

Guidance

Online Herd Registers for Cattle

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An Roinn
Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe

Department of
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Guidance for keepers on cattle online herd registers

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Introduction

1. For many decades you have been required to keep a herd register on your farm listing each of your cattle and their origin and destination. This has been kept in the form of a paper herd book or in an electronic form (in DAERA-accepted software or a computer spreadsheet).
2. This guidance explains that you now have another option. If you follow the conditions set out below, you can keep an online herd register by recording your herd information in NIFAIS. This means you do not have to maintain a herd register on your farm.
3. Keeping an online herd register is entirely voluntary. You can continue to maintain your on-farm herd register instead if you prefer. If you are new to NIFAIS Online, you may wish to maintain your on-farm herd register for a while until you are confident in managing your herd register online.
4. If you decide to keep an online herd register you will be moving to an electronic way of keeping your herd register and of notifying births, deaths and movements. You will no longer be sending paper notification documents (MC1s or MC2s) to DAERA.

No sign-up needed beyond NIFAIS Online

5. You do not have to sign up or be authorised by DAERA to keep an online herd register. If you have access to your herd information on NIFAIS Online, you can begin to keep an online herd register when you are ready.
6. If you do not currently have access to NIFAIS Online, you can find information on how to sign up at www2.daera-ni.gov.uk/gatewayweb/internet/login_1.aspx. If you use NIFAIS Online to notify births, deaths or movements but do not want to keep an online herd register, you can continue to maintain your on-farm herd register as you do now. We will only consider you to be keeping an online herd register if you stop keeping your on-farm herd register.

Use of an agent

7. If you keep an online herd register, you can have an agent enter information using NIFAIS Online on your behalf. You can find more information on this in the Annex to this guidance.

Your old on-farm herd register

8. If you keep an online herd register, you must retain your old on-farm herd register for a period of 10 years from the date of the last entry and present it for inspection if requested to do so.

Conditions

9. You must satisfy the conditions below if you want to keep an online herd register.

You must have access to NIFAIS Online

10. You or your agent must be signed up to NIFAIS Online and be able to access all of the information that would have been recorded in an on-farm herd register. You can find more information about using NIFAIS Online in the Annex to this guidance.

You must ensure that NIFAIS contains the information that would have been recorded in your on-farm herd register

11. All information that is required in an on-farm herd register must be recorded on NIFAIS. You must check that NIFAIS is correct before beginning to keep an online herd register.
12. You are responsible for the accuracy of your herd register information in NIFAIS even if it was uploaded by your employee or agent, or by a third party such as a market or abattoir.

You must record information electronically, and within set time limits

13. You must electronically record birth, death, and movement information on NIFAIS using NIFAIS Online, or have your agent do this on your behalf. You can no longer send paper notification documents to DAERA or use the DAERA Cattle Registration Line to notify births, deaths or movements.
14. You must record events within the following time limits:

Event	Time limit
Births	Within 27 days of birth (this includes 20 days to tag and 7 days to record the birth)
Deaths	Within 7 days of death
Moves from your holding	1. Record your intention to move an animal on the day of movement at the latest , and 2. confirm the move to another farm within 3 days (you do not need to confirm moves to a market or abattoir)
Moves to your holding	Within 3 days of the move

Recording movements using NIFAIS Online

Moves from your holding

15. You must record your intention to move an animal from your holding on the day you move it at the latest, and print copies of the MC2 movement document to give to the destination keeper.
16. In addition, if you move an animal from your holding to another farm you must confirm the move within 3 days following the move. You do not need to do this for moves to an abattoir or market.
17. An animal must be in your herd on NIFAIS before you can record its movement from your holding. Therefore you must always record a birth or movement to your holding before you move the animal from your holding.
18. Moves from your holding to export assembly centres (EACs) or directly to export are recorded by the EAC operator or the Authorised Veterinary Inspector certifying the export. Following such moves you should check NIFAIS-on-Line to ensure that the moves have been recorded.

Moves to your holding

19. You must record the movement of an animal to your holding within 3 days of its arrival. This is known on NIFAIS Online as a buyer confirmation.
20. If the keeper you move the animal from has not recorded and confirmed the move on NIFAIS Online you will need to key in the serial number of the MC2 document and possibly also the animal's tag number. You cannot confirm the move by sending the MC2 document or Confirmation Sticker to DAERA.

