheep CAPABLE of linking to EID device	SEWS	MOBILE sheep handling system for minimum 250 adult sheep - including pens and race with footbath on an integrated road legal trailer	MSH42

Application grouping	Item 1 (main item)	Item 1 Scheme Code	Item 2 (optional item)	Item 2 Scheme Code
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Automatic WEIGHING AND DRAFTING sheep crate - includes automatic drafting crate, control system with automated entry and exit gates, weigh bars, weigh scale and EID panel reader	WDSC	MOBILE sheep handling system for minimum 250 adult sheep - including pens and race with footbath on an integrated road legal trailer	MSH42
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Sheep Individual electronic weigh package (two electronic load bars and electronic weigh scale) CAPABLE of linking to EID device(s)	SIWP	MOBILE sheep handling system for minimum 250 adult sheep - including pens and race with footbath on an integrated road legal trailer	MSH42
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Manually operated cattle squeeze crush with weigh package (electronic weigh scale and two electronic load bars) CAPABLE of linking to EID device and automatic EID gate	CSCW	FIXED cattle handling system - provides safe holding area and race handling facility to attach to crush	FCHS
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Cattle (Beef/Dairy) Individual electronic weigh package (electronic weigh scale and two electronic heavy duty load bars) CAPABLE of linking to EID device(s)	CIWPH	FIXED cattle handling system - provides safe holding area and race handling facility to attach to crush	FCHS
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	Cattle (Beef/Dairy) Individual electronic weigh platform package (electronic weigh platform, two electronic load bars and electronic weigh scale) CAPABLE of linking to EID device(s)	CIWPP	FIXED cattle handling system - provides safe holding area and race handling facility to attach to crush	FCHS
Crop / Grassland - Management	Grassland Management Package - Fencing equipment and Digital platometer	GLMP	Towable road legal water bowser (minimum tank capacity 1100 litres) with integrated trough	TWBT
Horticulture	Electronic tray filling machine (fills minimum 500 trays per hour, handle commercially viable trays e.g. 600mm x 400mm)	ETFM	Compressed bale breaker	CBB
Pig Management	Precision dry feeding package for lactating sows, enabling individual feeding	PFLS	Additional feed dispensing system and electronic feed dispenser for lactating sows	ASLS
Pig Management	Precision dry feeding package for group housed	PFDS	Additional free access feeding station and one electronic feed dispenser	ASDS

Application grouping	Item 1 (main item)	Item 1 Scheme Code	Item 2 (optional item)	Item 2 Scheme Code
	dry sows, enabling individual feeding		for group housed dry sows	
Slurry Management	Tensioned cover package for an above ground store	TCPS	Additional works to strengthen a metal above ground store to include a metal ring	AGSR

8.5 Five-year retention period

Funded equipment or technology must remain in the ownership of the Business at the location stated in the claim and maintained in agricultural use for the purpose it was intended for and not disposed of, modified, transferred or sold for five years **from the date of the claim submission**, otherwise penalties will apply (see [Penalties](#)). If chosen for inspection, all items purchased across all rounds of this scheme will be checked to confirm retention by the farm business.

If due to exceptional circumstances you need to replace the item within the retention period, then you must notify SFIS delivery team (SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk).

You must retain the **original hardcopy and on-line** documentation for **5 years from the date of claim** for future scrutiny and copying by DAERA or its agents. This includes relevant records, receipts, invoices and proof of payments and access to digital data relevant to the application. Please ensure all digital data is saved in a safe accessible location for the duration of the retention period. This may exceed the lifetime of your electronic devices so please consider saving somewhere accessible e.g. emails. **DAERA may contact suppliers to verify the authenticity of invoices.**

8.6 Other Funding

You must declare that no other public funding has been sought for items selected. If you have received public funding from another source your claim will be rejected or payments recovered.

8.7 Sharing of data

DAERA may, if required to do so, publish information about the business and the Grant as is necessary to comply with domestic, European, and international Law. DAERA may further acknowledge the business involvement in the Scheme as appropriate without prior notice.

CAFRE will be informed of the items you have claimed for, and they may be in touch regarding potential training.

Information provided in the application is subject to the [DAERA Privacy Notice](#).

8.8 Inspections

All claims will be subject to an inspection that will include a desktop assessment of all uploaded claim documentation to determine if all items have been purchased and installed in line with the scheme rules, and documentation is complete, accurate and unaltered. DAERA will check authenticity of all documentation submitted and any documents found to be altered will result in non-payment of the claim, exclusion from future rounds and potential referral to fraud investigation service and PSNI.

Projects may also be subject to a pre-payment site visit to the business premises to check and verify the claim. The inspector will inspect the original claim documentation for the item(s) claimed and inspect the item(s) claimed in all rounds.

Some businesses will be chosen for on-site post payment inspection at any time up to five years after claim submission. The details you provide in your submitted application, the items you purchased, and your claim will be checked during the visit. As a condition of the Letter of Offer you must facilitate inspections and provide all necessary information to substantiate your claim.

8.9 Value Added Tax (VAT)

The reference price is net of VAT. There is no option to claim inclusive of VAT even if you are not eligible to reclaim it. The amount claimed must be exclusive of VAT.

8.10 Scheme Financial Limits

This scheme will fund projects between £3,000 and £62,500 (excluding VAT) based on the value of items listed. You can apply for a number of different items, within the overall maximum project / grant limits. A farm business may receive up to a maximum of £25,000 grant across all rounds of the scheme.

You must apply for at least £1,200 grant support within a round (that is, select items with a total cost of at least £3,000), or your application will be ineligible.

The grant payable for each item is 40% of the eligible claim value which is based on the original item reference price specified in the Letter of Offer, the updated item cost (due to variation), or the amount paid, whichever is lowest.

9. Application Questions

Throughout the application you will be asked particular questions to help with evaluation of the scheme.

9.1 Investment Support

You are asked in the application if you need grant support to proceed with the investment and to provide details as to why. **By selecting 'No' you cannot proceed with your application.**

You need to consider if the purchases are essential and affordable. You must ensure your cash flow can comfortably handle the new item(s) cost and any related expenses e.g. service, maintenance and operating costs. The scheme is only available to businesses where the investment would not go ahead without grant aid.

There are clear benefits of owning your own equipment for use whenever required, however before investing in your own equipment you should calculate the affordability of these items versus hiring contractors. Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) have developed a '[Machinery costing calculator](#)' which can be used to compare the costs of owning equipment with the cost of hiring it or using a contractor.

9.2 General – About your farm

There is a selection of general questions in the application e.g. age, gender, highest level of agricultural / horticultural qualification. They do not affect the application scoring or your eligibility but must be completed to proceed. The information provided will help DAERA evaluate potential scheme outcomes. Please take time to consider and answer appropriately.

9.3 Your priorities

You will be asked what priority you would place on the following for your business over the next 5 years. This data will be used for monitoring and evaluating the scheme so please consider carefully. We will ask successful applicants these questions again after investment. This does not affect the application scoring or your eligibility; however, it must be completed to proceed.

- Improve business viability
- Carbon / Greenhouse gas reduction
- Environmental Improvement e.g. biodiversity, water quality
- Invest in new technology / innovation
- More efficient management of nutrients and other inputs
- Increase production / output
- Reduce labour requirement
- Improve health & safety
- Improve plant health & disease
- Improve animal health & welfare

All questions should be answered using a dropdown of high, medium, low or not a priority.

9.4 Item questions

You will also be required to select answers to some questions if you have chosen specific items:

- LESSE (Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment),
- LESSE (Pig Livestock Numbers),
- Scrapers (robotic and passage),
- Cattle/sheep performance,
- Pig performance,
- Cattle management,
- Water management,
- Electricity management

These questions are to help DAERA establish some baseline data (based on current operations) for monitoring and evaluating the scheme. It does not determine the eligibility of your business for the scheme or contribute to the scoring of the scheme (apart from pig numbers in a LESSE application). We will ask successful applicants these questions again following use of the item.

9.4.1 LESSE – Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment

If you select any item under the LESSE category you will be asked approximately what percentage of slurry was spread using LESSE – Contractor, LESSE – Self and Splash Plate for the last complete calendar year. Your answer totals must be greater than zero but less than or equal to 100. You may export some slurry so the total percentage spread doesn't not have to total 100%.

9.4.2 LESSE - Pig Livestock Numbers

If you select LESSE, you will also be asked questions regarding breeding pigs or rearing/finishing pigs on your farm in the previous 12 months. This enables checking of eligibility of LESSE applications from pig producers and enables ranking of these applications. Businesses that exceed a total annual livestock manure nitrogen production of 20,000 kg or more from pigs in the previous 12 months will not be eligible for LESSE ([Annex E](#)).

If you know your business exceeds this limit, then please do not apply for LESSE. You can apply for Non-LESSE items. Following assessment of applications, your business will be deemed ineligible for LESSE if it exceeds these nitrogen production limits and your LESSE application will be rejected.

9.4.3 Scrapers

If you select scrapers or ammonia reduction cattle mats (listed below) you will have to select an answer regarding how many times a day you scrape solid /slatted passages and what prevents you from scraping more often.

Item Title	Scheme Code
Ammonia reduction SOLID rubber flooring for cattle housing	ARSF
Ammonia reduction SLAT rubber mat for cattle housing	ARSM
Automatic Electric scraper system - 1 - 2 passages (up to and including 18m per passage length)	AES2S
Automatic Electric scraper system - 1 - 2 passages (over 18m per passage length)	AES2M
Automatic Electric scraper system - 3 - 4 passages (up to and including 18m per passage length)	AES4S
Automatic Electric scraper system - 3 - 4 passages (over 18m per passage length)	AES4M
Automatic Electric scraper system - 5 - 6 passages (up to and including 18m per passage length)	AES6S
Automatic Electric scraper system - 5 - 6 passages (over 18m per passage length)	AES6M
Robotic slurry scraping device (or collector) and charging station	RSSD

9.4.4 Performance – Cattle / Sheep

If you select any of the items below, you will be asked if you currently weigh your cattle/sheep, what is the average age of first calving for your beef/dairy herd, and if you currently monitor calving intervals.

