

General News

Temporary Driver Hours Derogation

IGFA worked with ICOS and IFMBA to call for a temporary derogation to driver hours to deal with the weather situation. The Department announced on Friday 19 April that a derogation had been agreed and will apply for a period 14 days from 22nd April 2024 to 5th May 2024. See the RSA notice [here](#).

Agri Ministers Discuss Need for Commission to Publish an Updated EU Protein Plan

A proposed new EU plant protein policy was originally due to be published in the first quarter of 2024 but has now been pushed back to late summer. The need for this new protein strategy was emphasised at a recent EU Agri Ministers meeting where Commissioner Wojciechowski described the EU as having a ‘critical dependency’ on imported protein crops, adding that this is in conflict with the strategic importance of EU food security and a resilient agri-food system.

Encouraging more protein production under the CAP was discussed by ministers and the importance of investing in research and innovation in this area was underlined. The Commissioner also said that there was a need to examine rules on the placing on the market of sustainable and innovative feed additives so that they could contribute to reducing dependency on protein imports. The importance of increasing the share of protein derived from grass was also discussed. Many also highlighted however that EU self-sufficiency “is not a realistic objective” for many products and the focus should therefore be on prioritising the right EU trade policies and negotiating trade agreements aimed at accessing critical imports.

FEFAC will focus its 2024 Annual Conference on ‘How to boost EU feed autonomy and strengthen circularity of the EU livestock sector’. Agri Commissioner Wojciechowski will give the keynote speech at the event at the end of May.

Trade News

MEPS Endorse Ukraine Trade Measures

MEPs supported the extension of the suspension of import duties and quotas for Ukrainian agricultural products for one more year until June 5, 2025. The proposal was supported by 428 MEPs, 131 were against and 44 abstained. The lead MEP on the issue claimed the move ‘reaffirms the EU’s solidarity with Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression’. The new regulation includes a safeguard mechanism so that the Commission can swiftly act and apply any measures it deems necessary if imports from Ukraine cause significant disruptions on the EU market or the markets of member states. The Commission can “trigger an emergency brake for particularly sensitive agricultural products, namely poultry, eggs, sugar, oats, groats, maize and honey.” The regulation now needs to be formally approved by member states before entering into force immediately on June 5, 2024. Some of the sector groups are unhappy with the agreement and said that it falls short of addressing their concerns about import volumes and the impact on EU markets.

In other Ukraine news, Agri Commissioner Wojciechowski highlighted at the end of April that EU agrifood exports to Ukraine had risen by 18% in 2023, to €12bn, while imports from Ukraine had fallen in value by about 10% compared to 2022. He added that the Commission will continue to monitor imports of grain and wheat imports in particular.

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RASFF APRIL 2024

Total Food & Feed	526
Total Feed	34
Feed Materials	22
Compound Feed	1
Pet Food	10
Feed Premixture	1
Feed Additives	-
Animal by products	-
Fats and Oils	-

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Tariffs on Grain and Oilseeds Imports from Russia and Belarus

As reported in IGFA March Feed Issues Newsletter, Commission President von der Leyen announced a new Commission proposal to put a €95/tonne tariff on most exports of cereals from Russia and Belarus, with a 50% ad valorem duty for oilseeds and derived products. She said the proposal would prevent Russian grain from destabilising the EU market in these products.

The proposal has been discussed by member state experts and Belgium has raised concern about the impact on linseeds. In 2022, the EU faced a substantial shortfall in its linseed production, far below the demand. It therefore relied heavily on imports receiving 551,000 tonnes in total, with half of these imports originating from Russia. Belgium argued that the tariffs would cause critical disruption to the EU market and suggested phasing in of the import duty on Russian linseed at - 10% in 2024, - 20% in 2025 and - 50% in 2026. This and other aspects of the proposal are still being considered. The date being discussed for the entry into force of the proposal is 1 July 2024.

EU Dependency on China for Feed Additives

FEFAC has written a letter to the Commission highlighting that the EU has a very high dependency on third countries for some feed additives. The letter underlines that the EU supply chain is under pressure due to geopolitical tensions and the importance of access to essential nutritional feed additives for animal health, welfare and productivity.

Chinese production represents over 70% of global vitamin consumption and the EU relies very heavily on China for some specific products. For example, only two regions worldwide produce feed-grade vitamin B12 - China represents 83% of the global production and France represents 17%. China also holds a quasi-monopoly for vitamins K3, B6, B7 and B9. China has become the global supplier of vitamins and amino acids due to their investment in the sector and positive industrial policy measures. The only other region of significance for the production of vitamins is Europe (the EU, the UK and Switzerland). Despite the fact that Europe still has the required expertise and industrial capacity to increase its self-sufficiency in this sector, production in the EU is under pressure due to higher energy and raw material costs, inflation, labour costs and higher costs to comply with more stringent safety and environmental standards.

FEFAC, supported by IGFA, is calling on Brussels decision makers to recognise this extreme vulnerability of EU vitamin and amino acid production and consider a set of measures to ensure it survives and thrives. These include stimulation of production in the EU and incentivising capacity building in like-minded third countries such as the US or India.