Notification to your DAERA Direct office

21. You cannot record the following using NIFAIS Online so you will need to contact your local DAERA Direct Office:
 - a. you should use an MC2 movement document to notify moves to or from a show, and any lost or stolen animals;
 - b. you should apply for a special movement licence (MC2L) to move animals if movement to or from your holding is restricted;
 - c. you should notify DAERA using form MC1A if you have re-identified an animal with a different tag number; and
 - d. you should use an MC2 movement document and import documentation to notify imports.

Action in the event of technical problems

22. If your computer or Internet connection is not working, you must make alternative arrangements to continue to record information through NIFAIS Online. You can access NIFAIS Online using any computer with Internet access, as well as mobile phones and a range of other devices. DAERA Direct offices and some public libraries have public-access computers that you can use.
23. In the unlikely event that no alternative arrangements are possible, you should contact your local DAERA Direct office for advice. They will discuss with you options for reverting to paper movement documents, and for keeping a copy of all information generated during the period of the failure and recording that on NIFAIS Online as soon as possible. DAERA Direct staff will make a record of that advice, and it will be taken into consideration during any future cross-compliance inspection.

Use of NIFAIS Online without keeping an online herd register

24. If you use NIFAIS Online to notify births, deaths or movements but do not want to keep an online herd register, you can continue to maintain your on-farm herd register as you do now. We will only consider you to be keeping an online herd register if you stop keeping your on-farm herd register.
25. If you are using a recognised software package which automatically notifies information to NIFAIS, you can continue to use this whether or not you are keeping an online herd register.

Stopping your online herd register

26. If in the future you decide to stop keeping your herd register online you will need to create a new on-farm herd register containing all of the required information about the cattle on your holding at that time. You cannot begin to use your old on-farm herd register again.

Benefits of an online herd register

27. Keeping an online herd register will allow you to stop maintaining your on-farm herd register
28. DAERA selects holdings each year for cattle identification or cross-compliance inspection. Non-compliance with on-farm herd register rules can lead to animal movement restrictions, financial penalties against your Area-based Scheme payments, or prosecution. If you keep an online herd register, you will not have an on-farm herd register to be checked and can avoid this risk. However, your herd register information in NIFAIS will be checked.

Risks of an online herd register

29. If you do not comply with the conditions for keeping an online herd register set out in this guidance, and are selected for cross-compliance inspection, you could be subject to a financial penalty. This could be the case, for example, if you do not have access to NIFAIS Online; if you continue to send paper birth, death or movement notification documents to DAERA; if you do not record births, deaths or movements within the time limits; or if your herd information in NIFAIS is inaccurate.
30. If you move cattle to or from premises with access to NIFAIS (for example, a market, abattoir or other farm), they will record information about the movement in NIFAIS. It is essential that you notify or confirm the move using NIFAIS Online as appropriate, and that you ensure that the record in NIFAIS is accurate. This also applies for deaths recorded on NIFAIS by a renderer, which you must confirm using NIFAIS Online. The information relates to your herd, and you will be liable for cross-compliance penalties if it is not accurate.
31. A keeper who wishes to challenge the application of an NIFAIS status to an animal may be able to present a contemporaneous on-farm herd register as supporting evidence. You will not be able to do this if you have an online herd register.

Help with NIFAIS Online

32. Help is available to you if you want to keep an online herd register but are not sure how to use NIFAIS Online. A CAFRE course is available to train existing users and introduce new users to the full set of NIFAIS Online functions. The course consists of two sessions which are usually held in the evenings.
33. The course will help you to understand what NIFAIS Online is and how it can benefit you. It will show you how to register to use NIFAIS Online, notify cattle births, deaths, and movements, and access herd information.
34. You can book a place on a course or submit an expression of interest in attending the course on the CAFRE website. You can send a query to the DAERA Online Services helpdesk by emailing onlineservices@daera-ni.gov.uk or by calling 028 9442 6699. You can find further information in the Annex to this guidance.

Northern Ireland Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme (FQAS) inspection

35. Before the FQAS inspection begins, the inspector will ask you which type of herd register you are keeping, for example, an online herd register (NIFAIS Online) or an on-farm herd register (paper herd book, DAERA-accepted software package, or electronic spreadsheet).
36. If you are keeping an on-farm herd register, the inspection will continue as normal. If you are keeping an online herd register, you will need to give the inspector access to your current herd list in either electronic format (by viewing on a screen) or printed format. If you are aware that you will not be able to access NIFAIS Online during the inspection, for example, if an agent maintains the online herd register on your behalf, you should print a copy the day before the inspection.
37. If you cannot produce a current herd list from NIFAIS Online for inspection, then a Non-Conformance will be raised (this is consistent with the current procedure for on-farm herd registers if no herd records can be produced on the day of inspection).
38. As stated in this guidance, if FQAS participants choose to use NIFAIS Online as their herd register, all births, deaths and movements must be recorded electronically and be up to date. The inspector will ask to see evidence of the last movement. If an online herd register is used (NIFAIS Online), the inspector will ask to see evidence of the latest electronic movement. If you have only recently started keeping an online herd register and the last movement is recorded in an on-farm herd register, the inspector will ask to see MC2 documents and an up-to-date on-farm register as per normal inspection procedure.