Item Title	Scheme Code
Automated calf rearing system with washing facility and notification alerts (ONE programmable calf milk feeder and ONE feed station with washer)	ACRS
Waste milk / colostrum pasteuriser for calves	MCPC
Automated, insulated water bath for colostrum management	AIWB
SINGLE AUGER Diet feeder with weighing system MINIMUM 10 cubic metres capacity	SADF
TWIN AUGER OR PADDLE Diet feeder with weighing system up to and including 19 cubic metres capacity	TPDFM
TWIN AUGER OR PADDLE Diet feeder with weighing system greater than 19 cubic metres capacity	TPDFL
Cattle (Beef / Dairy) automatic Identification Drafting / Shedding gate	CADG

Item Title	Scheme Code
Cattle (Beef / Dairy) Individual electronic weigh package (electronic weigh scale and two electronic heavy duty load bars) CAPABLE of linking to EID device(s)	CIWPH
Cattle (Beef / Dairy) Individual electronic weigh platform package (electronic weigh platform, two electronic load bars and electronic weigh scale) CAPABLE of linking to EID device(s)	CIWPP
FIXED cattle handling system - provides safe holding area and race handling facility to attach to crush	FCHS
Manually operated cattle squeeze crush with weigh package (electronic weigh scale and two electronic load bars) CAPABLE of linking to EID device and automatic EID gate	CSCW
Automatic EID drench / pour-on gun	EIDP
Automatic EID vaccination gun	EIDV
EID cattle STATIC / RACE PANEL READER with RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology	EIDC
EID handheld reading and recording device with RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology	EIDD
EID sheep STATIC / RACE PANEL READER with RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology	EIDS
Automatic WEIGHING AND DRAFTING sheep crate - includes automatic drafting crate, control system with automated entry and exit gates, weigh bars, weigh scale and EID panel reader	WDSC
Electronic weigh crate with electronic weigh system for sheep CAPABLE of linking to EID device	SEWS
FIXED sheep handling system including pens and race with footbath	FSHS
MOBILE sheep handling system for a minimum of 100 adult sheep - including pens and race with footbath on an integrated road legal trailer	MSH33
MOBILE sheep handling system for minimum 250 adult sheep - including pens and race with footbath on an integrated road legal trailer	MSH42
Sheep handler	SH
Sheep Individual electronic weigh package (two electronic load bars and electronic weigh scale) CAPABLE of linking to EID device(s)	SIWP
Indoor standalone automatic cattle weighing unit including EID reader	ISCW
Outdoor standalone automatic cattle weighing unit including EID reader with compatible solar panel	OSCW
Mounted grass tedder (minimum 4 rotors)	MGT4
Trailed grass tedder (minimum 6 rotors)	TGT6

9.4.5 Cattle Management

If you select any of the items below, you will be asked about the current replacement rate (%) of your beef/dairy herd. Replacement rate in these questions means the number of

replacement heifers kept compared to your herd size. For example, 10 heifers and a herd of 100 cows = replacement rate of 10%.

Item Title	Scheme Code
Automated IN parlour feeding system to include IT link with the capability to "feed to yield" - Controller and one hopper	IPFCH
Automated IN parlour feeding system - additional hopper	IPFAH
Automated OUT of parlour feeding system to include IT link with the capability to "feed to yield" WITH backing gate - control unit / base and one station	OPFGBS
Automated OUT of parlour feeding system - additional station WITH backing gate	OPFGAS
Automated OUT of parlour feeding system to include IT link with the capability to "feed to yield" WITHOUT backing gate- control unit / base and one station	OPFBS
Automated OUT of parlour feeding system - additional station WITHOUT backing gate	OPFAS
Automated stainless steel cattle footbath	ASCF
Specialist foot trimming cattle crush	FTCC
Calving gate	CG
Electronic Cow (Beef / Dairy) Heat AND Health Detection System - Base Unit	HHDB
Electronic Cow (Beef / Dairy) Heat AND Health detection System - devices (collars / ankle transponders / boluses)	HHDD
ICAR certified Milk meter to measure conductivity and yield	ICMM
Automatic variable ventilation system in livestock buildings	AVVS
Louvre panel ventilation system for livestock sheds	LPVS
Positive pressure tube ventilation system for livestock buildings	PPTV
Badger proof cattle SINGLE SIDED creep feeder	BPCFS
Badger proof cattle DOUBLE SIDED creep feeder	BPCFD
Cattle Wildlife Proofing Package	CWPP
Rapid empty STAINLESS STEEL water trough for housed cattle	SSWT

9.4.6 Performance – Pig Management

For the following pig items, you will be asked the average age of slaughter of your clean pigs.

Item Title	Scheme Code
Automated piglet rearing system	APRS
Piglet Creep - Enclosed (top, back and side panels) with thermostatically controlled heat pad / plate for use in farrowing pens	PCHP
Flexible farrowing pen package	FFPP
Heat pads for pig farrowing and weaner accommodation	HPP
EID handheld reading and recording device with RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology	EIDDP
Automatic transition feeder for young pigs	ATFP
Precision dry feeding package for group housed DRY sows, enabling individual feeding (computer control unit, one free access feeding station, feed dispensing system and one electronic feed dispenser)	PFDS
Additional free access feeding station and one electronic feed dispenser for group housed DRY sows	ASDS
Precision dry feeding package for LACTATING sows, enabling individual feeding (computer control unit, feed dispensing system and ONE electronic feed dispenser)	PFLS
Additional feed dispensing system and electronic feed dispenser for LACTATING sows	ASLS
Wet and dry ad lib feeder for growing and finishing pigs - Linear / Long Feeder	WDLF
Wet and dry ad lib feeder for growing and finishing pigs - Multi Space Circular	WDCF
Automation of ventilation for Trobridge / Solari pen package	AVPP
Ventilation system	VSP
High pressure robotic washer with notification alerts for livestock housing and pens	HPRW
Electronic load bars to operate with digital weighing device for weighing pens of pigs	LBWP
Electronic weigh platform to operate with digital weighing device for weighing pens of pigs	PWP

9.4.7 Performance – Water Management

If you select any of the items below, you will be asked for your mains 'Chargeable water volume' as stated on your water bills per calendar year for your yard in cubic metres (m³).

Item Title	Scheme Code
Rainwater harvesting pre-fabricated covered system - minimum 10,000 litre above ground tank	RWHS
Ultraviolet (UV) Water Treatment system for agricultural use	UVWT

9.4.8 Performance – Electric Management

If you select any of the items below, you will be asked for the approximate electricity usage in kWh per calendar year for your dairy business (or total business if you have a mixed enterprise)

Item Title	Scheme Code
Industrial gasketed plate cooler for cooling milk	IGPC
Standard gasketed plate cooler for cooling milk	SGPC
Heat recovery unit to preheat water - heat recovery tank up to and including 500 litres	HRUS
Heat recovery unit to preheat water - heat recovery tank over 500 litres	HRUM
Variable speed vacuum pump system for dairy	VSVPS

9.5 Benefit questions

For each selected item you will be provided with a list of benefits (air quality, animal/plant health, carbon, efficiency, soil health / biodiversity and water quality) specifically for that item. Please click on the arrows to rank the benefits in the order of importance to you and your farm business - 1 being the most important. Please consider your answers and do not leave in the default position, as the answers to these questions will help evaluation and development of future schemes. You will be asked to confirm you are content with your selection.

10. Claim

10.1 What to claim

You will be expected to purchase all items you have applied for, have them ready for operational use on site and submit a complete claim for all items within the Letter of Offer term (or if under an approved extension), otherwise penalties may apply to the entire application.

Invoices which are dated, or expenditure (including part payments or deposits) incurred before the date of issue of the Letter of Offer will render the whole item, or potentially the entire project, ineligible for Grant. Expenditure is only eligible for Grant if it has been incurred in line with the Terms and Conditions (Annex C) and the Letter of Offer. The onus is on the business to seek clarification if in doubt to the eligibility of any expenditure. Claims for cash expenditure will not be accepted.

The eligible claim value is based on the original reference price, the updated reference price (due to variation), or the amount paid, whichever is lowest. The Grant amount shall not be increased in the event of any overspend. Grant is allocated for each specific item. If the cost of purchasing an item is less than the reference price, then the balance of Grant is not transferable to other items in the Letter of Offer. However, the Grant remaining for subsequent rounds will be calculated against the Grant monies paid.

10.2 How to claim

All the items specified in the Letter of Offer must be paid for in full and cleared from a bank account and received in accordance with the timetable set out in the Letter of Offer when you make a claim. The Claim must be submitted along with supporting documentation on the Portal by the Final Claim Submission Date as set out in the Letter of Offer, or as extended under an approved Extension. No other claim forms will be accepted. DAERA is not obliged to accept a Claim after this date.

The ability to submit a claim will only be available on the portal for 180 days (Non-LESSE) and 270 days (LESSE) from the date of issue of the Letter of Offer. This date is stated in your Letter of Offer.

If the claim is incomplete the Scheme Portal will prompt you to reconsider if you wish to proceed. Once the claim (whether complete or incomplete) is submitted then it will be processed and if approved you will be notified when your payment details are available on the portal and advised when you should expect payment in your bank account. It is your responsibility to ensure the claim is accurate before submitting.

Only one claim is available per Letter of Offer.

By submitting a claim, you have agreed that this is the final settlement of the claim. Once submitted, the claim cannot be withdrawn. If the Department has already told you about Breaches in your Claim or if you have been given notice of the Department's intention to conduct an on-the-spot check, which subsequently reveals a Breach of Letter of Offer, you cannot withdraw the parts of the Claim affected. It is the responsibility of the business to ensure that the claim and payment is accurate.

The inclusion of ineligible expenditure and failure to purchase all items specified in the Letter of Offer could incur a reduction to the grant payable. For further information see [Penalties](#).

If possible, and **to ensure quicker processing of your claim**, please:

- include one item per invoice and one bank transaction per invoice;
- ensure any delivery and /or installation costs are shown separately and discounted from your claimed amount;
- include payments, such as deposits that are paid within LoO term;
- ensure if discount is received then it is before VAT is added.

10.3 Variations to claim

Variations are permitted at claim stage, but this is limited to specific items listed below. Even though this facility is available, you are advised to consider your initial item selection and your needs in advance and adhere to these where possible. You will be asked to provide reasons for requiring the amendment to your claim.

10.3.1 Non-LESSE

For a number of Non-LESSE items that are available in different sizes, you can select the size of item you actually purchased at claim and there is no penalty. However, the grant support is limited to value of the Letter of Offer for the item or actual cost of purchasing if it is lower than the value approved. You can only change the size of the Non-LESSE item and NOT the type at claim.

For example, if you received a Letter of Offer for a Cover crop roller 6m (CCR6), but you then purchased a Cover crop roller 3m (CCR3), you can still claim for this as an eligible variation.

