

Dyddiad: Dydd Gwener 21 Tachwedd 2001
Amser: 2.00pm to 5.00pm
Lleoliad: Ystafell Bwyllgora, Adeilad y Cynulliad Cenedlaethol

Nid yw'r cyfieithiad Cymraeg ar gael ar hyn o bryd.

REPORT OF THE MINISTER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture Council

1. I will be attending the Agriculture Council in Brussels on 20 November which will, among other things, be discussing the reform of the sheepmeat regime. I will provide an oral update to the Committee on the outcome of the meeting.

New Entrants

2. At the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee on 20 June 2001 a paper was presented on proposals for assisting new entrants into farming - ARD 11-01(p3). I agreed to report back to the Committee in the Autumn.

3. As part of Rural Recovery Plan for Wales, I announced on 8 August an allocation of funds directly to the Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs in Wales to support projects. £250,000 is to be allocated over three financial years - £50,000 this year and £100,000 each year in 2002-02 and 2003-04.

4. The money will be used to support initiatives targeted at the younger members of the rural community. Initiatives will be aimed at helping to reduce rural isolation caused by Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and to alleviate stress and depression in young people in rural areas. Specific assistance will be directed at helping young people to make informed choices about their futures and developing agricultural skills including animal husbandry, stock handling and the driving of agricultural vehicles.

5. On 9 September at the Young Farmers' Clubs' Rural Forum, I stated that I would be looking at ways to give further assistance aimed at young farmers. I have now identified £50,000 for this financial year, which will assist in the activities of a newly appointed rural development officer and help establish a "Database for Opportunity", the aim of which is to give young people trying to get into agriculture the support to do so by matching them with people who can provide opportunities within the industry.

6. Farming Connect was launched on 17 September. It provides a comprehensive package of assistance aimed at improving, developing and diversifying farming businesses. Farming Connect includes

provision for farm business development plans to encourage farming families to analyse the strengths and prospects for their enterprises, training opportunities, access to specialist advice and a range of capital grants. These grants include the Farm Improvement Grant and Farm Enterprise Grant.

7. The Farm Improvement Grant will help farmers adopt best practice, to make animal welfare, hygiene and product quality improvements and to enhance, protect and maintain the environment of the farm. The Farm Enterprise Grant will address ways of widening the employment base on and off farm for members of farming families. Increases to the rates of grant had been previously announced on 16 August. Grants will be paid at a rate of 30% for Farm Improvement Grant and 35% for Farm Enterprise Grant. Importantly, an additional 10% on **both** Grants will be available to young farmers.

8. Provision is being introduced to provide extra application points for young farmers in order to assist them to enter the Tir Gofal scheme; these proposals will need the approval of the European Commission.

9. *Farming for the Future: A new direction for farming in Wales*, which I will be launching on 21 November, introduces a number of measures which will directly help young people. Briefly, ELWa is to review the provision of initial and vocational training to ensure that it supports the new direction of Welsh agriculture. Farming Connect will include specialist "Young Farmers' Angels" which will help young people access Farming Connect Services, help prepare business plans and access appropriate support. They will also promote share farming and help young farmers identify suitable partners and negotiate agreements. In addition, I propose to give Young Farmers top priority in allocating sheep and suckler cow quota from the National Reserve.

Farming Connect monitoring arrangements

10. At our meeting on 24 October, I agreed to update the Committee on the monitoring arrangements for the Farming Connect initiative. Arrangements are being put in place for the production of a regular overview chart, which will show latest performance against agreed delivery targets for each of the key elements of the programme. Mechanisms are also being put in place for assessing the regular feedback being sought from individual farmers, the farming unions, banks and other interested parties. The Farm Development Strategy Group is currently considering NAWAD/WDA outline proposals for evaluating the effectiveness of the programme, with independent reviews undertaken at 3, 5 and 7 year milestones; and an interim (first 12 months) review in summer 2002. I shall be circulating the overview chart to Committee members on a quarterly basis and will be keeping the Committee informed of the wider evaluation proposals.

Funding arrangements: Farming Connect & Rural Recovery Plan

11. At our meeting on 24 October, I undertook to provide clarification of funding arrangements for the Rural Recovery Plan and Farming Connect, distinguishing between Assembly and European money. The sources of funding for Farming Connect in 2001-02 are indicated in the table below. The Objective 1 bids, which have now been formally approved, embrace the whole of the Farming Connect service in

west Wales, while the Rural Development Plan monies include the provision of similar services for east Wales. It is intended that the additional resources made available as part of the Rural Recovery Plan will be disproportionately targeted at east Wales in order to help correct the imbalance in funding available from European sources.

