



**Trader Notice No. 03/2020**

**4th June 2020**

**RE: Official controls performed by the Feedingstuffs Division of DAFM  
during the Covid 19 pandemic**

To: All Feed Business Operators:  
Manufacturers;  
Wholesalers;  
Importers;  
Retailers;  
Hauliers of Feed;  
Suppliers of Surplus Food/By-products for Feed;  
Storekeepers;  
Grain Intake;

Irish Grain and Feed Association

The Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM) would like to assure all feed business operators that it has a procedure in place, which sets out additional precautions that must be undertaken by its staff to protect all during the Covid-19 pandemic, when conducting official controls related to feed in accordance with Reg (EU) No 2017/625 on official controls.

The following is a synopsis of the procedure:

- DAFM officers have been instructed to follow HSE Guidelines on hygiene, in particular the washing of hands, practising good respiratory hygiene, maintaining social distancing of 2m, not shaking hands and avoiding crowded places indoors.
- In addition, officers have been instructed to reduce the number of people they deal with on-site, not to share pens, not to sign visitors' book or to ask FBO representatives to sign forms and not to accept refreshments on site.

**Prior to undertaking the official control:**

- The relevant business will be contacted by telephone or email in advance of the planned activity (at least 24 hours notice required) and a date and time arranged for the activity to be undertaken.
- Officers will ask the business operator if they or any of their family or staff have any of the symptoms of Covid-19. If the answer to this question is yes, the inspection will be postponed until further notice.
- The officer will ask the business operator if there are any procedures that the business requires the officer to follow and any such procedures will be adhered to at all times.

**Undertaking the official control:**

- Social interaction on site will be reduced and therefore if the activity can be undertaken without physical contact with personnel from the relevant business, that will be the preferable course of action for officers to do so.
- If it is not possible for officers to undertake the activity without the accompaniment of someone from the business, social distancing guidance will be adhered to.
- If officers feel they are being placed at risk during the activity, they have been instructed to cease the activity immediately e.g. if social distancing guidelines are not being adhered to or that someone from the business is displaying symptoms.
- If it is evident that social distancing is not being adhered to between feed mill employees, this will also be noted by the officer and cross reported to the Health and Safety Authority.
- Prior to putting on PPE, officers will be required to wash hands with soap and water, if facilities are available. If not, an alcohol based hand rub or disinfectant wipes will be used instead.
- Officers will carry out inspections wearing relevant PPE, including disposable gloves.
- If officers need to examine records or paperwork, it is preferable that these are sent by email but if this is not possible, officers must ensure that the transfer of paperwork is undertaken observing social distancing guidelines.
- Once the activity has ended, officers are instructed to remove gloves and wash hands with soap and water or use an alcohol based hand rub or disinfectant wipes, as outlined above.
- Immediately after concluding the activity, officers will remove all PPE in the correct manner to prevent contact with contaminated surfaces and placed in a refuse bag. Refuse bags are to be sealed and disposed of on site (if possible). Alcohol based hand rub or disinfectant wipes will be used on hands.
- Finally, following each official control activity, officers will be required to complete a contact tracing form indicating the names of people that the officer came into contact with during the inspection.

If you require any further information or have any concerns in relation to this procedure please email [Feedenquiries@agriculture.gov.ie](mailto:Feedenquiries@agriculture.gov.ie)

Yours sincerely,

*Niamh O'Leary*

Feedingstuff, Fertiliser, Grain and Poultry Division,  
Dept of Agriculture, Food & the Marine.