

General News

IGFA Annual Dinner 2024

We were delighted to host our Annual Dinner in Dublin on 25 January and to have the opportunity to welcome members and guests from all over Ireland and abroad. Thanks to everyone who attended, and we hope you enjoyed the evening. Thanks also to the staff at the Crowne Plaza Hotel who did such a wonderful job. Thumbnail of pictures taken are located at the end of this newsletter. If you wish to receive the full version of a photo, please request from cornelia.oconnell@eorna.ie and she will e mail it to you.

Belgium takes over EU Presidency

Belgium has taken over the rotating Presidency of the EU until the end of June and will be under pressure to get policy issues finalised before the European Parliament elections in June (6-9). The Presidency is planning to deal with issues such as New Genomic Techniques (NGTs) which the Belgian Agriculture Minister described as vital for the agriculture of the future and the sustainable use of pesticides regulation (SUR) which was rejected by the European Parliament at the end of November. The Belgians also plan to prioritise animal health and disease prevention through continued work on the revision of animal health and welfare legislation.

EU Food sovereignty and sustainability will be a key theme and the Belgian Minister has highlighted that ‘the costs, benefits and risks associated with the transition to a sustainable food system must be shared equally throughout the chain,’ to ‘ensure farmers are partners in the sustainability transition and are fairly compensated’. Work will continue on finding solutions to EU market shocks caused by Ukrainian exports and analysis done on the possible accession of Ukraine and the impact on agriculture.

The Belgians will also kick off discussions on new initiatives for the future Commission and Parliament on issues such as poultry vaccination, combating antibiotic resistance and EU self-sufficiency in protein.

New Import Controls - Great Britain (GB)

The following is a brief summary of the changes that have come into effect from 31 January 2024

- The introduction of health certificates for imports of animal products, plants, and plant products (medium risk)
- The introduction of health certificates for imports of high-risk foods and high-risk feed of non-animal origin
- The introduction of new checks and controls when moving Irish goods (i.e., any goods other than Qualifying Northern Irish Goods) from Irish ports directly to Great Britain

DAFM held webinars on 11 October 2023, 6 December 2023 and 10 January 2024 to help you navigate these changes. You can find all of these webinars on IGFA training page <https://igfa.ie/training/>.

Ukraine Trade

Six European industry associations representing sectors such as sugar, cereals/oilseeds, poultry meat, and eggs wrote to the Commission in mid-January emphasising their commitment to supporting Ukraine but raising concerns about the impact of Ukraine exports on the agricultural sector and potential risks to EU producers. To address these

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RASFF 'S JAN 2024

Total Food & Feed	389
Total Feed	14
Feed Materials	13
Compound Feed	1
Pet Food	-
Feed Premixture	-
Feed Additives	-
Animal by products	-
Miscellaneous	-

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Read Lyons Systems Research Notes [here](#)



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concerns, the organizations have proposed various solutions, including additional investments in logistics and infrastructure and stricter controls to ensure compliance with phytosanitary and animal welfare standards and antimicrobial usage. They advocate for the establishment of a system to determine the destination of Ukrainian agricultural products before entry into the EU. They also asked for the introduction of import thresholds for sensitive agricultural commodities and any products exceeding these thresholds would be required to be exported outside the EU.

Agriculture Ministers from Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia have written to the Agriculture Commissioner Wojciechowski calling for the introduction of tariff quotas. They say that the suspension of import duties, quotas, and trade defence measures on Ukrainian exports to the EU have caused a surge in agriculture imports and significantly damaged their national markets. They stress the negative impact on their farmers and the inability of the sector to compete with the prices of Ukrainian commodities adding that this will drive their farmers out of business. The Ministers said that they are still fully committed to supporting Ukraine and the EU solidarity lanes but add that they must protect their farmers and rural areas. The letter calls for a report on Ukraine's compliance with EU legislation and standards and for further steps to be taken to ensure that Ukraine's exports are channelled to the countries that need them most.

€126 million will be channelled into investment in port facilities in Romania to help ease trade flows from Ukraine to the EU. The Commission's aim is to reduce bottle necks by contributing to the costs of additional processes, equipment, and storage at ports. The main focus is on enhancing the infrastructure of Constanța and Galat, the two largest ports in the country. Constanța has been a crucial alternative export route for Ukraine, evident in its record-breaking grain exports of 36 million tons in 2023, a 50% increase on 2022.