Non-LESSE items where variations are permitted at claim:

Application grouping	Item	Item Code
Cattle / Sheep - Management	Badger proof cattle SINGLE SIDED creep feeder	BPCFS
	Badger proof cattle DOUBLE SIDED creep feeder	BPCFD
Cattle / Sheep - Management	SINGLE AUGER Diet feeder with weighing system MINIMUM 10 cubic metres capacity	SADF
	TWIN AUGER OR PADDLE Diet feeder with weighing system up to and including 19 cubic metres capacity	TPDFM
	TWIN AUGER OR PADDLE Diet feeder with weighing system greater than 19 cubic metres capacity	TPDFL
Cattle / Sheep - Weighing and Monitoring	MOBILE sheep handling system for a minimum of 100 adult sheep - including pens and race with footbath on an integrated road legal trailer	MSH33
	MOBILE sheep handling system for minimum 250 adult sheep - including pens and race with footbath on an integrated road legal trailer	MSH42
Crop / Grassland - Establishment	Cover crop roller (minimum 3m working width)	CCR3
	Cover crop roller (minimum 6m working width)	CCR6
Crop / Grassland - Management	Tractor mounted sprayer with sectional and boom height control and GPS ready (MINIMUM boom width <u>15 metres</u> , MINIMUM tank capacity <u>800 litres</u>)	TMS15
	Tractor mounted sprayer with sectional and boom height control and GPS ready (MINIMUM boom width <u>18 metres</u> , MINIMUM tank capacity <u>1000 litres</u>)	TMS18
	Tractor mounted sprayer with sectional and boom height control and GPS ready (MINIMUM boom width <u>24 metres</u> , MINIMUM tank capacity <u>1200 litres</u>)	TMS24
Crop / Grassland - Management	Mounted grass tedder (minimum 4 rotors)	MGT4
	Trailed grass tedder (minimum 6 rotors)	TGT6
Crop / Grassland - Management	Computer control Simple Cross Flow Ambient Top ventilation System - UP TO 330t fruit or vegetables	CAVS

Application grouping	Item	Item Code
	Computer control Simple Cross Flow Ambient Top ventilation System - UP TO 660t fruit or vegetables	CAVM
	Computer control Simple Cross Flow Ambient Top ventilation System - UP TO 1000t fruit or vegetables	CAVL
Fruit / Vegetable / Grain Management	Grain crimper roller with additive applicator (output 5-9 t/hr)	GCRAS
	Grain crimper roller with additive applicator (output 10-14 t/hr)	GGRAM
	Grain crimper roller with additive applicator (output 15-20 t/hr)	GCRAL
Guided Weed Control	Precision camera guided INTER row hoe (minimum 3m working width)	CGH3
	Precision camera guided INTER row hoe (minimum 6m working width)	CGH6
Resource Management - Energy / Water	Standard gasketed plate cooler for cooling milk	SGPC
	Industrial gasketed plate cooler for cooling milk	IGPC
Resource Management - Energy / Water	Heat recovery unit to preheat water - heat recovery tank up to and including 500 litres	HRUS
	Heat recovery unit to preheat water - heat recovery tank over 500 litres	HRUM
Slurry Management	Automatic Electric scraper system - 1-2 passages (up to and including 18m per passage length)	AES2S
	Automatic Electric scraper system - 1-2 passages (over 18m per passage length)	AES2M
Slurry Management	Automatic Electric scraper system - 3-4 passages (up to and including 18m per passage length)	AES4S
	Automatic Electric scraper system - 3-4 passages (over 18m per passage length)	AES4M
Slurry Management	Automatic Electric scraper system - 5-6 passages (up to and including 18m per passage length)	AES6S
	Automatic Electric scraper system - 5-6 passages (over 18m per passage length)	AES6M

Examples of Non-LESSE item selection at application, variation at claim and overall grant calculations.

Application / Letter Of Offer		Variation selected at claim		Purchased		Grant calculations	
Item	Ref Price	Item	Ref Price	Item	Price paid	Ref Price	Max Grant
Mounted grass tedder (minimum 4 rotors)	£10,350	Trailed grass tedder (minimum 6 rotors)	£27,300	Trailed grass tedder (minimum 6 rotors)	£26,000	£10,350	£4,140

Badger proof cattle DOUBLE SIDED creep feeder	£2,485	Badger proof cattle SINGLE SIDED creep feeder	£1,830	Badger proof cattle SINGLE SIDED creep feeder	£1,950	£1,830	£732
Cover crop roller (minimum 6m working width)	£20,500	Cover crop roller (minimum 3m working width)	£18,450	Cover crop roller (minimum 3m working width)	£18,000	£18,000	£7,200

10.3.2 LESSE

For the LESSE items, you can change not only the size but also the type of item you actually purchased at claim and there is no penalty. However, the grant support is limited to value of the Letter of Offer for the item or less if actual cost of purchasing if it is lower than the value approved. You must ensure you follow the item specification for the LESSE item you actually purchase.

LESSE items where variations are permitted at claim

Application grouping	Item	Item Code
LESSE (Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment)	Any LESSE: DRIBBLE BAR, TRADITIONAL RIGID TRAILING SHOE, FLEXI TRAILING SHOE SHALLOW INJECTOR	DBP, TRTSP, FTSP, SIP, DBS, DBM, DBL, TRTSS, TRTSM, TRTSL, FTSS, FTSM, FTSL, SIS

Examples of LESSE item selection at application, variation at claim and overall grant calculations.

Application / Letter Of Offer		Variation selected at claim		Purchased		Grant calculations	
Item	Ref Price	Item	Ref Price	Item	Price paid	Ref Price	Max Grant
Tanker or Tractor mounted Dribble bar (less than 9m working width)	£13,110	Dribble bar package - Slurry tanker minimum 1600 gallons (maximum 2500gal) with mounted Dribble bar (minimum 6m working width)	£31,955	Dribble bar package - Slurry tanker minimum 1600 gallons (maximum 2500gal) with mounted Dribble bar (minimum 6m working width)	£32,500	£13,110	£5,244

Tanker or Tractor mounted Traditional Rigid trailing shoe (less than 9m working width)	£17,540	Tanker or Tractor mounted Flexi trailing shoe (9m to 10.9m working width)	£16,830	Tanker or Tractor mounted Flexi trailing shoe (9m to 10.9m working width)	£16,500	£16,500	£6,600
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10.4 Supporting documentation

Supporting documentation must be unaltered and uploaded to enable a claim to be submitted. To enable prompt processing of claims and reduce queries during the claim assessment process, original digital documentation is preferred to scanned copies. Examples include invoices emailed from suppliers, statements generated from your banking app and photographs taken from and downloaded to your electronic device. You are advised to retain these records as part of your personal files.

Funded items must be on the premises at the time you submit your claim evidenced by photographs you have submitted. Further verification that items are installed and ready for operational use may be confirmed by a site visit or on-line meeting. If items are not operational at the pre-payment inspection, then your business may receive a post payment inspection.

Applicants must advise DAERA of any changes to the information provided in the application or supporting documentation.

DAERA will check authenticity of all documentation submitted and any documents found to be intentionally altered will result in non-payment of the claim, exclusion from future rounds and potential referral to fraud investigation service and PSNI. DAERA may request information from a third party for detection of fraud. By accepting the claim declaration ([Annex P](#)) you have provided consent.

The following uploads are required to substantiate your claim:

- **Invoices** - original digital PDF from supplier (preferred) or scanned / photograph. See [Annex N](#) for details required.
- **Payment Evidence** – original digital transaction statement from bank / building society or credit card statement showing full payment amount and date covering all transactions relating to each item. If credit card statement is provided you must also provide a bank / building society statement to prove payment. (see [Section 10.5](#))
- **Item Photographs (Annex O) -**
 - showing full item(s) on your premises (ready for operational use if possible)
 - manufacturer's identifier plate if accessible and applicable (see item specification)
 - displayed health safety warning (if applicable, [Annex J](#))
- Making it Safer Risk Assessment – dated from 1 July 2026

- Certificate of competence (if applicable),
- Engineer's certificate (if applicable, [Annex K](#))
- Tanker Manufacturer's letter (if applicable, [Annex K](#))
- Ammonia emission reduction certification (if applicable)

Once you have uploaded supporting documents covering all items you are claiming for you will need to associate these (with exception of the Making it Safer Risk Assessment) to each item under the following document categories (you can associate more than 1 document under each):

- Invoice(s)
- Payment Evidence
- Photographs
- Other – documents required as detailed in the item specification (for example certificates)

To avoid delay in processing your invoices should (where possible) include:

Supplier's name, address, telephone number, VAT registration number
Addressed to person or business named on DAERA Business ID
Date of invoice
If invoice includes items not part of the scheme, then you must clearly show those for the scheme.
EACH Scheme item: • description to demonstrate it meets or exceeds the specification (and item code if possible) • manufacturer's make, model (use manufacturer's plate or operating manual) • unique identifier e.g. Serial number (s), barcodes • quantities (number / area / volume) • unit price (excluding VAT) • price paid (excluding VAT) or any associated costs such as delivery charges shown separately, highlighting any discounts for item or at overall total invoice value. This should match the amount you are claiming. • clearly show the cost of any optional extras separately • Clearly show delivery and installation costs, software etc. separately as these are not eligible for funding (unless stated in specification) • VAT charged • Must state that paid in full

If invoices provided do not meet the criteria above, then it may delay or prevent DAERA from paying the claim. If an invoice includes any items that are not in your Letter of Offer, you must clearly show the items you are claiming for.

If your transaction amount on your financial statement relates to more than one invoice, then you will need to provide all the invoices included in the payment or a copy of your monthly statement of your supplier account showing the other items purchased. One invoice and one payment will speed up the processing of your claim.

Invoices in euros are acceptable; however, payment of financial support will be made in sterling. The exchange rate will be calculated based on the date the transaction cleared the bank account. The rate used will be determined from the EU exchange rate website: [Pound sterling \(GBP\)](#). Bank charges incurred against euro/sterling transactions will not be eligible for support.

You may have an item where a deposit is paid at the time of ordering within the Letter of Offer term and then the full payment later when the item is received. These transactions can be stated on one or two invoices and monies shown on two bank statements - the deposit and then the balance.

10.5 Bank or Building Society evidence required at claim

You must use an account for a named person in your DAERA business ID to pay for items. You cannot use cash, part exchange, lease or hire purchase to pay for items.

When submitting your online claim, you will be required to upload your bank, building society or credit card statements. This will enable DAERA to check that invoices have been paid in full by the business or a person named in the business.