Glossary of terms

NIFAIS	Animal and Public Health Information System – the livestock traceability database for Northern Ireland operated by DAERA
NIFAIS Online	DAERA's online service which allows you to access your herd information in NIFAIS and record births, deaths and movements
CAFRE	College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise
Cattle Registration Line	DAERA's telephone line that allows you to notify cattle births and deaths
FQAS	Northern Ireland Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme
On-farm herd register	The paper or electronic list of all the cattle on your holding, which is required under EU Regulation No. 1760/2000
Online herd register	Records you keep in the NIFAIS database, making use of a derogation provided by EU Regulation No. 1760/2000
Notification document	An MC1 or MC2 document for use by you to notify births/deaths or movements respectively
MC1A	A DAERA document for use by you to notify the change of an animal's tag number

NIFAIS Online

Introduction

NIFAIS Online is DAERA's online service which allows you to access your herd information at the touch of a button at any time, day or night.

Using NIFAIS Online you can:

- ☐ register cattle births, deaths and stillbirths;
- ☐ produce movement notification of cattle moving off your herd to market, abattoir or farm;
- ☐ confirm cattle movements into your herd;
- view and download your herd list, including information about your animals' DAERA statuses, TB & Br test results and export eligibility;
- ☐ view movement and progeny history of every animal in your herd;
- ☐ view post and ante mortem details of slaughtered animals; and
- ☐ produce a report to count and classify your animals in accordance with the Nitrate Action Programme.

Benefits of NIFAIS Online

NIFAIS Online is:

- secure – access to your data is protected by Government Gateway security;
- quick – all your registrations are completed with immediate effect;
- less tolerant of errors – your data is checked for errors before registration; and
- free – there is no charge to use NIFAIS Online.

How to access to NIFAIS Online

To use NIFAIS Online you must register or log in to DAERA Online Services at the link below.

- ☐ www2.daera-ni.gov.uk/gatewayweb/internet/login_1.aspx

If you have any questions, please contact the DAERA Online Services Helpdesk on 028 9442 6699 or email onlineservices@daera-ni.gov.uk.

NIFAIS Online training

To help you move from the traditional paper forms to the online system, DAERA is offering free training on NIFAIS Online at local venues across Northern Ireland.

During the training course DAERA will help you log onto NIFAIS Online to view your own herd details and show you all the benefits that NIFAIS Online has to offer, such as how to:

- ☐ register cattle births, deaths and stillbirths;
- ☐ notify DAERA of all cattle movements out of and into your herd;
- ☐ view, print and download your current DAERA herd list;
- ☐ view detailed information about your animals, including comprehensive movement and calving history;
- ☐ view post and ante mortem information on slaughtered animals;
- ☐ produce a report which counts and classifies your animals in accordance with the Nitrate Action Programme; and
- ☐ check all your registrations for mistakes. NIFAIS Online will let you know if there are any problems.

Booking NIFAIS Online training

If you wish to attend an NIFAIS Online training course, you can enroll using the NIFAIS Online course booking system at the following link:

- ☐ www.cafre.ac.uk/industry-support/industry-training/information-technology/NIFAIS-Online-training/.

If you want more information or would like to book your place on a course by telephone, contact the DAERA Online Services Helpdesk on 028 9442 6699 or email onlineservices@daera-ni.gov.uk.

Training videos

DAERA has published a range of videos to assist you in completing tasks using NIFAIS Online. You can find these at the link below.

- ☐ www.daera-ni.gov.uk/NIFAIS-online-support

Use of an agent

An online agent is a member of the public who works on your behalf to carry out administrative tasks using available DAERA online services such as NIFAIS Online. You must authorise an agent before they can work on your behalf and you are responsible for ensuring that all information provided by the agent is correct. You can find further information about online agents on the DAERA website at:

- ☐ www.daera-ni.gov.uk/index/online-services/online-agents.htm.