Source of funds		Allocation 2001-02 (£000)
BEL 153 – Farm Adaptation	Rural Development Plan (non-Objective 1 area) – Farm Business Development Plans etc.	615,000
BEL 153 – Farm Adaptation	Rural Development Plan (non-Objective 1 area) – capital grants	937,000
Rural Recovery Plan	Farm Business Options Reviews	1,000,000
Rural Recovery Plan	Farm Business Development Plans	500,000
Rural Recovery Plan	Capital grants	500,000
Objective 1	Objective 1 bids – Farm Business Development Plans, capital grants etc.	3,465,000
BEL 155 – Farm Adaptation Match Funding	Match funding for Farm Business Development Plans, capital grants etc.	3,465,000
Total		10,482,000

Review of State Veterinary Service (SVS)

12. Following earlier undertakings that a review of SVS Services in Wales would be commissioned, terms of reference for the review have now been agreed and a reviewer appointed. Mr Lionel Walford, until 31 May 1999 Director of the Agriculture Department at the Welsh Office, has been appointed to undertake the review. The review will take into account the National Assembly's responsibilities for agriculture, health and rural development, more widely. It will be informed by experience in managing the FMD outbreak and also take into account recent changes within DEFRA to the management of the SVS. The review, which is expected to take about three months, will examine options for the development of veterinary and related services which reflect the National Assembly's responsibilities for policy and operational issues in these areas and provide advice on costs and implementation. The Committee will have an opportunity to consider the outcome of the review.

Relaxation of FMD controls on falconry and on hunting with dogs

13. Members will be aware that The National Assembly, along with the agriculture departments of Great Britain, announced on 15 November risk assessments on hunting and falconry. Falconry will be permitted under a DEFRA permit in Infected Areas from 19 November onwards. A consultation paper has been published with the conditions under which the current ban on hunting with dogs in England and Wales for FMD control reasons can be lifted from 17 December onwards.

14. In brief the proposals are as follows: Hunting of all kinds should continue to be prohibited in FMD Infected and Restricted Infected areas. The hunting of deer with dogs should continue to be prohibited in any part of the Controlled Area. (Currently England and Wales.) Coursing and use of terriers for pest control, which take place in more confined areas than other forms of hunting, should be permitted in FMD free and at risk counties. Other forms of hunting with dogs should be permitted in counties designated as FMD Free but that precautions should be taken to minimise the risk of disease transmission.

Export of Sheepmeat

15. I welcomed the announcement that the European Commission has approved the export of lamb and sheepmeat from counties in Wales, which have never had a case of foot and mouth disease. This means that lamb, beef and pork can now be exported from Conwy, Gwynedd, Carmarthen, Cardigan, Pembrokeshire, Denbigh, Flint and Wrexham. Beef and pork can be exported from Anglesey, Glamorgan, Bridgend, Swansea and Port Talbot, and pork only exported from Newport. This represents major progress, and the prospects are good for the scope for exporting meat to be broadened over coming months. The export of live animals will take longer. The future export of both meat and live animals will be dependent on there being no further cases of FMD. This rapid return to exporting meat would not have been achieved if vaccination had been adopted.

GM Release Directive 2001/18/EC

16. The initial consultation on the implementation of Directive 2001/18 on the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment closed on 16 November. The results are currently being analysed and the analysis will be presented to the Committee at their meeting on 5 December.

Woodland Strategy

17. On 8 November, the positive work of this Committee was recognised in the full discussion on our woodland strategy, culminating in its unanimous adoption as National Assembly policy to support our sustainable development commitment. I will be referring several points to the National Assembly Woodland Forum which is shortly to be set up. I will report back to the Committee on progress at the Woodland Forum.

Ystwyth Valley Woodland and Community Development Initiative

18. Progress is being made on implementing the Ystwyth Valley project which is part of the woodland strategy. A meeting in the Ystwyth Valley on 14 November has agreed a method of working between the key players in the local authority, public, private and voluntary sectors. The partner bodies will assist financially and professionally to enable and empower the inhabitants of the valley to maximise the socio-economic outputs from the sustainable management of the woodland and other land in the valley. A project officer will be appointed to help the local community to develop the project.