Alternatively, you can provide screenshots from an online account showing payment details and bank or building society logos, or a certified report printed from a banking system. Transaction bank /building society statements must show the:

- bank or building society's name and logo;
- account holder name / business name in full;
- account number;
- transaction date;
- transaction type (including payee reference or cheque number);
- transaction amount

You can redact personal information that is not needed from the statements.

If you pay for an item through a Buying Group, provide evidence from the supplier to show:

- you've paid the Buying Group
- the Buying Group has paid the supplier

10.6 Item information required at claim

At claim stage, you will be required to answer some questions regarding each item purchased:

- invoice details (total amount paid for item excluding VAT, quantity of item paid for),

- claim details (quantity claimed for),
- postcode of farm business where item is used,
- serial / unique identifier number (individual serial number or the sequential range for large quantity items e.g. Heat and heat detection collar).

In the claim details section, the system will calculate the total value of the claim and the potential grant payable (greyed shaded boxes in examples below) by comparing the amount paid and the quantity claimed to the approved grant and approved quantity (from the Letter of Offer). The Total Value of Claim is then based on the amount paid or the approved grant (whichever is lowest) and the quantity claimed or approved (whichever is lowest – and the quantity claimed must equal or exceed any approved minimum quantity).

The information provided in this section will be cross checked with your uploaded information to assess your eligibility for payment and any potential penalties.

10.6.1 Example 1: Business spends more than the reference price

Purchase a hydraulic squeeze crush which is a higher specification than the manual squeeze crush listed (CSCW). In this case the grant contribution does not cover the total cost of the item, and it is the business responsibility to fund the remaining cost.

Manually operated cattle squeeze crush (CSCW) with reference price £9305

INVOICE DETAILS	
Enter the total amount that you paid for this item, excluding VAT (<i>total paid for the item across all invoices which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	£14,000
Quantity paid for (<i>total number of this item purchased which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	1 [Unit]
CLAIM DETAILS	
Quantity claimed for (<i>must be less or equal to the quantity approved. Must be greater than the minimum quantity according to list</i>)	1 [Unit]
Total value of claim	£9305
Potential Grant Payable (<i>40% of total value of claim</i>)	£3722

10.6.2 Example 2: Business spends less than reference price

Purchase high pressure centrifugal slurry chopper pump with a reference price of £11,110 however the invoice price is £10,500 (excluding VAT)

INVOICE DETAILS	
Enter the total amount that you paid for this item, excluding VAT (<i>total paid for the item across all invoices which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	£10,500
Quantity paid for (<i>total number of this item purchased which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	1 [Unit]
CLAIM DETAILS	
Quantity claimed for (<i>must be less or equal to the quantity approved. Must be greater than the minimum quantity according to list</i>)	1 [Unit]
Total value of claim	£10,500
Potential Grant Payable (<i>40% of total value of claim</i>)	£4,200

10.6.3 Example 3: Business exceeds scheme limit

Purchase Robotic drill and guided hoe for £65,000, however it has a reference price of £62,500.

INVOICE DETAILS	
Enter the total amount that you paid for this item, excluding VAT (<i>total paid for the item across all invoices which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	£65,000
Quantity paid for (<i>total number of this item purchased which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	1 [Unit]
CLAIM DETAILS	
Quantity claimed for (<i>must be less or equal to the quantity approved. Must be greater than the minimum quantity according to list</i>)	1 [Unit]
Total value of claim	£62,500
Potential Grant Payable (<i>40% of total value of claim</i>)	£25,000

10.6.4 Example 4: Business exceeds quantity

Purchase 200 Electronic Cow (Beef/Dairy) Heat AND Health detection System – devices (HHDD), however 180 on Letter of Offer. The business should only claim up to the number in the Letter of Offer regardless of the actual quantity purchased and listed on the invoice.

Invoice: 200 devices: £22,000. $£22,000/200 = £110/\text{device}$

Reference Price for devices: £105/device

180 devices on Letter of Offer, therefore $180 \times £105 = £18,900$ total for this item.

INVOICE DETAILS	
Enter the total amount that you paid for this item, excluding VAT (<i>total paid for the item across all invoices which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	£22,000
Quantity paid for (<i>total number of this item purchased which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	200 [Unit]
CLAIM DETAILS	
Quantity claimed for (<i>must be less or equal to the quantity approved. Must be greater than the minimum quantity according to list</i>)	180 [Unit]
Total value of claim	£18,900
Potential Grant Payable (<i>40% of total value of claim</i>)	£7,560

10.6.5 Example 5: Business purchases different size

Purchase 6m roller at claim (CCR6) for £19,000 whereas Cover Crop roller (minimum 3m working width) (CCR3) on Letter of Offer.

Cover Crop roller (minimum 3m working width) Reference Price: £7430

Cover Crop roller (minimum 6m working width) Reference Price: £18,450

INVOICE DETAILS	
Enter the total amount that you paid for this item, excluding VAT (<i>total paid for the item across all invoices which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	£19,000
Quantity paid for (<i>total number of this item purchased which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	1 [Unit]
CLAIM DETAILS	
Quantity claimed for (<i>must be less or equal to the quantity approved. Must be greater than the minimum quantity according to list</i>)	1 [Unit]
Total value of claim	£7,430
Potential Grant Payable (<i>40% of total value of claim</i>)	£2,972

An example of an invoice and online screen details required is found at [Annex N](#).

10.7 Claim Submission

Once you are content that all information is uploaded and entered into the Scheme Portal, then you must tick the claim declaration to proceed (See [Annex P](#)). You will receive a secure message on the DAERA Customer Portal confirming receipt of the claim.

10.8 Additional Information

Claims will be checked and if we require additional information for your claim, we will send a message to your email and your agent (where applicable). To resubmit your claim with the requested information within a specified deadline, you will have to log in to the SFIS Scheme Portal, select the relevant application reference and click 'Update claim' on the Application Dashboard. All claims are checked for eligibility and accuracy. Penalties or recoveries may apply where claims are found to be ineligible or inaccurate.

DAERA reserve the right to contact third parties, such as suppliers, directly to ascertain details of the purchase and supply.

10.9 Claim Approved

If following assessment of your claim it is approved, the payment will be made electronically into a bank account or building society account using BACS. Payment will be made to the bank account associated with your DAERA Category 1 Farm Business ID Number.

The amount paid may be less than your claim amount if scheme penalties have been applied, or if the business has an outstanding debt to the Department.

10.10 Claim Refused

If following assessment of your claim it has been deemed that you are not approved for payment for the LESSE or Non-LESSE items, then you will receive a message on the portal. You have 28 days from the date the claim is refused to lodge an appeal to this

decision by emailing SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk stating the grounds for appeal. If no appeal is received the claim will be permanently closed. See [Review of Decisions](#) for more information.

10.11 Claim Expired

If you are issued with a Letter of Offer and do not submit a claim on the scheme portal by the 'Final Claim Submission Date' then the claim window will expire. As a result, the claim will be closed, and no grant funding can be paid in respect of the Letter of Offer.

Please note that if you applied for both LESSE and Non-LESSE items, they are considered separately for claims and the status of each can be viewed on the Scheme Portal.

11. Making It Safer Risk Assessment

Upload the 'Making it Safer Risk Assessment' at claim stage. Completion is via the link: [SAFEr Farmsafe Action Plan | FarmSafe](#)

It is advisable for you to be insured against all risk of injury, damage or loss arising from whatever cause during your project. Any additional expense which may be incurred because of failure to insure, or inadequate insurance will not be eligible for financial support. DAERA are not liable for the failure or malfunction of any funded items.

12. Payment

Once DAERA has completed its checks, the approved payment will be made via BACS (Bankers Automated Clearing System) to the bank or building society account registered with your DAERA Category 1 Farm Business ID Number. The amount paid may be less than your claim amount if scheme penalties or recoveries apply for ineligible or inaccurate claims, or if the business has an outstanding debt to the Department. Once paid you will receive notification via secure messaging that a remittance advice is available.

Your payment will take longer if you do not submit the correct evidence or your claim is incomplete. If DAERA is unable to pay your claim in part or full then we will notify you and explain why. If you are not content with the decision, see [Review of Decisions](#).

DAERA will use other administrative databases at its disposal to assist in determining eligibility for payments.

It is the responsibility of the business to ensure your business status is OK to pay and you must make sure a valid and active bank or building society account has been registered for your business. If these details change you must inform us immediately. Applicants can register or change their farm business bank account details by telephoning 0300 200 7848 and request to speak to DAERA BACS Section, Orchard House.

If the business is in receipt of a payment from DAERA for another scheme and an overpayment has occurred or clawback is deemed necessary, then a claim under this Scheme may be intercepted and payment withheld or reduced.

It is the business's responsibility to check all payments received and notify DAERA immediately if the business has any reason to believe that an error has occurred. If the business receives any overpayment or any payment to which the business is not entitled (including in the event of an administrative error), the undue amount must be repaid.

13. Inspections

Your project(s) may be selected for a site visit, virtual check, audit, or evaluation by a DAERA official (or their authorised agent) before or up to 5 years after the date of the claim submission (end of retention period). The business must permit access to the item, land and / or agree to disclose or supply all information or evidence as required. (see Terms and Conditions, [Annex C](#)).

If an inspection is refused or cannot be conducted because of the business's actions or the actions of others, acting on your behalf, then no payment will be made. Any payment received will have to be repaid (see [Penalties](#)).

Items purchased must only be used, and be available for inspection, in Northern Ireland.

If DAERA identifies a Breach in the terms and conditions of the Letter of Offer or the Regulations, or failure to use the Grant for its purpose under the Scheme, DAERA may:

- (a) give notice specifying the way in which performance falls short of the requirements of the Letter of Offer or is otherwise unsatisfactory;
- (b) require the business to prepare and undertake remedial actions to make good any shortcomings; or
- (c) exercise its rights in accordance with the Scheme penalty matrix

14. Penalties

Before a penalty is applied, DAERA will provide an opportunity for your business to remedy the cause of non-compliance and provide further information, where relevant, within deadlines agreed with DAERA. DAERA will consider the reasons and evidence submitted on a case-by-case basis in deciding whether the business is relieved of all or part of its obligations under the Letter of Offer and whether to take enforcement action.

Where DAERA requires any part or all of the Grant to be repaid, your business shall repay this amount no later than 60 days beginning on the date on which the notification is given. If your business fails to repay, the amount may be offset or will be recoverable as a civil debt, together with interest on that amount calculated.

There are six types of breaches where a penalty may be applied – see the proportionate penalty matrix below.