Brexit – New UK Import Controls

The UK Government's new import control regime for agri-food goods continues to be introduced in phases throughout 2024, with further changes due to commence from 30 April. The changes from that date are in addition to the changes which were introduced from 31 January related to advance pre-notification of consignments on the UK IPAFFS system and export health certification for EU imports.

The most recent webinar, held on April 2024, can be found [here](#) and a Q&A [here](#). Members can also find all the webinars on the IGFA training page <https://igfa.ie/training/>

Technical News

New Genomic Techniques (NGTs)

During the European Parliament (EP) April plenary session, a total of 89 texts were tabled for consideration. This marks the final session of the current legislature before the upcoming European Parliament elections in June 2024. On NGTs, the EP confirmed its positive vote on the file (2023/0226(COD)) on 24 April. This means that the first reading is closed, and the new Parliament cannot reopen discussion at Committee level. In other words, if member states reach a compromise before the Belgian Presidency hands over to the Hungarian one at the end of June, final compromise meetings could start as early as autumn.

Mycotoxins

Maximum levels are set for some mycotoxins within the [Undesirable Directive 2002/32/EC](#) i.e. Aflatoxin B1 and Rye ergot (*Claviceps purpurea*). Recommended levels for other mycotoxins are set in [2006/576/EC](#).

Last week the EU Commission shared a proposal for modification of Recommendation 2006/576/EC with lower guidance values for feed materials and lower guidance values for compound feed. As well as the changes in guidance values themselves, additional modifications are also proposed regarding the enforcement of the concept of guidance values. It is

however still unclear what action is to be taken in cases where the guidance values are exceeded. A feed mycotoxin forum is expected to be organised at the end of May/start of June to give opportunities to stakeholders and authorities to share their views on the proposed levels. IGFA hopes to attend this forum and will provide feedback to members.

Vitamin B12

As noted in IGFA February Feed Issues, all forms of Vitamin B12 with the exception of one form, 3a835, will be withdrawn from the market by 6 July 2024 if no other form is authorised. FEFAC wrote to the Commission advising that a shortage of Vitamin B12 could lead to animal welfare issues. IGFA also alerted DAFM. We have now been advised that a vote on the second form of Vitamin B12 (produced with *Ensifer adhaerens* CGMCC 21299) is scheduled at a meeting on 6-7 May. We are hopeful that the vote will be positive. FEDIAF and FEFAC have also asked the EU Commission to take the same rapid action for a third form i.e. Vitamin B12 produced with *Ensifer adhaerens* CGMCC 19596. We hope that a vote might be possible on this at the meeting on 4-5 July.



IGFA Feed Statistics



Animal feed statistics are based on data and information gathered by IGFA from various sources. This data provides information on the quantities of animal feed manufactured nationally, animal feed and feed material imports and has recently been updated with info on domestic cereals used in animal feed. This data is available to members on the IGFA website <https://igfa.ie/feed-statistics/>

Environment News

Clarification of 15% Crude Protein Limit

IGFA has been calling on DAFM to provide clarification regarding the concentrate 15% crude protein limit. DAFM has published a Technical Note [here](#). The Department has also provided this [template](#) that they will accept as a form of written confirmation from the feed supplier. This should be available on inspection and where it is not available it will be requested to be provided within a timeframe declared by the inspector. Other forms of letters that provide sufficient justification by the appropriate advisors will also be accepted.

There has also been some confusion on other aspects of the detail, so IGFA had the below questions answered by DAFM at the end of March.

Question: Is this requirement only for dairy cows on the holding?

Answer: No, this measure is focused on dairy cows & cattle over two years & does not apply to livestock under two yrs.

Question: What will be the level of Crude Protein (CP) allowed in concentrate feeds for grazing livestock at grass?

Answer: Bovine livestock greater than two years old, including dairy cows, fed on a 100% grass forage diet during the main grazing season will be required to comply with a maximum of 15% CP (on a fresh weight basis) between 15th April to 30th September in 2024.

Note: If higher levels of crude protein are required, this needs to be justified and certified by the appropriate advisor.

Question: Who qualifies as an appropriate advisor for the purpose of this certification?

Answer: An appropriate advisor is the compounder, supplier of feed, nutritionist or FAS approved agricultural advisor.

Agri Commissioner Requests to Defer Application Dates of EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)

The EUDR entered into force in June 2023 with the aim of ensuring that EU imports of a range of products, including soy, do not contribute to EU and global deforestation and forest degradation. The regulation requires traceability to the plot of land of all commodities, operators to collect the geolocation coordinates of all land where the commodities have been produced and segregation of commodities from those of non-compliant origins along the supply chain. Obligations for operators are due to be in place by the end of December 2024 but in recent months the industry and some governments have highlighted significant implementation challenges. These include a lack of clarity and guidance on how aspects of the EUDR should be implemented and progress with information systems.

EU Farm Commissioner Wojciechowski wrote to Commission President von der Leyen at the end of April to highlight the potential impacts on farmers and EU supply chains. He said that as we are behind schedule in a number of areas, the EU should consider proposing to defer the dates of application of the EUDR. He added that we need more time to address the concerns raised by member states and partners.