

## **National Fertiliser Database Stakeholder Consultative Committee **Draft** Meeting Minutes**

**29<sup>th</sup> November 2022 @ 2:30pm, Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise.**

**In attendance DAFM:** Louise Byrne (Chair), Sheila Nolan, Ted Massey, Finbarr O'Regan, Brian O'Shaughnessy, Paul Vickers, Tiana Gomes, Colin Murtagh, Fiona McMorrow, Bernard Harris, and Mary Cleary.

**See Annex 1** for list of other organisations and names of their representatives in attendance.

### **Item (1) Welcome and Previous Minutes and Matters Arising**

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming Committee Members with a quick tour de table and an overview of the meeting agenda. The minutes of the previous meeting (15/09/22) were approved.

### **Item (2) Overview of National Fertiliser Database**

Sheila Nolan (DAFM) gave a presentation on the National Fertiliser Database (NFD) and work to date. This included a background of what the NFD will be used for, an update on the legislative process and an overview of the Pre-Legislative Scrutiny Report regarding the NFD elements of the Veterinary Medicinal Products Medicated Feed and Fertilisers Regulation Bill 2022. Some amendments will now be made to the draft legislation.

This legislation to underpin the NFD will not be in place by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023; however it remains a priority and is hoped to be in place for early 2023 subject to the democratic process.

### **Item (3) IT Developments**

Brian O'Shaughnessy (DAFM) gave a presentation on the proposed National Fertiliser Database IT screens on AgFood.ie. The presentation covered the aims of the database, the different external users, registration, transactions, product catalogue, declaring opening and closing stocks, farm-to-farm transfers and Application Programming Interface (API) data submission. The Agfood.ie system will allow data entry by retailers trading in lower volumes who don't wish to invest in an developing an API. Stakeholders were also reminded that the "test" system is available on request to fertiliser retailers who wish to engage in developing their IT capacity to facilitate automated data transfer to the NFD. Stakeholders were strongly encouraged to engage with the test system.

Given the importance of the NFD, and the delay in the legislation, DAFM asked whether Stakeholders would be willing to engage with the NFD to pilot the system on a voluntary basis underpinned by consent. This would allow stakeholders prepare for the formal introduction of the NFD and would allow resolution of any technical issues identified through the use of real data. It would also facilitate a smooth formal introduction of the NFD when the legislation is in place. Committee members were supportive of the pilot; however they expressed some

concerns about data protection issues that may arise from operation of a voluntary pilot. The timing of entry was also raised. In response DAFM agreed to develop a document setting out how the pilot could operate, including by providing assurances to address data protection concerns. DAFM will circulate this document for the Committee's views.

DAFM recognises that the introduction to the NFD will result in some IT development costs for those that will be developing an API. DAFM has scoped out the available supports. Enterprise Ireland have advised that support may be available through a Trading Online Voucher (TOV). Enterprise Ireland also provide a 50% grant for digital expansion options for companies to assist 'Development of processes and services'. This could include developing an IT system to work with DAFM's system via the API. Stakeholders/Merchants were encouraged to engage with their Local Enterprise Office to assess what supports might be available to them. DAFM also requested stakeholders/merchants to come forward with estimated costings for IT development.

**Action:** DAFM to draft and circulate document on the possible operation of the pilot NFD to include details regarding timing and information to address data protection concerns. Committee members to respond with their views in response to this document.

**Action:** Fertiliser traders to engage with the test system and where appropriate develop their IT capacity to facilitate automated data transfer to the NFD.

**Action:** Fertiliser traders to engage with their Local Enterprise Office to assess what supports might be available to support them developing IT capacity to facilitate automated data transfer to the NFD. If they wish traders are also to advise DAFM of their estimated costings for IT development.

#### **Item (4) Communications and Next Steps**

Committee members were reminded that a dedicated webpage has been set up for the NFD. Following the meeting an updated FAQ and the fertiliser product catalogue will be published on the webpage. Links will be circulated to Committee members. Committee members were also reminded of their responsibility to feed information from these meetings back to their members.

**Action:** DAFM to update FAQ on website, upload product catalogue and circulate links to stakeholders.

#### **Item (5) AOB**

No items raised under AOB.

**Action:** Presentations and Minutes to be circulated by DAFM post-meeting

The Chair thanked everyone, and the meeting ended at 16:55.

**Annex 1. List of non-DAFM organisations and names of their representatives in attendance.**

<b>Representative</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Bayley, Gary	Charles R Wynne Ltd
Bergin, Eamonn	Centenary Thurles
Browne, PJ	Grassland Agro
Butler, Tom	Butler Agriculture
Byrne, David	To be confirmed
Carroll, John	Tirlán
Cooke, Trevor	National Agrochemical Distributors Ltd. (NAD)
Daly, Brian	Tullamore Agri
Daly, John	Yara Ireland
Dodebier, Saskia	Breen Agri Services Ltd
Drennan, Denis	Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association (ICMSA)
Dullea, Charles	Gouldings
Farrell, Eamonn	Irish Co-Operative Organisation Society (ICOS)
Hand, Damien	Maudabawn Co-op
Hennessey, Liam	Hennessey Feeds
Kelly, George	Kelly Grain Ltd.
Larkin, Barry	ACORN Group
Matthews, Colm	National Agrochemical Distributors Ltd. (NAD)
McCabe, Kevin	Lakeland Dairies
Moroney, Michael	Farm Contractors of Ireland
Murphy, Pat	Teagasc
O'Carroll, Eoin	Ground Limestone Producers Association of Ireland
O'Herlihy, Joe	Dan Donovan & Co. Ltd.
O Mahony, Seamus	Dairygold Agribusiness
Phelan, Brendan	Grassland Kilkenny
Potterton, Max	Irish Farmer's Association (IFA)

Punch, Eddie	Irish Cattle and Sheep Farmers' Association (ICSA)
Suttle, Pat	Golf Ireland
Walsh, Peter	Grassland Kilkenny
Warren, David	Brophy Agri Services Ltd.

**Apologies received:** Shane Fitzgerald (Macra na Feirme), Kevin Cooney (Target Fertilisers),

Ends.