Penalty type and examples	Outcome	Penalty Amount
Overclaim: Claim submitted for more than maximum in Letter of Offer	Partially ineligible – deduction of ineligible amount *Warning notification of overclaim	If the ineligible amount is more than 10% of claim, then a 10% penalty is applied on the remaining eligible amount
Ineligible Expenditure: Didn't buy mandatory item with additional item Didn't buy to item specification (including packages) Purchased or reserved item (either deposit or in full) before Letter of Offer date Refusal of inspection or unable to due to business action	Ineligible expenditure – deduction for full item amount *Warning notification to complete item	No further penalty. Already paid for an item which will not get funded.
Decommitment: Didn't buy every item on Letter of Offer – failure to make expenditure against commitments	Banded penalty relative to the amount of decommitment applied to eligible claim amount (unless de minimis <1%) *Warning notification to complete item	Claim amount ÷ Offer amount: 75% – 99% = 5% penalty 50% – 74% = 10% 25% – 49% = 15% 0.1% – 24% = 20%
Evaluation / monitoring obligations: Failure to provide requested information for evaluation or monitoring, as required by offer and payment of grant	*Warning notification to provide information to avoid penalty	10% penalty of claim amount paid
Retention period obligations: Item not retained and operational for 5 years	Breach of scheme requirement – banded penalty to be applied relative to when item disposed of	100% if disposed of in 1 st and 2 nd year; 60% 3 rd year; 40% 4 th year; 20% 5 th year
False evidence: Either at claim stage or after payment	Penalty and 2-year exclusion from scheme	100% penalty on claim amount or amount paid

*Note – where possible, a warning notification will be displayed on the claim system and/or a message will be issued to the applicant to offer option to avoid penalty by fulfilling the Letter of Offer (i.e. by purchasing the correct or missing item)

14.1 Overclaim

If you overclaim (e.g. submit costs which exceed the maximum available under the Letter of Offer or against a particular item), the excess amount is deemed ineligible and deducted from the claim. If the excess amount is more than 10% of the total claim, a penalty of 10% would be deducted from the remaining eligible amount.

Example

Offered	Claimed	Breach?	Penalty	Paid
£5,000	£4,950	No	0	£4,950
£5,000	£5,450	£450 ineligible = 9%	0	£5,000
£5,000	£5,700	£700 ineligible = 14%	£500	£4,500

14.2 Ineligible Expenditure

You must claim for item(s) which meet the conditions of your Letter of Offer. Where a claim is made for an item which is determined to be ineligible, the entire amount claimed for that item will be deducted from the claim. No further penalty will apply.

Where relevant you will be offered the opportunity (within a set period of time) to amend your claim e.g. to purchase and claim for a main item to avoid ancillary items being deemed ineligible.

A claim for an item would be deemed ineligible for example:

- i. where an item was purchased (or reserved by deposit) before the date of the Letter of Offer (indicating the applicant proceeded ahead of scheme outcomes);
- ii. where an item is below the required specification, such as a cattle crush without weighing equipment, or a package item without all the required parts; or
- iii. where additional items have been purchased without the relevant main item, such as a claim for heat detection collars (child) without the heat detection unit (main parent item).

14.3 Decommithment

If you have accepted a Letter of Offer for 2 or more items, you must claim for all items within the offer. Failure to do so will result in a penalty relative to the amount of decommitment (unless de minimis). A decommitment penalty is not applied where you have claimed for a lower amount of grant but have purchased all items under your Letter of Offer.

The greater the level of decommitment, the higher the penalty percentage deducted from the eligible claim amount:

Claim amount ÷ offer amount	Level of decommitment	Penalty (on eligible amount)
>99%	De minimis <1%	0
75% to 99%	1 - 25%	5%
50% to 74.9%	25 - 50%	10%
25% to 49.9%	50 - 75%	15%
<25%	>75%	20%

Examples:		
Claim £10,000 / offer £12,000 = 83.3% Claim 2 items / offer 3 items	Decommitment 16.7%	Penalty = £500 (5% of £10,000). Paid £9,500
Claim £5,000 / offer £12,000 = 41.6% Claim 1 item / offer 3 items	Decommitment 58.4%	Penalty = £750 (15% of £5,000) Paid £4,250
Claim £11,500 / offer £12,000 Claim 3 items / offer 3 items	No decommitment	No penalty

As above, you will be notified that your decommitment would lead to a penalty and will be offered the opportunity to avoid a penalty by fulfilling your Letter of Offer.

14.4 Evaluation Information

If you have been asked to provide evaluation information and fail to do so, a 10% penalty will be applied to your farm business. This would either be applied to the value of a claim, or retrospectively if a payment has already been made. In the latter case, the penalty would be recovered as a civil debt or from other monies payable to your farm business by the Department.

14.5 Retention Period

To ensure maximum value for money, businesses are required to retain and maintain all equipment for the purpose it was intended for 5 years from the submission of their claim otherwise they will be required to repay all or part of the Grant.

The business is also required to retain all original documents in hard copy and digital format relating to the Project and its financing for 5 years from the date their claim is submitted (unless the Letter of Offer is transferred in which case the transferee is required to retain copies). This includes receipts, invoices, proof of payments and access to computer data, and any other relevant records relevant to the Grant expenditure.

In no circumstances should any documentation be destroyed or disposed of, before the end of the Retention Period, without written consent of DAERA.

Penalties will be applied on a sliding scale depending on the point at which the item purchased through the scheme was sold, destroyed or otherwise transferred:

Year Disposed	Penalty
1 st	100%
2 nd	100%
3 rd	60%
4 th	40%
5 th	20%

14.6 False evidence

It is an offence to knowingly provide false or misleading information. If you provide false evidence / information e.g. an altered document as part of a claim or present a substitute item to pass a retention inspection, a 100% penalty will be applied along with a two-year exclusion from the scheme. The penalty would be applied to either the value of a claim, or retrospectively if a payment had already been made (e.g. in the case of a retention inspection), DAERA will seek recovery reserving the right to withhold payments from other schemes.

Any person who knowingly or recklessly makes a false statement for the purposes of obtaining grant under this scheme or assisting another to obtain grant may be prosecuted. In line with the Department's Anti-Fraud Policy and Fraud Response Plan, depending on the circumstances the matter could also be referred to the Fraud Investigation Service. DAERA operates a "zero tolerance" policy regarding fraud. All potential frauds will be thoroughly investigated with the aim of establishing the facts. If fraud occurs, the Department will take the appropriate legal action in all cases where that would be justified.

DAERA Fraud Hotline: Freephone 0808 100 2716 or daeracounterfraud@daera-ni.gov.uk

15. Review of Decisions

If DAERA has determined your cattle business is not eligible for LESSE and you feel this is incorrect, for example, if your business temporarily exceeded the limit of 200 or more cattle livestock units due to TB closure; then please email SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk for your eligibility to be reviewed **no later than 10 calendar days before the scheme closing date**. Requests received after this date will not be considered.

If you are not satisfied with DAERA's:

1. findings that your pig business is ineligible for LESSE
2. rejection of your claim evidence as part of your claims processing or a breach resulting in a penalty,

then you may request a review of the decision by emailing SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk **no later than 28 days from the date of notification of the decision to be reviewed**. Late request will not be considered.

You must provide the reference number for the application, business ID, name and address of the business, the DAERA decision that you wish to appeal, date of the decision and the full details of the grounds upon which the review of decision is sought. You may

provide evidence that was not available at the time of the decision. DAERA will review the evidence and may request further information relevant to the review as considered appropriate. You will be informed in writing of the decisions and the reasons.

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

The scheme will be monitored and evaluated to assess the impact that grant funded items have had on your business. This will also provide evidence for the development of any future support measures.

It is proposed this will be carried out via a number of methods; including short surveys and case studies. You may be required to participate, as a condition of support. (see [Penalties](#))

Your business contact details may be disclosed to third parties for monitoring and evaluation of the Scheme, and your business must assist and cooperate with any person authorised by DAERA to conduct monitoring or evaluation on your project.

17. Contact Details

If you have a scheme query, please contact us via the email address 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: SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk

Telephone: 028 9052 4882

Opening hours are 9.00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday (excluding bank and public holidays).

If you have any questions regarding online agent nomination, information is available at [Online Agent Nomination | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#), or telephone: 0300 200 7840.

If your business is a primary food producer and you require a DAERA Farm Business Category 1, information is available online at [New Farm Business | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#) or telephone: 0300 200 7848.

Annex A: Eligible Item List

This can be found at:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/sustainable-farming-investment-scheme-item-list>

Annex B: Questions and Answers

This can be found at:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/sustainable-farming-investment-scheme-questions-and-answers>

Annex C: Terms and Conditions

This can be found at:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/sustainable-farming-investment-scheme-terms-and-conditions>

Annex D: 'How to Guides'

The 'How to' Guides and videos can be found at:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/sustainable-farming-investment-scheme-how-guides>

Annex E: Calculating Cattle Livestock Units / Nitrogen Produced by Pigs

Calculating Cattle Livestock Units / Nitrogen Produced by Pigs

Total cattle livestock units can be calculated using the 2025 stock count numbers, available on NIFAIS (Reports - Nitrates Stock Count). Please note you may have to wait 24 hours on the data. These figures can then be inserted into the [CAFRE Livestock Units calculator](#) to calculate your total livestock units for your business.

Similarly estimate the nitrogen produced by pigs using the previous 12 months stock numbers. The N Loading Calculator can be used to calculate the nitrogen produced by pigs, available at: [DAERA Online Services | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

For mixed farms with cattle and pig enterprises (or any other livestock enterprise) the above calculations should be carried out independently and if either the total livestock units from cattle is over 200 or the N produced by pigs is 20,000kgN/year or more, then LESSE must be used for spreading all slurry produced by all enterprises on the holding. Do not include pigs (or any other livestock enterprise except cattle) in the livestock unit calculation or nitrogen produced by cattle (or any other livestock enterprise) in the pig nitrogen produced calculation.

If you prefer you can calculate the cattle livestock units for your business as shown below.

