

# Cross Compliance Farm Advisory Service Training Module 3 2009

## Landscape Features

# Overview

## Cross Compliance Changes

§ Landscape Features

§ Organic Matter Requirements

# Overview

## Landscape features

- § Background
- § Designation
- § Maintenance
- § Removal
- § Controls
- § Sanctions



# Landscape Features .. Background

## Article 30 of 796/2004

- Where hedges internal to LPI S Parcel are greater than 2M wide then area under hedge deducted in full
- Where hedges on the LPI S parcel boundary are greater than 4M in width then area under hedge deducted in full

Following the **Health Check** emphasis on protection of Habitats was increased. DAFF has now designated these features as Landscape Features thus allowing payment on the land occupied under such features.

# GAEC Requirements

Under Minimum level of maintenance  
issue:

Among other requirements

§ Farmers must avoid the deterioration  
of habitats

# New GAEC Compulsory Standard

Retention of landscape features, including, where appropriate, hedges, ponds, ditches, trees in line, in group or isolated and field margins

# Hedgerows and Drains.. Designation

To meet the new requirement, DAFF has designate all Hedgerows and Drains as Landscape Features under GAEC.

§ All Land under these features will be eligible for SPS and DAS

§ These features whether on **claimed or unclaimed land** can't be removed ...

# Why protect such Landscape Features

Such Landscape features are beneficial as they can provide:

Natural stockproof boundaries;

Shelter and shade for farm animals;

Physical barriers to restrict soil and water movement thus reducing soil erosion and protecting water quality.

Habitats for wild life in circumstances where the proportion of natural woodland in Ireland is relatively low;

Nature corridors to allow the free movement of wildlife through the countryside.

# Hedgerows and Drains

## Implications

- Area under these features now considered eligible land
- Where hedgerows are neglected then  
ØGAEC sanctions will have to be considered
- Where features are removed then  
ØA GAEC Penalty will apply

# Scrub on SAC/SPA land

Land under scrub continues to be ineligible for SPS and Disadvantaged Area Payments.

It will be necessary to consider an GAEC or eligibility reductions for spreading scrub

Same rules apply in SAC/SPA land

# Maintenance Requirements

Hedges must be maintained at their traditional width and must not be allowed to extend into the field in a scrub like manner

Drains can be cleared to retain their drainage properties but should not be filled in or piped.

# Maintained Hedges together with ineligible scrub land



# GAEC sanction necessary for low density scattered scrub



# Eligibility reductions .. Not designated a Landscape Feature



# GAEC Sanction



## Very poor Hedge Maintenance with invasive species extending into the field .. GAEC Sanction



# Conforming Hedge



# Very Poor Hedge Maintenance



# Significant Area Reductions required



# Would you consider this as Abandonment



# Abandonment



# Well Maintained Hedge



# Hedge and Drain Landscape Feature combination



# Trees in a line Landscape Feature



Conforming Hedge  
Controlled at Ground Level  
Do not require to be topped



# Area reductions required





Department of  
**Agriculture,  
Fisheries and Food**  
An Roinn  
**Talmhaíochta,  
Iascaigh agus Bia**

## Streams and rivers are not Landscape Feature under the LF Designation



# Designated Drain should not be piped and closed in



# Removal of Landscape Features

Can be removed where good reason

§ Farmyard expansion

§ Straighten to facilitate machinery

**BUT**

§ Must be replaced with equivalent before removal

# Inspections and Sanctions

Part of normal GAEC inspection

Use will be made of latest ortho maps from this year and remote sensing imagery to determine removal

Exceptions

§ New field gates

Sanctions determined by considering:

§ Intent or Negligence

§ Extent Severity and Permanence

Thanks!

Any Questions?