Network Q Rally

19. The Network Q Rally of Great Britain takes place this week. This is a hugely important event which brings in between £16m and £20m to the Welsh economy and places Wales firmly in the glare of the world media, attracting as it does a global TV audience of some 135 million. This is the second year in succession that the rally has taken place wholly in Wales. I am reporting it here to this Committee, because it would not take place without the facilities provided in our National Assembly woodlands managed by the Forestry Commission. This is another example of the multiple-use of woodlands which we are committed to in our woodland strategy and shows the huge economic potential from looking at these woodlands as a multi-purpose resource, not just for producing timber or biodiversity.

Secondary legislation

20. I have attached to this report a list of forthcoming legislation, and other items of secondary legislation in the pipeline yet to be programmed, which I have undertaken to provide to the Committee on a regular basis.

Annex 1

Programmed Legislation

TITLE	INTENTION OF LEGISLATION	PROJECTED TIMETABLE			COMMENTS
		Business Committee	Legislation Committee	Plenary	
The South Wales Sea Fisheries Committee (Levies) Regs 2001	To permit the SWSFA to issue substituted levies to its constituent councils			Nov-01	Executive Procedure. Cleared by Carwyn Jones 12/11/01

<p>Farm Improvement Grants (Wales) Regs 2001</p> <p>Farm Enterprise Grants Regs 2001</p>	<p>To implement capital grants to support farm improvement and diversification under RDP and Objective 1 programmes</p> <p>To implement a match funding grant of last resort for projects under RDP and Objective 1</p>				<p>Executive procedure.</p> <p>End of November 2001</p>
Milk Marketing Board Dissolution Order 2001	To provide for the dissolution of the Body	January 2002		January 2002	Joint SI with DEFRA
Sheep and Goats Spongiform Encephalopathy (Compensation) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2001	Compensation for scrapie affected cases	13/11/01	15/11/01	22/11/01	Standard Procedure – come into force 23 November
The Plant Health (Amendment) Wales (No2) Order	Amendment to protected zone provisions in EC Directive 2000/29/EC			20/11/2001	SO22
Plant Protection Products (Amendment) (No 3) Regulations 2001	Routine frequent amendments which must be made by SI			29 Nov 2001	SO23

The Pesticides (maximum residues levels) Amendment (No 3) Regulations 2001	Routine frequent amendments which must be made by SI	29 Nov 2001	SO23
Foot and Mouth Disease (Import & Export) Restrictions (Amendment Regulations (no.12)	to amend regulations on imports & exports	16/11/2001	Made under special provisions relating to FMD under Standing Order 22.27
Foot & Mouth Disease (Amendment) Regulations	to amend 1983 FMD Order to allow hunting to take place and make provision for a Licensing scheme on ultra sound	16/11/2001	Made under special provisions relating to FMD under Standing Order 22.27

Annex 2

Legislation to be programmed

TITLE	INTENTION OF LEGISLATION	PROJECTED DATE FOR MAKING SI	COMMENTS
The Fisheries and Aquaculture Structures (Grants) (Wales) Order 2001	To provide powers to make grants to enable investments to qualify for EU fisheries support	Early 2002	
The Farm Waste Grant (Nitrate Vulnerable Zones) (Wales) Scheme 2001	To implement an increase in grant aid from 25% to 40% of expenditure incurred on farm waste facilities within NVZs	07/12/2001	

Welfare of laying hens regulations	EU proposals laying down minimum standards for the protection of laying hens kept in various systems	Spring 2002	SO 23 SI
The Undersized Spider Crabs (Wales) Order 2001	Measures to support EU technical conservation regulation 850/98	Spring 2002	
Scallop Conservation Order	To implement new restrictions on scallop fishing	Spring 2002	
Environmental Impact Assessment (Uncultivated land and semi natural areas)(Wales) Regulations 2001	To implement the uncultivated land and semi natural areas provisions of the EIA Directive	31/12/01	Transfer of function from DETR to NAW received 20th August
Review of sheepmeat regime	To implement any EU decisions on a reformed sheep regime following Commission review	01/04/2002	Joint SI- SO 23
The Cereal Seeds Regulations	To implement conclusions of seed certification review	Aut 2002	SO22
The Fodder Plant Seeds Regulations	To implement conclusions of seed certification review	Aut 2002	SO22
The Oil and Fibre Seeds Regulations	To implement conclusions of seed certification review	Aut 2002	SO 22
The Beet Seeds Regulations	To implement conclusions of seed certification review	Aut 2002	SO 22
The Vegetable Seeds Regulations	To implement conclusions of seed certification review	Aut 2002	SO22
The Seeds (Registration, Licensing and enforcement) Regulations	To implement conclusions of seed certification review	Aut 2002	SO22
Transposition of Directive 2001/18/EC	To implement controls on the deliberate release into the environment of GMOs and repeal Directive 90/220/EC	Oct-02	SO22
Green Code	Code of practice for pesticides use by farmers	Spring 2002	Possibly SO 27 legislation