Livestock units for each category of cattle

Cattle Type	Livestock Units (LU)
Dairy cows	1.0
Beef cows	0.8
Breeding bull	1.0
Cattle over 2 years	0.8
Cattle 1 to 2 years	0.6
Cattle under 1 year	0.4

Examples of how to calculate cattle livestock units

Example 1: 150 cow dairy herd and followers

Stock type	Number	Livestock Unit (LU)	Total Livestock Units (LU)
Dairy cows	150	1.0	150
Breeding bulls	2	1.0	2
Cattle over 2 years	5	0.8	4
Cattle 1-2 years	45	0.6	27
Calves under 1 year	45	0.4	18
			= 201 LU
Greater than 200 cattle LU – must use LESSE			

Example 2: 90 cow suckler and beef finishing farm

Stock type	Number	Livestock Unit (LU)	Total Livestock Units (LU)
Suckler cows	90	0.8	72
Breeding bulls	3	1.0	3
Cattle over 2 years	5	0.8	4
Cattle 1-2 years	125	0.6	75
Calves under 1 year	125	0.4	50
			= 204 LU
Greater than 200 cattle LU – must use LESSE			

Example how to calculate nitrogen produced by pigs

250 sow pig unit

Stock type	Number	N produced per head per year (KgN)	Total N produced (Kg)
Sows	250	16	4,000
Gilts	20	11	220
Boars	2	18	36
250 sows x 28 pigs sold	7000	2.38	16,660
			= 20,916 kg N
Greater than 20,000kg/N/year – must use LESSE			

Annex F: SFIS Application Declaration

Declaration

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge all information provided in this application is true and complete, and that I/ my client require grant support to undertake the proposed investment. I understand that providing false or misleading information may result in this application being rejected or grant funding being withdrawn or recovered.

I confirm that I have / my client has read, understood and agree to comply with all Scheme requirements, as set out in the Terms and Conditions and Scheme Guide.

I / my client give permission for the Department, or its agent, to process and store data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016 (UK GDPR 2016) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).

I / my client agree that the Department may verify claim information and supporting documentation with third parties as necessary to assess eligibility, process the application and for the purposes of monitoring and prevention of fraud.

I / my client agree that the information within this application may be used by the Department, or its agent, to monitor and evaluate the Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme, and the Sustainable Agriculture Programme.

☐ I confirm that I/ my client have read and accept the declaration above and that ticking this box constitutes a legally binding signature.

Annex G: Letter of Offer

Food, Farming and Rural Affairs Group
 Future Investment Measures Delivery
SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk

[Business Name]
 [Business ID]
Application Ref: [Round]-[LE/NL]-
 [UniqueReference]
 [Date Issued]



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
 and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
 agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department of

**Fairmin, Environment
 an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

LETTER OF OFFER:

Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme (SFIS) – [ApplicationType]

Following assessment of your application and in accordance with the Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026, I am pleased to inform you that your application to the SFIS has been approved for [ApplicationType] items.

TOTAL GRANT OFFERED (£)	[Grant applied for]
PROJECT START DATE	[Date LoO issued]
FINAL ACCEPTANCE DATE OF LETTER OF OFFER	[28 calendar days from date of LoO issued]
FINAL CLAIM SUBMISSION DATE	[If NL = 180 calendar days from date of LoO issued; If LE = 270 calendar days from date of LoO issued]

Failure to accept this [ApplicationType] Letter of Offer by [FinalAcceptanceDate] will result in your Letter of Offer expiring.

Please read the Scheme Guide, Terms and Conditions, each item specification below and the contents of this letter carefully before accepting your Letter of Offer on the scheme portal.

This Letter of Offer if accepted becomes a **legally binding contract** between you and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs. This includes any addendum made to this Letter of Offer, either on your request in writing or under a variation by the Department.

Your project must be completed by purchasing the specific item(s) listed in this Letter of Offer, and your claim submitted on the scheme portal by the [FinalClaimSubmissionDate] or the claim will be ineligible. Only one claim for the complete project can be submitted against this [ApplicationType] Letter of Offer.

An extension to the Final Claim Submission date for this Letter of Offer will only be considered in exceptional circumstances as set out within the Scheme Guide.

Expenditure that is not incurred within the rules will not be funded and further penalties may apply. Any invoice dated, or expenditure (including part payments or deposits)

incurred BEFORE the date of this Letter of Offer will render the whole item and potentially the entire project ineligible for Financial Support.

Project Item List

All Reference Price and Grant £ amounts below are excluding VAT

[ItemCode1]

[Item Title1]

[FullItemDescription]

Quantity:	[Quantity][Unit]
Total Reference Price (£):	[TotalReferencePrice]
Grant sub-total (£):	[GrantAmount]

[ItemCode2]

[Item Title2]

[FullItemDescription]

Quantity:	[Quantity][Unit]
Total Reference Price (£):	[TotalReferencePrice]
Grant sub-total (£):	[GrantAmount]

Total Grant Offered (£): [GrantAppliedFor]

Each item must be retained for a minimum of 5 years from the date of claim and may be subject to an on-site inspection.

All transactions will be completed on the scheme portal which will advise you of the progress of your claim. Project notifications may issue by secure message on the DAERA Customer Portal including reminders of upcoming claim deadlines.

You will be notified in writing if the Department wish to vary an approval provided in this Letter of Offer as per regulation 6(2) of the Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026.

This Letter of Offer ONLY relates to the [ApplicationType] items included in your application. If you applied for both LESSE and Non-LESSE items, the outcome of each of these will be available separately on the scheme portal.

If you are also issued with a Letter of Offer for [Opposite to ApplicationType] then you must consider it separately. Payments may or may not be made at the same time, as claims may be processed separately for each Letter of Offer.

If you have any queries, please email SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk.

Yours Sincerely,

Head of Farm Investment Delivery Branch, DAERA

Failure to accept this [ApplicationType] Letter of Offer by [FinalAcceptanceDate] will result in your Letter of Offer expiring.

Annex H: Letter of Rejection (LoR)

Food, Farming and Rural Affairs Group
Future Investment Measures Delivery
SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**

An Roinn

**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

Department o'

**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

www.daera-ni.gov.uk

[Business Name]

[Business ID]

Application Ref: [Round]-[LE/NL]-

[UniqueReference]

[Date Issued]

LETTER OF REJECTION:

Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme (SFIS) – [ApplicationType]

Following assessment of your application and in accordance with the Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026, I regret to inform you that your application for [ApplicationType] items has not been successful, and you will not receive an offer of grant. The reason for this decision is that your application scored below the minimum threshold.

This letter ONLY relates to your [ApplicationType] application. If you applied for both LESSE and Non-LESSE items, the outcome of each of these will be available separately on the scheme portal.

This decision is final and there is no appeal process.

If you have any queries, please email SFIS@daera-ni.gov.uk

Yours Sincerely,

Head of Farm Investment Delivery Branch, DAERA

Annex I: Letter of Offer acceptance declaration

I confirm that I / my client:

- have / has read, understand and agree to comply with the Letter of Offer from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), and all of the relevant item specification, information in the Scheme Guide and the Terms and Conditions.
- understand that providing false, inaccurate or incomplete information or failure to notify the Department of any material changes to the information in this application may result in a penalty, including recovery of any payments made, and such information may be used against me in any subsequent criminal investigation.
- confirm no other grant support is being sought or has been received for any item on the Letter of Offer.
- understand that information in the application and claim may be used in support of any function of the Department including for the prevention or detection of crime.
- give permission for the Department, or its agent, to process and store data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016 (UK GDPR 2016) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).
- agree to repay grant should DAERA determine that the conditions of the above scheme documentation have not been adhered to. Where repayment is not made, I understand that DAERA will take action to recover grant through appropriate legal means.

[wording on check boxes on the system:]

Confirm you have read the Letter of Offer, Scheme Guide, and Terms and Conditions

Confirm you have read and accept the declaration above

Confirm you accept your Letter of Offer, and that ticking this box constitutes a legally binding signature.

Or

I decline my Letter of Offer

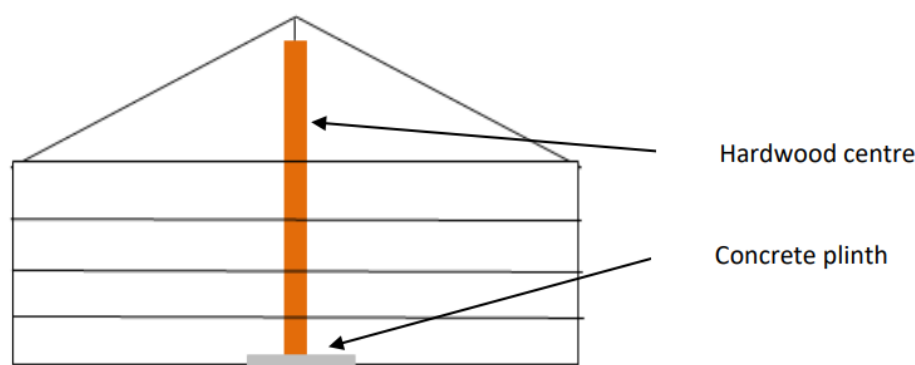
Failure to accept this Letter of Offer by [LOOExpiryDate] will result in your Letter of Offer expiring.

Annex J: Tensioned cover for above ground store and additional ring

J.1 Tensioned covers for above ground stores

Tensioned covers for above ground stores (AGS) used to store slurry reduce the amount of rainwater that is collected and hence increases storage volume on farms which allows the slurry to be applied to the land when conditions are best. In addition, there is a reduction in the emission of ammonia from the surface of the store. The fitting of the tensioned cover on an AGS may include the placing of a load bearing pad on the floor of the store, which may be made from pre-cast concrete, a hardwood centre pole and the cover itself. The cover extends down the side of the store and is tensioned with ratchet straps to the side of the store.

The diagram below shows a 4-ring metal store indicating the position of the concrete pre-cast pad and hardwood central pole.



J.2 Specification Obligations

J2.1 Tensioned cover for above ground slurry store

Tensioned covers for AGS which are eligible for funding must conform to the relevant British Standards (or equivalent). It is your responsibility to seek advice to ensure these standards are met. It is important that you ensure the tank is structurally sound and able to support the additional loading from the cover before you fit the cover.

Confirmation from a currently registered chartered engineer that the store is structurally sound with no visible leaks and capable of supporting the new cover MUST be included with any claim for this item. You are advised to consult with an engineer to assess the suitability of the store to have a tensioned cover fitted prior to submitting an application for this item.

Covers are NOT eligible for stores constructed prior to 1st Dec 2003 or after 31st Dec 2019. All new AGS that have been erected after 1st January 2020 are required to have a cover fitted at erection stage.

There is a legal requirement for any AGS that was erected after 1st December 2003 to be notified to NIEA [previously Silage Slurry and agricultural Fuel Oil (SSAFO) 2003 now Nutrients Action Programme (NAP) 2019- 2022. If you have any queries regarding this, contact the Agricultural Regulations team by emailing Agricultural.Regulation@daera-ni.gov.uk. DAERA may check this notification was submitted and hence this will confirm the date of erection.

The rainwater from the roofed store will collect at the outside base of the store and it will be necessary to direct this away from the store into a clean water drain or rain harvesting system.

