Food Safety Authority of Ireland Submission on DAFM Climate Change Adaptation Plan

1. Opportunities from Climate Change

Part of the overall goal of the plan (page 4) is to identify/take advantage of any opportunities arising from climate change and these are clearly identified in the marine case studies but not in others. Examples of opportunities that may arise in other sectors include:

- Possibility of growing more and greater variety of fruit, vegetables and animal feed ingredients thus decreasing reliance on imports
- Longer growing season should improve welfare of grazing livestock and decrease need for slurry storage
- Dryer springs and summers should decrease disease threat from certain fungal crop diseases
- Dryer grazing seasons will also increase the production potential of heavier/poorer draining soil types
- Possibility of making more hay/haylage with resultant savings on plastic and handling costs

“Opportunities” from climate change could be added as a standalone Case Study.

2. Food and Feed Safety

Suggest addition of another Case Study devoted to Food and Feed Safety due to the scale of potential threats arising. Some opportunities here also. FSAI could provide content for this.

3. Cross Sectoral Issues (pages 14-16)

The food safety element under the Public Health Theme (page 16) could be greatly expanded beyond the limited risks and issues listed e.g. the pathogens,
chemical contaminants and natural toxins identified in the Safefood report (as referenced on page 17).

4. Priority Impacts and Consequences (Pages 10-12)

Again, the food safety issues “potentially arising” (page 11) should be significantly expanded. More detail needs to be provided for the slurry storage/landspreading impact/consequence – assume it is referring to impacts of flooding/extreme precipitation so need to clarify.

5. Uncertainty, Monitoring and Surveillance


The 2014 Safefood report on potential impacts of climate change on food safety emphasises the need for enhanced monitoring and surveillance systems in order to anticipate and minimise negative impacts of new problems such as those arising from new pests and diseases. This need is worth stressing in this report also.

Another important issue addressed in the Safefood Report is the uncertainty associated with the climate change predictions and this is worth stressing in this report as well – perhaps in the introduction. The uncertainty of prediction reinforces the need for careful monitoring and Surveillance.

6. Appendix II Action List (pages 56-63)

Food Safety issues, the Food Safety Authority and Safefood warrant inclusion in actions 13-15 inclusive.