Dairy Produce Quotas Regulations	Consolidation of existing EU regulations	Mar-02	
Home Grown Cereals Authority amendment order	To implement provisions in Regulatory Reform Act	Early 2002	SO 23 SI
Tir Mynydd amendment regulations	To implement any agreed changes from the review of the scheme as part of RDP evaluation	2004	
Amendments to dairy quota regulations	To implement EU reforms under Agenda 2000 awarding extra quota allocation to dairy farmers and to compensate dairy farmers for cuts in support prices	01/04/2005	SO 23 SI
The Brucellosis in Cattle Herds (Wales) Order 2001	Provisions governing the testing of milk for brucellosis	Timing uncertain	
The Enzootic Bovine Leukosis (Wales) Order 2001	Regulatory framework for testing of milk for EBL	Timing uncertain	
The Bovine and Bovine Products (Trade) (Wales) Regulations 2001	Will permit the despatch of bone-in beef from establishments approved under the Date Based Export Scheme to the domestic market	Timing uncertain	
The Sea Fish (Specified Sea Areas) (Regulation of Nets and other Fishing Gear) Order 2001	Measure to support EU technical conservation regulation 850/98	Spring 2002	
The Prohibition of Fishing with Multiple Trawls Order	Measure to support EU technical conservation regulation 850/98	Spring 2002	
The Condensate from Rendering Plant of Ruminant Animals (Wales) Regulations 2001	To implement a SEAC recommendation on spreading of condensate onto land	Early 2002	
The Lobster and Crawfish v Notching Order 2001	Alignment of UK legislation with new EU technical conservation regulations	Early 2002	

The Plant Health (Export Certification) Order 2001	To place plant health charges on a statutory basis	Timing uncertain	SO 23
The Seed Potatoes (Fees) (Amendment) Regulations 2001	To place plant health charges on a statutory basis	Timing uncertain	SO 23
The control of Pesticides (Amendment) Regulations	Pesticide regulation and freedom of information	Summer 2002 at the earliest	SO 23
Cattle Artificial Insemination Amendment Regulations	To rationalise regulations for AI disease control purposes	Timing uncertain	
The Swansea Bay (Deep Dock Ltd) Mussels Fishing Order	Grant of fishing rights to one body	Timing uncertain	
The Swansea bay (Penclawdd Shellfish Processors Ltd) Order	Grant of fishing rights to one body	Timing uncertain	
The Three Rivers Regulating Order	Grant of fishing management rights to one body	Timing uncertain	
The Geographical Indications, Designations of Origin and Certificate of Specific Character	To implement EU decisions on the protection of Welsh food products	Timing uncertain	Not definite if this will require an SI. Awaiting legal advice.
Amendments to the Fish Health Regulations 1997	To establish GB as a single zone with regard to certain fish disease	Timing uncertain	
Review of Welfare of Animals in transit	To implement changes agreed to strengthen welfare standards of animals in transit	Timing uncertain	
Amendments to Beef Special Premium Regulations	To implement amendments required as part of the Agenda 2000 revisions of the EC beef regime	Timing uncertain	
Sheep and Goats Spongiform Encephalopathy Amendment Wales Order		Timing uncertain	