The covered area within the tank is considered a confined space and hence it is a danger to enter a covered store without the appropriate safety equipment. It is important to display the following signs to warn of the dangers of confined spaces and fragile covers:

- a. Warning Dangerous slurry gases; No naked flames; No smoking
- b. Danger Fragile roof
- c. Warning Confined Space; No authorised entry



At claim you must provide a photograph of your displayed health and safety signage.

J2.2 Additional works to strengthen a metal above ground slurry store to include a metal ring

Some metal AGS may not currently be suitable to fit a cover without additional structural strengthening. You can apply for additional works to strengthen a metal above ground slurry store in order to safely fit the tensioned cover you have also applied for. Confirmation is required at claim from a currently registered chartered engineer that the store requires the additional works and is structurally sound with no visible leaks and capable of supporting the new cover.

J3 Costs

The reference price for the cover and strengthening ring is a set price and does NOT vary according to the diameter of the store or length of ring. The area of the cover and the length of the strengthening ring must be stated on the invoice.

The following costs are ineligible for grant:

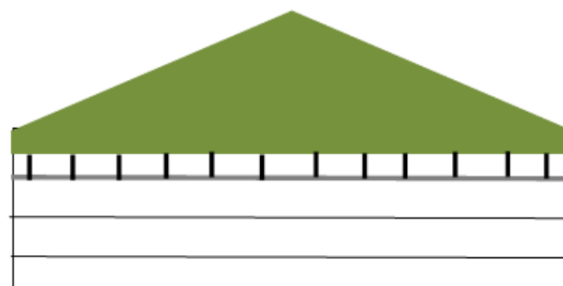
- Floating covers;
- Covers on stores constructed prior to 1st December 2003 OR after 31st December 2019;

- Any remedial works to repair the store to make it structurally sound as identified by the engineer

J4 Tensioned Cover Area Calculations

Before submitting your application, you should consult with a supplier to confirm the area of cover required, however you must NOT order at this stage.

The area of the tensioned cover includes the material required to allow for the cone shape and the depth that the cover extends down the side of the store. The area covered is shown below in green along with the ratchet straps and strengthening ring.

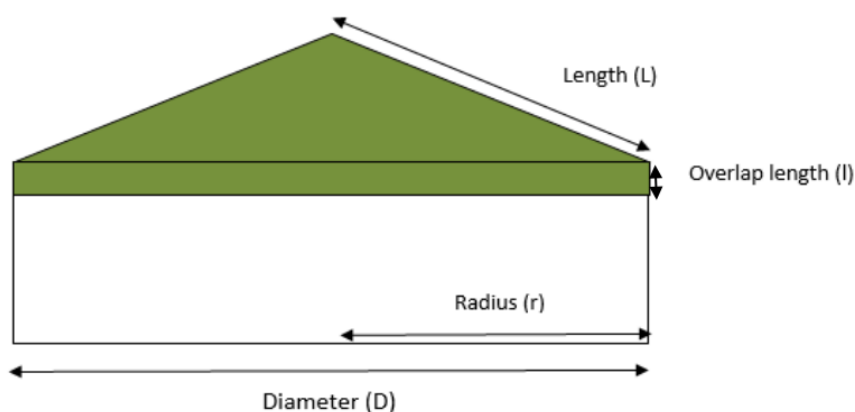


If the cover cost exceeds the £52,500 limit, you may apply for the cover up to £52,500 and self-fund the difference.

The total area depends on the following:

- The diameter of the tank
- The angle of the slope
- The length of the cover that extends down the side

J4.1 Calculation of the area of cover required



Calculate	Formula	<u>Example of above ground store cover:</u> Diameter of above ground store: 10.5m Cover overlap length: 0.5m
Length of cover (L) on top edge of the cone	$L = r / 0.966^*$ (*Cos 15° = typical angle of cover)	$L = 5.25 / 0.966 = 5.43\text{m}$
Area of the cone / Cone Area (CA)	$CA = 3.14 \times r \times L$	$CA = 3.14 \times 5.25 \times 5.43 = 89.51\text{m}^2$
Area of cover down the side of the tank / Overlap Area (OA)	$OA = 3.14 \times D \times l$	$OA = 3.14 \times 10.5 \times 0.5 = 16.49\text{m}^2$
Total Area of cover (TA)	$TA = CA + OA$	$TA = 89.51 + 16.49 = 106\text{m}^2$

Hence eligible total area of the cover for a 10.5m diameter store is 106m².

J4.2 Calculation of the Length of Strengthening Ring Required

Calculate	Formula	<u>Example of above ground store cover:</u> Diameter of above ground store: 10.5m
Length of strengthening ring = circumference of the tank	Circumference (m) = 3.14 x diameter (m)	Circumference = $3.14 \times 10.5 = 32.97\text{m}$

Hence eligible length of strengthening ring is 33m.

Annex K: Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment (LESSE)

K.1 Types of LESSE

Funding is available for equipment that will spread slurry to help reduce the emission of ammonia compared with surface broadcast application (inverted splash plate). This equipment is referred to as Low Emission Slurry Spreading Equipment (LESSE).

For those eligible for funding, it is available for the following types of applicators:

- Dribble bar / trailing hose
- Flexi trailing shoe
- Traditional Rigid trailing shoe
- Shallow injector

All these applicators use a hydraulic driven macerator(s) to distribute the slurry down individual pipes to the system applying the slurry to the ground. The macerator is likely to have a chopping effect on the slurry and will require maintenance. The width of the applicators can vary from 4m to 12m depending on type and has hydraulic folding facility for road transport. The dribble bar tends to be the lightest system and the shallow injector heaviest and hence this is reflected in the working widths and method of attachment to the tanker. Due to the corrosive effect of slurry on metal, it is advised that all metal components of the attachment should be galvanised or equivalent protection to increase durability and lifespan.

Dribble bar (Trailing Hose)

LESSE	Example photograph
Dribble bar / trailing hose	

A dribble bar applicator has outlets at spacing of 25cm - 30cm placed along a metal bar with pipes dropping the slurry onto the ground. It still has the potential to coat the grass leaf surface with slurry and therefore is less effective in reducing ammonia emissions than the other methods. It is more suited to applying slurry to growing crops. The “lay flat” type hose should reduce this contamination of the grass sward and is recommended.

Trailing Shoe

LESSE	Example photograph
Flexi trailing shoe	 
Traditional Rigid trailing shoe	

Trailing shoes are available as the 'Traditional Rigid' and 'Flexi' shoe. The key difference is in their design (rigid versus flexible) and their ability to handle challenging terrain. The flexi shoe is lighter and designed to combine the flexibility of the dribble bar system with the precision application of the trailing shoe. It is suitable for farmers who struggle with tanker weight and uneven terrain.

The trailing shoe applicator is specifically designed to deliver the slurry beneath the grass canopy to the soil surface. The spacing is typically 25cm – 30cm and the opening tip should follow the ground. Most will have a positive downward pressure so that it follows the ground contours. This should result in less contamination of the herbage and greater emission reduction.

Shallow Injection

LESSE	Example photograph
Shallow injector	

The shallow disc injector is designed to place slurry precisely into the grassland. It is usually fitted with a cast iron disc that opens a slot in the soil into which the slurry is

placed. The interval spacing of the discs is typically 25cm and depth of slot is 30mm – 80mm. There is a downward hydraulic pressure on the disc and should produce a lot less contamination of the herbage and reduces emissions the most.

K.2. Modifications

Any modification to LESSE, for example, shortening the trailing hose or attaching small splash plates within the scheme retention period (five years from date of claim submission) will make the whole item ineligible as it is not deemed to be a Low Emission spreading method.

K.3 LESSE Packages

Where an existing slurry tanker is not suitable to fit an appropriate LESSE attachment, funding is available for the purchase of a new tanker with an attachment. A slurry tanker is not funded on its own. Slurry tankers and LESSE must be fitted with a manufacturer's identifier plate. It is recommended that the plate indicates a CE marking, serial number and states the make and model, unladen weight and laden weight (tanker). You should also ensure you are supplied with the operator's manual highlighting the relevant safety instructions.

Current road traffic legislation restricts the maximum laden weight of a trailed implement at 18.29 tonnes and there is a further maximum total weight of tractor and trailed implement of 31 tonnes. To ensure compliance with these regulations, the maximum size of tanker permitted for purchasing is 2500 gallons (11,360 litres). The tanker must comply with all other road traffic legislation including the correct braking efficiency and lighting. Where the LESSE equipment obscures the tanker's rear lights, there must be additional lights fitted to the rear of the applicator. An operator's manual should be supplied with the slurry tanker and LESSE which include safe use of the item and highlight the relevant safety instructions.

Where the new slurry tanker is specifically designed to fit a LESSE applicator, and both the tanker and the LESSE item are of the **same make**, there is no requirement for confirmation that the LESSE item can be safely attached.

Where the new slurry tanker is specifically designed to fit a LESSE applicator, but the tanker is of a **different make** to the LESSE item, a letter on headed paper from the manufacturer of the tanker, stating that the make and model of the LESSE item can be safely attached to their model(s) of tanker is required.

Where such a letter cannot be obtained from the tanker manufacturer, a report from a registered chartered engineer will be required. The cost of this report is not eligible for funding. The report must state:

- a) owner (name of applicant),
- b) tanker (make, size, and serial number),
- c) tanker inspected and is suitable to safely fit the LESSE item (state make, size, type, and serial number); and
- d) The LESSE has been fitted in a manner that is safe to use.

