The Scrapie Monitoring Scheme (SMS) was introduced to facilitate intra-Community trade in sheep and goats. Changes to EU rules with regard to scrapie have resulted in the introduction of a two-tier system, which took effect in Ireland from 1 January 2014. This provides for flocks registered in the SMS to have either a **negligible or controlled risk status** for scrapie.

Participation in the scheme is voluntary but is generally a pre-requisite for anyone wishing to maintain a breeding flock or herd for intra-Community trade purposes, including trade with Northern Ireland. It ensures that the animals to be exported fully meet the export health requirements for scrapie. Breeding sheep (but not goats) can also be traded if they are certified as being of ARR/ARR genotype and do not originate from a flock restricted for scrapie.

**Controlled Risk Status:**

To become a controlled risk member, the flock or herd owner must be a member of, and abide by the rules of, the SMS for three years, and the flock/herd must be scrapie free for these 3 years. Animals bought into the flock must be sourced from a flock/herd not restricted for scrapie and be of ARR/ARR genotype, or be sourced from a flock/herd with the same or higher SMS scrapie status as the purchasing flock e.g. year 3, 4, 5 or 6, or negligible risk status. The member may choose to have his/her name included on a register of controlled risk members on the Department’s website. The controlled risk status facilitates the trade of sheep and goats for breeding\(^1\) with other Member States (including Northern Ireland as part of the UK) that do not have an approved national control programme or negligible risk for classical scrapie\(^2\). Flocks do not require SMS membership to export sheep/goats to these member states for slaughter or fattening.

**Negligible Risk Status:**

To become a negligible risk member the owner must have been a member of the SMS for seven years, and the flock/herd must be free of classical scrapie for those seven years. Any animal bought in must be sourced from a holding with negligible risk status, or be sourced from a flock/herd not restricted for scrapie and be of ARR/ARR genotype. The member may choose to have his/her name included on a register of negligible risk members on the Department’s website. The negligible risk status facilitates movement of sheep and goats for breeding and fattening to other Member States with negligible risk or an approved

---

1 Breeding includes animals intended for milk production

2 All EU member states except Austria, Denmark, Finland, Slovenia, Sweden
national control programme for classical scrapie. Naturally, negligible risk status flocks are also eligible to export sheep for all purposes to other Member States which do not have an approved national control programme or negligible risk status for classical scrapie, as outlined in footnote 2 above.

The terms and conditions of the scheme, among other things, require members to ensure that:

- all animals in the flock are clinically inspected annually by a private veterinary practitioner for signs of scrapie,
- flock records are in order with documentary proof of all movement into and out of the farm,
- all animals are accounted for and properly tagged
- premises are suitable for purpose and appropriate bio-security measures are in place, and
- all fallen animals are submitted to a local knackery or dead animal collection centre for TSE sampling and subsequent TSE testing.

DAFM will select a proportion of flocks for inspections to be carried out by local veterinary inspectors each year.

Any queries about the scheme should be directed to TSE Section, Johnstown Castle, Wexford on 053 9163535.

---

3 Austria, Denmark, Finland, Slovenia and Sweden