Sheep and Goats Spongiform Encephalopathy (Determination of Compensation) Wales Order		Timing uncertain	
Welfare of Animals (Slaughter) Regulations	To implement EU amending Directives	Timing uncertain	
Amendments to Rabies legislation incorporating Pet Travel Scheme	Will allow pet dogs and animals to be brought into Wales from Europe without quarantine	Timing uncertain	SO 23 SI - made jointly with MAFF
The Product of animal origin (import and export) regulations	To implement EC Directive 97/12	Timing uncertain	SO 23 SI
The Horse Passport Order	To implement EC Directive 64/433	Timing uncertain	SO 23 SI
The Feedingstuffs (Zootechnical Products) Regulations	Amends 1998 regulations on criterium of feeding stuffs	Timing uncertain	SO 23 SI
Classical Swine Fever Regulations	To revise and strenghten controls for this disease	Timing uncertain	SO 23 SI
Swine Vesticular Disease Order	To improve and strenghten controls for this disease	Timing uncertain	SO 23 SI
Amendments to Corn Returns regulations 1997	To allow producers to make electronic returns	Timing uncertain	SO 23 SI
The Potatoes Originating in Netherlands (revocation) (Wales) Regulations 2001	Revokes legislation applying additional disease control measures to Dutch potatoes	Timing uncertain	
The Coast Protection Notices (Wales) Regulations	To replace existing regulations made under the Coast Protection Act 1949	Timing uncertain	
Seeds(fees) (Amendment) Regulations 2002	Consequential amendment arising from the Fodder Plant Regulations	Jan/ Feb 2002	SO22
The Plant Protection (basic Conditions) Amendment Regs.	Sets out the General conditions for pesticide sales.	Summer 2002 at the earliest	Cannot be made until the control of pesticides (amendment) Regs. are made

Livestock Quotas Regulations	To implement measures to consolidate and liberalise the quota regime	Spring 2002	
Implementation of Directive 2001/64/EC	Amends 66/401/EC (Fodder) and 66/402/EEC (Cereals) in respect of marketing seed in bulk	Aut 2002	Two SIs, changes may be incorporated into the Fodder Plant Seeds (Wales) (Amendment) 2002 and the Cereal Seeds(Wales) amendment 2002 above
The Seed(Fees) Amendment (No 2) Regs. 2002	Annual fees increase	Target CIF 04/07/2002	SO23
Fees for Representation and hearings for National Listing	Since the Seeds National List of varieties Regulations have been made the main NL fees can be set administratively however, the mechanism for raising fees for hearings and representations remains unresolved.	Timing uncertain	
Plant Breeders Rights (Fees) Amendment Regulations 2002	Annual fees increase	Target CIF 4/07/2002	SO23
Potatoes Originating in Egypt (Wales) Regulations 2002	Renewal of controls on Egyptian Potatoes to control Brown Potato Rot	Jan/Feb 2002	SO22
Plant Protection Products (Amendment) Regulations 2002	Routine frequent amendments which must be made by SI	Mar-02	SO23
The Pesticides (maximum residues levels) Amendment Regulations Plant Protection Products (Amendment) Regulations 2002	Routine frequent amendments which must be made by SI	Mar-02	SO23
Arable Area Payments Regulations	To consolidate & incorporate a number of new measures	Timing uncertain	

Tir Gofal (Amendment) Regulations 2002	to implement changes recommended by the stocktake	2002	
Organic Products Regulations	to introduce revised standards for organic produce	2002	
The Regulatory Reform (Sugar Beet Research and Education) Order 2001	to repeal section 68 of the Food Act 1984- to be laid on an England and Wales basis but subject to Assembly approval	2002	
The Sea Fishing (Enforcement of Community Satellite Monitoring Measures) (Wales) Order 2000	to implement stricter monitoring measures	Jan-02	Standard
Small Farmers Scheme	to simplify direct subsidy claims procedure for farmers with farms below a certain size	Winter 2002	
CAP Wine Amendment Regs	to implement EU updated labelling regs.	Apr-02	
Horticulture Development Council Regs	technical amendment to change the levy start year from 1st October to 1st April	May-02	SO 23
Potato Industry development Council	to implement proposed modification to the levy collection system	Jan-03	SO 23
School Milk (Wales) Amendment Order	to enable the National Assembly to find those children on welfare food scheme to benefit from School Milk scheme	Winter 2001	
Eggs and Poultry Marketing Regs.	These will implement EU regulations on stocking density for free range eggs and technical requirements relating to the marketing of poultry meat.	Early 2002	

BSE Monitoring (Amendment) Wales Regulations	To test all fallen stock/ casualty animals aged 24/30 months old	Winter 2001	Executive Procedure. Consultation period ends 26th November 2001
Implementation of EU Regulation 999/2001 on TSE's	One SI to cover enforcement and the other to cover international issues	Jan/Feb 2002	Standard Procedure
Implementation of EU regulation 999/2001 on TSEs	To cover international trade issues and the other to cover enforcement issues.	Jan/Feb 2002	
Fertiliser Regs	Consolidation of existing EU regulations	Spring 2002	