

DRAFT Minutes

MEETING OF THE FARM ANIMAL WELFARE ADVISORY COUNCIL (FAWAC)

Date: 30th January 2023

Venue: DAFM Backweston Campus, Seminar Room 3

Meeting Time: 10.30am – 1.00pm

Attendees:

Ciara Feeney-Reid (Chair), Eoin Ryan DAFM, Sean Murray DAFM, Catherine Lawler DAFM, Stephanie Ronan DAFM, Aiden Maguire DAFM, Alan Walsh DAFM, Brendan Golden IFA, Aine O'Connell IFA, Des Morrison ICMSA, Noel Murphy ICMSA, Bernie Earley Teagasc, Conor Dowling ISPCA, Ray Doyle ICOS, Elizabeth O'Flynn Veterinary Ire, Conor Geraghty Veterinary Ire, Siobhan Mullen UCD.

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The Chair noted minutes of previous meeting were accepted and actions to be discussed further in today's agenda.

DAFM contacted Animal Health Ireland in relation to nominate a representative to FAWAC group.

DAFM issued an information note to veterinary practitioners in relation to the use of stunning/immobiliser equipment. An additional information notice is being considered for the farming community.

2. FAWN update

Four regional meetings took place over the 28th and 29th November. A disparity in attendance was noted with greater attendee levels for the Southern region sessions than that of the Northern. The next meeting will be an in-person event, which will afford greater opportunities of networking among all stakeholders.

The suggestion of having a presence from An Garda Síochána at future FAWN meetings was well received. DAFM agreed to contact the Garda Crime Prevention Unit to arrange attendance at the next FAWN meetings.

DAFM informed the Group that three focus groups of the On Feirm Ground Initiative had taken place in late 2022 with attendance from the IFA, SPCA's and DAFM veterinary staff. Once the training course is tailored following feedback from these focus groups DAFM will look to progress the one day training course to make it available to a range of personnel dealing directly with farmers, including PVP's.

3. Painful Procedures update

The report from the Painful Procedures Subgroup was presented and associated conclusions discussed.

The Report was discussed with members mindful of the impact of any potential implications of the EFSA opinion on dairy cow and calf welfare, due in March. Disbudding was discussed as was the availability of local anaesthetic, for use by farmers. There was concern that a disruption in supply of local anaesthetic could lead to disbudding becoming a vet only practice. FAWAC members also asked to advocate for disbudding to remain a task which can be performed by farmers, as for castration, in any future EU legislation.

The language of the phrase “painful procedures” was raised and questioned if it could be softened, with a suggestion of necessary procedures put forward.

ACTION POINT: DAFM to explore pathway/process to provide alternative local anesthetic for farmers.

4. FAWAC Website Review and Updating Guidelines

It was agreed among members that the Guidelines on the FAWAC website were very useful but that elements needed to be updated and revised. It was agreed to review all guidelines among the group, as a whole, with DAFM coordinating. It was agreed to begin with reviewing the guideline “Animal Welfare Guidelines for Managing Acutely Injured Livestock on Farm.”

AOB

- Apology from Stephen Arthur IFA.
- Next meeting 10-1pm on 26/06/2023 at DAFM Backweston Campus, Seminar Room