Commission Proposal on Ukraine Trade Measures

On 31 January the Commission released a proposal to renew the 'Autonomous Trade Measures' suspending import duties and quotas on Ukrainian exports. Describing the ATMs as a key measure to support Ukraine and its economy, the proposal seeks to extend them for another year. However, given the impacts of Ukraine exports on the EU market, the commission has proposed a "reinforced safeguard mechanism" for poultry, eggs, and sugar from Ukraine. This creates the possibility to reintroduce quotas if the volume trade goes too high and therefore allow quick action, in the form of tariff rate quotas, if there are significant disruptions on EU or member state markets. Industry groups representing the sectors have said that the proposals are not enough to provide relief and argue that the exclusion of cereals and oilseeds from the 'sensitive' list is not acceptable. The European Parliament and Council will now consider the proposals so that there is a mechanism in place when the current regime expires on 5 June 2024.

Red Sea/European Additive Supplies

Shipping companies are seeking alternative routes, like the Cape of Good Hope, in response to escalating unrest in the Red Sea over recent weeks. This strategic shift results in an additional 10 to 20 days of transit time, leading to increased costs and impacting stocks. Current EU inventories of vitamins and amino acids seem to be adequate for the short term, and with lower demand for feed additives, no immediate market pressure is expected. Nevertheless, there are concerns about potential disruptions in ingredient supplies starting from February onwards, with threats of force majeure on contracts and possible price hikes. Compounding these challenges, an explosion in China has disrupted the supply from a major Vitamin A and D3 producer, leading to a halt in production at that facility. As the situation develops in the Red Sea, delivery delays and complications in the supply chain are likely to persist.

Strategic Dialogue on Shaping the Future of EU Agriculture

EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced last September that she would set up a Strategic Dialogue on the future of EU Agriculture to foster "more dialogue and less polarisation" on the future of the sector. The first meeting took place on 25 January and included a range of high-level Agriculture and Food stakeholders. They plan to continue discussions over the coming months and report back to the Commission President before the Summer 2024. The dialogue aims to shape a shared vision for the future of agriculture in Europe. Key issues include;



- How can we support agriculture within the boundaries of our planet and its ecosystem?
- How can we make better use of immense opportunities offered by knowledge and technological innovation?
- How can we promote a bright and thriving future for Europe's food system in a competitive world

The Commission has also launched a [dedicated webpage](#) dedicated webpage to support the Forum.

Environment News

Crude Protein in Animal Feed

At this stage you will know that due to water quality concerns, we are obliged to move to a reduced derogation limit of 220kg N/ha from January 2024. DAFM have provided an FAQs document here (also available on <https://igfa.ie/sustainability/>).

IGFA has received queries from members regarding the maximum level of crude protein in grazing diets for 2024. Last year the rules under the nitrates regulations with respect to crude protein levels were that **'If greater than 130kg N/ha (grassland stocking rate) max crude protein 15% for concentrates to grazing dairy cows and bovines >2 years between 15th April and 30th September'**. When we asked for confirmation that this would be the case this year, we were told by DAFM that as part of the interim review of the nitrates action programme, there is consideration that the Crude Protein % at grazing may be reduced further than the current level limit of 15%. They added that the interim review has been stalled as a result of the work that needed to be done to deal with the changes to the derogation and that any changes to crude protein % cannot be confirmed until after the review is completed. This is scheduled for the end of Quarter 1 2024. Although they added that consideration will be made for the sector to be able to adapt in the form of appropriate lead in times, IGFA has emphasised that members require clarity as soon as possible as our industry needs time to appropriately prepare.

Code of Practice for Green Feed Labelling

More than 150 participants including experts from 18 EU Member States, participated in the webinar on Green Feed Labelling on 25 January 2025. The main objective of this webinar was for industry representatives to provide Member States Experts, including DAFM, with technical information to allow them to assess the draft update of the FEFAC/Copa-Cogeca Code of Practice for Compound Feed Green Labelling.



The draft code of practice will now be reviewed in detail by members state representatives at SCoPAFF Animal Nutrition meetings. There are likely to be some amendments, but we hope to have an endorsed code of practice by October 2024.

