

ANNEX B

Key Targets and Indicators

Evidence

- By June 2009, finalise three research programmes to provide a strong evidence base for the Department's policy development and delivery activities in the areas of renewable energy, sustainability of the red meat sector and sustainable environment.
- By September 2009, introduce appropriate cost-effective quality assurance arrangements for DARD-funded R&D.
- By October 2009, introduce competitive contract commissioning arrangements for DARD-funded R&D.
- By March 2011, develop research programmes to underpin all of the research areas identified in this Strategy.

Innovation

- By September 2009, develop and introduce a Research Challenge Fund for agri-food and rural businesses.
- By October 2009, set up appropriate mechanisms for stakeholder engagement in R&D.
- By March 2010, establish the resources and mechanism(s) required for a research digest.
- By March 2010, review DARD's arrangements for knowledge transfer and deliver improvements.

Performance Indicators

Indicators will be based around those used for reporting on the Regional Innovation Strategy Action Plan 2008-2011 which include the following:

- Percentage of innovation-active rural businesses;
- Number of participants at DARD-funded knowledge transfer events;
- Number of hits on research material published on the DARD website and Research Digest (when available);
- Number of collaborative agreements between AFBI and other research providers.