# Minutes

# FARM ANIMAL WELFARE ADVISORY COUNCIL (FAWAC)

**Date:** Thursday 30th July, 2020

**Venue:** Midlands Hotel, Portlaoise

**Meeting Time:**  10.30am

**Attendee’s:**

Sean O’Laoide (Chair), Kevin Kinsella IFA, Brendan Golden IFA, Tom Phelan IFA Gerald Quain ICMSA Alison Hanlon UCD, Andrew Kelly ISPCA, Sean Murray DAFM, Rob Doyle, DAFM

Apologies: Andrew Cromie,

**Introduction**

The Chair opened the meeting and was advised Kevin Kinsella is retiring from FAWAC to be replaced by Brendan Golden. The Chair expressed his gratitude on behalf of all FAWAC members for Kevin’s valuable contribution over the years and wished him the best for the future. The meeting was also advised that Tom Phelan is replacing Sean O’Leary on the Council. The Chair expressed thanks to Sean, particularly in relation to the work undertaken on the last 2 FAWAC booklets.

1. **Minutes of the last FAWAC meeting of 12th March, 2020 and matters arising.**

The ISPCA requested that the ISPCA/RSPCA update on QA welfare scheme is reflected in the previous minutes.

1. **Calf welfare**

DAFM gave a short presentation on ICBF breeding figures. This issue of the Calf Welfare Guidelines was discussed among the group. It was agreed that the National Health Awareness Week in November would be a suitable occasion for the launch of the Guidelines. DAFM agreed to arrange for publication and launch at the event.

Following a suggestion by UCD and ISPCA it was also agreed that the Guidelines be kept under constant review going forward to keep in line with updating legislation. A number of review factors were discussed at to the effects the guidelines have, could it be evaluated and is the correct message getting to the correct people. The Chair agreed that a formal review process should take place.

DAFM gave an update on calf exports outlining a new model at marts and the significant advantage of calves going straight from farms to assembly centres. Calves now have a lower stocking density and there have been improvements in compliance with an over 90% return rate on sat nav’s from transporters. DAFM added that the Calf Stakeholder Group has been very influential with huge strides made.

The ISPCA welcomed the commitments of the new Programme for Government. IFA recommended linkage between UCD and DAFM to ensure there is a clear message. Adding that Government need to present a clear message as to the high animal welfare standards Irelands adheres to with regards to live exports.

UCD noted the need for wider education of younger people on farming issues adding that a linkage with Agri-aware would be beneficial.

**3. Equine welfare**

DAFM presented on equine LA figures for Q1, 2020. DAFM informed the meeting that of 267 equines seized, 130 had been rehomed, 65 had been euthanized, 38 reclaimed and 34 still in pounds. These figures included a drop in seizures in Dublin but a significant increase in Galway.

The ISPCA reported that 6142 calls had been received, a similar figure to 2019. 1810 animal welfare complaints represented a 16% decrease. ISPCA reported 707 equine related calls to the end of June representing more than half the 1080 figure for 2019. Further reporting the seizure of 19 equines with 28 surrendered.

The ISPCA added that dogs seized were 157 compared to 281 last year. ISPCA added that 3 prosecutions had been finalised this year with 7 cases upcoming.

UCD informed that HRI is developing a strategy on equine welfare to assess what happens to race horses following a racing career.

**4. Pig Welfare**

DAFM gave an update in intensive pig farming. DAFM informed of separate initiatives, an antimicrobial database, quality assurance scheme, TASAH funding to address tail biting and a biosecurity assessment. DAFM informed of the commencement of a programme of regulatory inspections on rearing pigs with intact tails with a number of veterinary inspectors undergoing specialised training.

ISPCA gave an update on RSPCA/ISPCA welfare assured scheme. ISPCA advised that they were working with RSPCA on a MOU to use their standards. ISPCA added that Some dairy farmers interested in RSPCA welfare assured. ISPCA agreed to circulate outdoor pigs standards.

UCD added that they weresupervising the adaption of a German risk assessment model Schwip.

**AOB**

* DAFM suggested that presentations on calf welfare and breeding be given by James Maher of DAFM and Andrew Cromie of ICBF at the next meeting.
* ISPCA suggested that Riona Sayers of Teagac present on calf welfare at the December meeting.
* DAFM to publish minutes to the FAWAC website.