New Genomic Techniques (NGTs)

The European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) voted on 24 Jan in favour of an EU proposal on new genomic techniques (NGTs). The margin of approval stood at 47 votes in favour, 31 against, with 4 abstentions. The main points of interest are as follows the final report

preserves a ban on the use of NGTs in organic farming, asserting a commitment to organic principles	seed labelling requirement for "conventional-like" NGT1 plants remains intact, ensuring transparency for consumers	MEPs rejected an opt-out clause that would have allowed member states to independently ban NGTs on their territory	Herbicide-tolerant gene-edited plants were also distinguished from the "conventional-like" NGT1 category, subjecting them to more stringent regulations
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Copa and Cogeca, representing the EU farming community, welcomed the decision. They did however argue that categorizing NGT varieties might be unnecessary given the existing traceability through the plant varieties certification system. FEFAC also welcomed the outcome of the vote and is now urging swift action for the next stage within the EU Council. They also suggest establishing thresholds for the adventitious (unavoidable) presence of NGT products from third countries in the interest of international trade. In addition, they advocate for exempting Category 1 NGT products from mandatory traceability and labelling requirements, asserting that treating them as conventional products is crucial for NGTs' successful adoption in the agrifood system. IGFA has conveyed a similar message to DAFM.

Technical News

Upgrade of EU Feed Materials Catalogue

The 5th upgrade of the [EU Catalogue of Feed Materials](#) has also been launched. This process involves an invite to all FEFAC Members including IGFA to submit their proposals for new catalogue entries or modification of existing entries before 21 March. All IGFA members will be contacted next week and asked if they wish to put forward proposals. Note, only feed materials already placed on the market, i.e. listed currently in the [Register of Feed Materials](#) may be transferred to the EU

Catalogue of Feed Materials. This proposal, once reviewed by EU Feed Chain Task Force members, will be submitted to the EU Commission in October 2024 for assessment for inclusion on the next version of the EU Catalogue of feed materials.

Update on Undesirable Substances Directive

Following information provided in the [October](#) and [November](#) IGFA Feed issues, we now wish to advise you that the draft delegated act amending undesirable substances Directive 2002/32 has been published for public consultation from 5 January until 2 February 2024. See [here](#). As soon as this regulation is adopted, which we expect shortly after this public consultation, we will provide you with a final summary document of the changes and relevant dates of enforcement.

Medicated Feed Update

A final discussion on the draft delegated act setting the maximum limits for residues of antibiotics from medicated feed into feed for non-target species took place at the DG Sante Animal Nutrition expert group in December.

The main changes to the draft were the

- extension of the transition period from 6 to 12 months,
- inclusion of intermediate products in the scope of the carry-over proposal,
- clarification that the LOQ to be used as max. limit will be the one specified in the annex and not the Lab-specific LOQ
- removal of specific details on re-use of flushing materials.

These are positive changes for medicated feed manufacturers.

The Commission has now invited the DG Sante Animal Nutrition expert group to provide their views on whether specific details on how to manage flushing materials should be subject to an additional delegated act or take the form of informal guidelines. This point was discussed at a FEFAC medicated feed task force meeting last week. Details of the discussion was provided to IGFA medicated feed members and we requested feedback so we can ensure IGFA opinions are voiced before decisions are made on this topic.

Delegated Act on-Farm Use of VMPs For Group Treatment (Top Dressing)

Running in parallel to the medicated feed delegated act on carry over levels is the delegated act for on farm use of veterinary medicinal products (VMPs) for group treatment. The new requirements on farmers in this delegated act could possibly increase the need for medicated feed. The main requirements of this draft delegated act are as follows:

1. Group treatment with antimicrobial or antiparasitics permitted only via drinking water or liquid feed.
2. Mixture into or onto solid feed of antimicrobials or antiparasitics only for individual or small groups treatment and the possibility for Member States to restrict to individual animals only, if they can justify it.
3. Only one antimicrobial per course of treatment.
4. Responsibility of the veterinarians to prescribe the right form of treatment depending on their assessment of the equipment, facilities, possibilities for individual treatment, composition of the feed (similar provisions as in article 5 of the medicated feed regulation) and level of expertise of the farmer.
5. Additional national guidance possible.
6. Entry into application 1.5 years after entry into force to allow farmers to adapt to new requirements.

EFISC-GTP Training

In May 2024, there will be the annual EFISC-GTP training. The following will be discussed; changes due to the new ISO 22003-1: 2022, hybrid and totally remote audits, new module on sustainability, positive labelling and transportation. See [link](#)

2024 IGFA Feed Dinner Memories

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