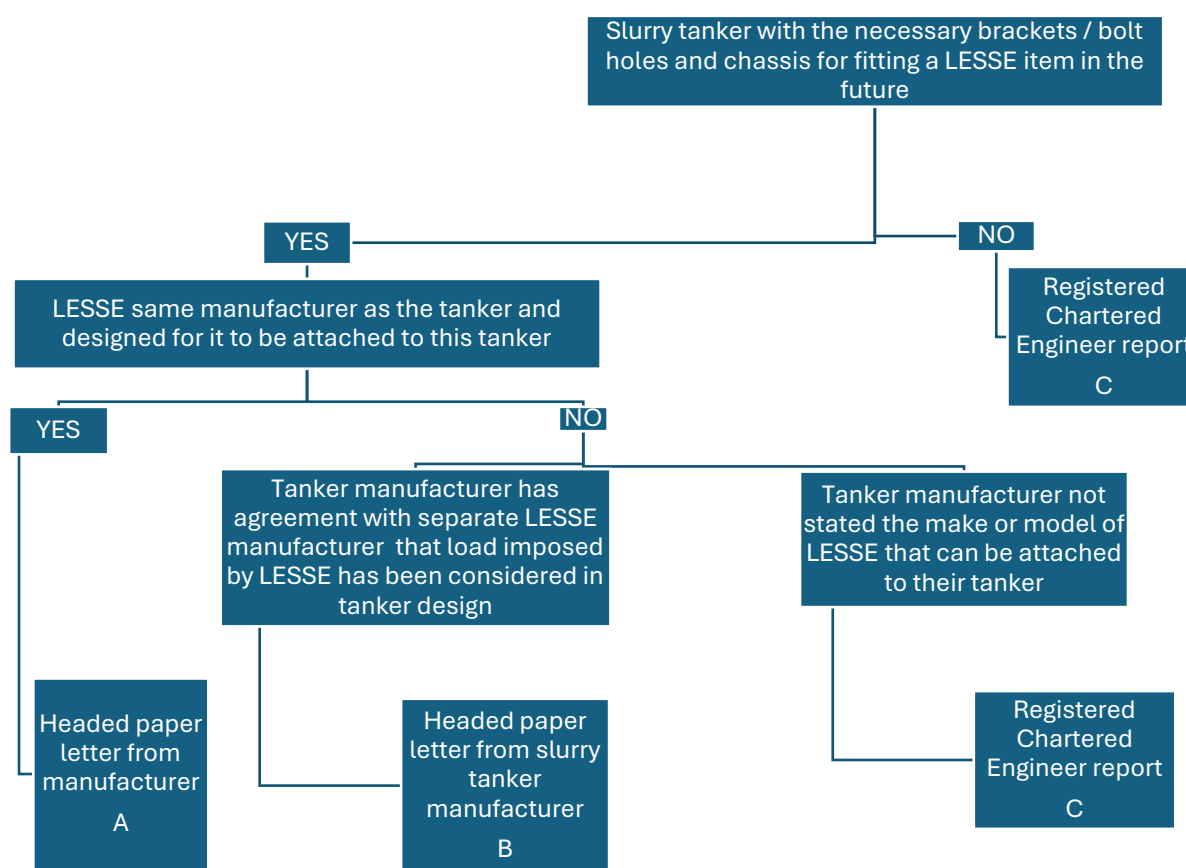
K.4 Tanker Mounted LESSE (Dribble bar / Rigid trailing shoe / Flexi trailing shoe / Shallow Injector) to existing tanker

If you have applied for a LESSE applicator without purchasing a slurry tanker you **MUST** retrofit the LESSE applicator to an existing slurry tanker in a safe manner. All LESSE applicators retrofitted to an existing slurry tanker must be fitted with a manufacturer's identifier plate. It is recommended that the plate indicates a CE marking, serial number and states the make and model of applicator and unladen weight. You should ensure you have been supplied an operator's manual for the LESSE applicator to include safe use of the applicator and highlight the relevant safety instructions.

LESSE applicator must be mounted onto the tanker in a safe manner. Newer tankers have been designed with a chassis type frame or mounting points fitted during manufacture. Older tankers may need to be adapted to safely attach the different systems. It is advisable to seek specific advice from a registered chartered engineer to ensure the applicator can be fitted and operated safely to your existing slurry tanker and not affect the integrity or weaken any part of the slurry tanker. Particular attention should be given to the load bearing capability and safe operation.

Where funding is provided for LESSE which is being mounted onto an existing slurry tanker where no existing brackets exist, confirmation from a currently registered chartered engineer that the attachment has been mounted in a manner that causes no detrimental effect on the tanker will be required at claim stage. The cost of this certificate is not eligible for funding.

K.5 Summary of documentation required with LESSE claim



- A. Headed paper letter from manufacturer must state that the tanker (size, serial number) belongs to (applicant name), was inspected and the company is satisfied that it is suitable to safely fit the LESSE item (state type, serial number and size of LESSE item).
- B. Headed paper letter from the slurry tanker manufacturer stating the make and model of the LESSE item that can be attached to their model(s) of tanker is required.
- C. Engineers report which must state:
 - The tanker (make, size and serial number) belongs to (applicant name) was inspected and is suitable to safely fit the LESSE item (make, size, type and serial number of the LESSE);
 - The LESSE item has been fitted in a manner that is safe to use.

Annex L: Umbilical

In certain circumstances it might be more appropriate to apply slurry using an umbilical system. Funding is available for the centrifugal chopper pump, umbilical hose reeler system (includes 600m of hose and reeler) and the LESSE applicator. Reelers can be trailed or mounted, random or compartmentalised. The minimum length of pipe that is funded is 600m and there is no upper limit that can be purchased. The pipe can be either up to 100mm (4inch) or up to 125mm (5inch) or a mixture of both. It may be an advantage to use a larger diameter of pipe for the first section of pipe. This complete system must include a LESSE applicator. If the farm business does not currently own a LESSE applicator, one must also be purchased.

All items of equipment must be fitted with a manufacturer's identifier plate. It is recommended that the plate indicates a CE marking, serial number and states the model of machine and the weight. You should ensure you have been supplied an operator's manual highlighting the relevant safety instructions.

Annex M: Crush

Crushes should provide accessibility to the neck area for TB testing. They should also be maintained – need to be greased regularly to ensure freely moving. Floors must be anti-slip as animals require good grip and preferably not metal as these can be noisy.



Annex N: Sample invoice and claim

Machinery Limited
www.machinerylimited.co.uk

Industrial Estate, Town, AB12 3CD
Tel: 028 1234 6789 email: sales @machinerylimited.co.uk
VAT Reg No. 123 4567 89

INVOICE

Date: 20/9/26
INVOICE Number: ABC 123456

To Joe Bloggs
Made up Farm
Country Road
Any town
County
AB78 9CD

Delivery date: 25/9/26

BACS
Details

Machinery Ltd
Ulster Bank
Sort Code: 99-00-11
Account Number: 12345678

Qty	Description	Unit Price	Line Total
1	Electronic Cow (Beef/Dairy) Heat AND Health Detection System - Base Unit. (HHDB) Records, transmits and processes animal data Nedap Smarttag base Item No 9985963	£3424	£3424
120	Electronic Cow (Beef/Dairy) Heat AND Health detection System - collars (HHDD) Nedap Smart tag Neck Item No 9985964 Lot Nos: XXX-YY-123456 – 00000 to XXX – YY – 123456 - 98765	£100	£12,000
			£15,424
	Delivery		£56
		Discount	£480
		Subtotal	£15,000
	Paid by BACS: 25/9/26	VAT	£3000
	Amount paid in full : £ 18,000	Total	£18,000

The £56 delivery and the VAT are not eligible for the scheme. The £480 discount should also not be counted as expenditure. The total spend is therefore £15,424 - £480 = **£14,944**

Letter of Offer: 110 collars and 1 base

Spend: Base: £3,424

Collars: £12,000 - £480 = £11,520 for 120 collars

On the online claim you then enter the details for each item:

Electronic Cow (Beef/Dairy) Heat AND Health Detection System - Base Unit.

Reference Price for base: £3,520

INVOICE DETAILS	
Enter the total amount that you paid for this item, excluding VAT (<i>total paid for the item across all invoices which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	£3424
Quantity paid for (<i>total number of this item purchased which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	1 [Unit]
CLAIM DETAILS	
Quantity claimed for (<i>must be less or equal to the quantity approved. Must be greater than the minimum quantity according to list</i>)	1 [Unit]
Total value of claim (<i>total amount paid for items eligible for claim</i>) *	£3,424
Potential Grant Payable (<i>40% of total value of claim</i>)	£1,369.60

Electronic Cow (Beef/Dairy) Heat AND Health detection System - collars (HHDD)

Reference Price for devices: £105/device

Paid: £11,520 for 120 collars = £96 / collar

Letter of Offer for 110 collars - £96 x 110 collars = £10,560

INVOICE DETAILS	
Enter the total amount that you paid for this item, excluding VAT (<i>total paid for the item across all invoices which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	£11,520
Quantity paid for (<i>total number of this item purchased which may exceed the approved amount</i>)	120 [Unit]
CLAIM DETAILS	
Quantity claimed for (<i>must be less or equal to the quantity approved. Must be greater than the minimum quantity according to list</i>)	110 [Unit]
Total value of claim (<i>total amount paid for items eligible for claim</i>) *	£10,560
Potential Grant Payable (<i>40% of total value of claim</i>)	£4,224

Annex O: Photographs

Photographs of the item must:

- clearly show the whole item out of the packaging, in focus, colour and on site
- show all the component parts within an item that is specifically listed in the specification. For example, for the squeeze crush show various components – adjustable head yoke, head scoop, sliding rear gate, anti-slip flooring, sides that can be opened, weigh scale, load bars.
- show all the 'system' if possible, e.g. 'Umbilical Hose Reeler System', need to photograph hose and reeler.
- show each part of the 'package' if multiple parts e.g. for 'Soil Health and Weather Package', need to photograph digital weather station and penetrometer
- show item installed / ready for operational use
- not include individuals

It is recommended to have 'Location' enabled on your smart device when taking photographs (refer to Annex D, 'How to Guide').

Photographs of manufacturer's identifier plate (if required - see item specification):

- must include serial /unique identifier (if accessible),
- recommend plate indicates a CE marking, serial number and states the make and model, and potentially weight (unladen and laden).

DAERA may request more photographs to show that an item meets the specifications and is on site.

Annex P: Claim declaration

I / my client:

Confirm that to the best of my knowledge all information provided in this claim is true and complete and complies with all requirements set out in the Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme Terms and Conditions, Scheme Guide, and Letter of Offer.

Understand that providing false or misleading information may result in this claim being rejected or grant funding being withdrawn, and that such information may be used in any subsequent criminal investigation.

Give permission for the Department, or its agent, to process and store data in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).

Agree that information within this claim may be used by the Department, or its agent, to monitor and evaluate the Sustainable Farming Investment Scheme, and that the Department may verify claim information and supporting documentation with third parties as necessary to process the claim and for the purposes of monitoring and prevention of fraud.

Understand that any amount found to be ineligible will be deducted from the claim and that reduction(s) may be applied to the claim where DAERA has determined that I have not fulfilled all commitments in my letter of Offer, or have otherwise breached the scheme's Terms and Conditions.

Understand that if the claim does not include all required documentation at the point of submission, the claim may not be processed.

Understand that debt owed to DAERA may be deducted from this Claim.

☐ I confirm that I / my client have read and accept the declaration above and that ticking this box constitutes a legally binding signature.