

To: Chief Executives
Heads of Service
Lead Feed Officers
cc: SFELC, SCOTSS, TSI

2 April 2020

FSS/ENFTS/20/002

Dear Colleague

We recognise that due to the Coronavirus (Covid -19) pandemic, local authorities are focusing their limited resource to support businesses and local community needs, rather their usual delivery of services. On 17 March 2020, Food Standards Scotland issued a holding request to Lead Feed Officers with regards feed hygiene work and Official Controls. This remains in place. Local authority officers are already enforcing the Scottish Government requirements around social distancing. Please see further guidance that has been published on the FSS website:

<https://www.foodstandards.gov.scot/consumers/food-safety/coronavirus/questions-and-answers-covid-19>

If local authorities have any queries or issues relating specifically to feed work and the Coronavirus situation, please liaise directly with FSS by emailing feed@fss.scot, with 'COVID-19 – Question' in the subject line. Many thanks to the authorities who have already contacted Food Standards Scotland and have followed up referrals regarding potential human and animal health concerns.

Feed Delivery Project Update

As many of you are aware, we were due to run a Local Authority (LA) stakeholder event on 24 March 2020 to discuss current and future feed delivery in Scotland. At the event, we had planned to provide you with an overview of the model and how we expect it to operate, work planned in readiness for the transfer of competence from LAs to FSS, input into the consultation process, and support measures currently in place and planned for the future.

We are investigating whether we can replace the cancelled meeting with other means of stakeholder engagement, during the consultation period and we shall notify you if this is possible.

In addition, it is our intention to reschedule the 24 March event later in the year, although the focus will be on the ongoing work to develop the governance and infrastructure to support the new model and to provide a technical feed update.

Please find below details of the considerable work that has been taking place to develop the new delivery model and to provide ongoing support to LAs in their current feed delivery role.

1. Transfer of competence of feed from local authorities to FSS

Legislation is currently being drafted. This is a complex process and will require feedback from stakeholders, as part of the consultation exercise, to inform the drafting process. It is anticipated that the legislation will be laid during autumn 2020, with it coming into force in late 2020 or early 2021. I have included an overview of the proposed model in the Annex.

2. Consultation

The consultation package, which we had intended to publish during March, has been put on hold for the short term as a result of the impact of Covid-19. We will of course notify you when it is published.

As you may be aware, we invited delegates of the planned stakeholder event on 24 March to participate in a [Slido](#) Question and Answer event enabling them to submit questions on the proposed delivery model both before and during the meeting. We will keep the event open until 30 April and will develop a Q & A document for LAs. Details of access to the Slido Q & A event, may be found in the covering email.

3. Development of Governance arrangements to support the new model

It is our intention that FSS shall, with local authority representatives, including SCOTSS, establish an Implementation Group to consider initially the Service Level Agreements and costing model in order to support the new delivery arrangements. It is anticipated that as a result of current restrictions, the first meetings shall take place remotely, over the next few months. It is intended that the group shall then also be involved in the development of the infrastructure required to support the model, such as procedures ("Feed manual"), Official Control planning, data (records) transfer etc.

4. Current support

We have been fortunate to be able to significantly bolster the Animal Feed team within FSS and this has allowed us to roll out a series of support measures to local authorities over the past few months. These have included:

1. FSS organised training events at locations in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Stirling covering Feed Labelling, Feed Sampling and HACCP Level 3. These were well supported events with 118 Local Authority delegates attending in the learning experience. The feedback comments reflected there was a greater confidence and knowledge in undertaking Feed Official Controls.
2. FSS provided sampling grants at a cost of £57,000, allowing Local Authorities to submit 148 samples to the Agricultural Analysts, whom FSS paid to test for contaminants and undesirable

substances. This initiative has included work on imported feed and raw pet food that is still ongoing, subject to Covid-19 restrictions.

3. The new Feed Management Information System (FMIS) has undergone a trial period of several months with four local authorities – Dumfries and Galloway, Argyll and Bute, South Ayrshire and Aberdeenshire. Around 50 inspections have been carried out using the FMIS on FSS supplied tablets during this time, and recent work with the system developer has incorporated much of the feedback from those authorities and other improvements to the system which are now available to the participating LAs.. Further distribution of tablets and training is on hold for now, but work will continue to develop reporting systems using the inspection information already uploaded to the system. Updating and verification of the premises lists for every LA is also planned, and FSS will shortly be sending each local authority a list of Feed Business Establishments as currently held in the FMIS, and will ask for any updates to the lists.

4. FSS had attended and promoted all regional Feed Quality Groups that have met in the East, North and West of Scotland. These are excellent forums that permit debate and find practical solutions using the expert knowledge on feed law shared between local authorities.

5. Review of the Feed Law Code of Practice. An updated Code of Practice has been developed mainly to include administrative updates as result of the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2017/625, however as a result of the need to provide LAs with flexibility concerning the requirements of the Code in response to Covid-19, the publication has been put on hold.

6. In June 2019, FSS working with local authorities, sought to ensure that Feed Business Operators intending to export animal feed to the EU must designate a representative within the EU or the EEA for the establishments involved in that activity. This initiative allowed Scottish based feed manufacturers to prepare and ensure there would be no disruption to exports for the projected EU exit.

7. In November 2019, FSS responded to an industry request to establish an Agri-Hub at Rosyth as a Designated Point of Entry for animal feed. This was achieved by working in partnership with Fife Council. The port of Rosyth is now listed as a Border Control Post (BCP), following the implementation of Official Control Regulation (EU) 2017/625 on 14th December 2019. Further support has provided to authorities with BCPs through access to TRACES NT system to view consignments of high-risk feed and food products.

Yours faithfully



Jacqui Angus
Workstream Manager- Animal Feed Delivery
Food Standards Scotland

Annex: Overview of the Proposed Feed Delivery Model

FSS competency

Legislation “Feed Enforcement Order 2020”

FSS coordination

Service plan, enforcement policy, procedures, Official Control plan

Delegation

1. FSS delegates authority to LAs (“Edinburgh Gazette”). LAs deliver feed law function of behalf of FSS in accordance with the Service Level Agreement. FSS provide funding in accordance with agreed costing model. **LAs do not need to take part.**
2. FSS to identify and fill gaps:
 - Recruit FSS staff
 - Qualification equivalence
 - Train
 - Lead feed officer supervision and mentoring
 - Other Government Departments for primary production? To be investigated for the short term. Opportunities to reduce footfall at feed business establishments.

Timescale

Implementation late 2020 or early 2021