

FAR update

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FEED ADVISER REGISTER SCHEME



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FAR advisers keep delivering advice through COVID-19

AIC have been continually monitoring the situation regarding COVID-19 and have been working with the industry and Government to ensure the agri-food supply chain remains robust and productive.

As a critical part of the UK food supply chain, the compound feed sector has coped admirably with the challenges presented by the pandemic. The early phases were dominated by concerns in relation to receiving official recognition from Government that the

sector is regarded as critical. This was necessary to ensure the sector remains fully operational, with certain essential employees classified as key workers. AIC was instrumental in achieving this status for the industry and, at the time of writing, every UK feed mill remains fully operational.

Registered feed advisers have continued to play an important role advising farmers on healthy livestock diets to ensure health, welfare and productivity. Many have done this by delivering advice

Welcome

Welcome to the latest and my first edition of FAR Update. In this issue, we discuss the safe delivery of advice on farm during the COVID-19 pandemic, the new Defra Agri Climate team, how FAR advisers are involved in AIC's ELMS project, FAR training developments and FAR at livestock events (physical and virtual).

We do hope you find the FAR Update informative. If you have any questions or suggestions for future editions, please contact us via the details on the back page.



Sue Whittington
Technical Manager

remotely; where farm visits have been required, steps have been established to ensure that any risks of spreading the virus are minimised. We have had reports of advisers resorting to creative solutions to maintain contact with their customers – many advisers have held evening nutritional training sessions with farm groups via video-conference. Some have even arranged for deliveries of refreshments to farmers from local micro-breweries in order to keep spirits up and ensure a good attendance.

As lockdown measures gradually relax, AIC will continue to assist in developing general advice for the safe delivery of advice on farm. Whilst considerable challenges remain, the industry deserves great credit for the way in which it has handled the crisis.



FAR at Livestock events 2020

We were looking forward to meeting with you at industry events during 2020. Naturally, these plans have changed due to the threat posed by COVID-19, with events cancelled across the country and throughout the year.



DairyTech on 6th February at Stoneleigh – one show we were able to attend in person.

To ensure continued communication with our Members, FAR and FAA put together a stand at the Virtual Grassland event on 20th & 21st May 2020, where we had over 1,000 visitors. <https://thefarmingforum.co.uk/index.php?threads/welcome-to-the-aic-feed-adviser-register-and-the-forage-analysis-assurance-group.317930/>



FAR Exhibition Calendar 2020-21

Pig & Poultry	Postponed to 25th & 26th May 2021, Stoneleigh
Grassland & Muck	20th & 21st May 2020 (cancelled), Ragley Estate
National Sheep Event	Postponed until 19th October 2020, Malvern
Beef Expo	Postponed until 21st May 2021, Darlington
UK Dairy Day	16th September 2020 (provisional), Telford
Welsh Dairy Event	27th October 2020, Carmarthen
Agri Scot	18th November 2020, Edinburgh
Royal Ulster Winter Fair	10th December 2020, Lisburn

All dates are provisional. Be sure to check the website for the latest updates.

FAR Core Competency Modules 1 & 2 for Ruminants and Pigs

Our industry experts have been working hard to finalise core competency modules 1 & 2 for ruminants and pigs. The learning pathways for these are now live and accessible via the FAR VBMS portal.

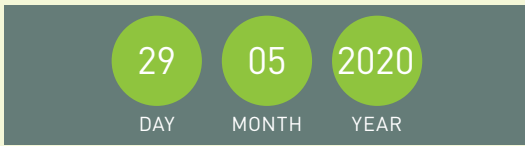


FAR Continuing Professional Development

CPD for 2019-2020 focuses on the maximum permitted levels for additives in feed. 92% of monogastric advisers and 88% of ruminant advisers have successfully completed the CPD to date.

The CPD in development for 2020-2021 considers the important role nutrition plays in the efforts to achieve a reduction in the use of antibiotics in farm livestock. The module will be launched this summer. Members will be kept up to date on any progress.

Number of feed advisers



The total number of feed advisers now stands at:

1,107

‘Find a Feed Adviser’ tool

The Feed Adviser Register (FAR) launched its new “Find a Feed Adviser” search tool on the 8th June. This on-line tool is a new initiative by FAR, which will allow farmers to find nearby feed companies that employ registered feed advisers.

All feed advisers have had the opportunity to register for the tool. The search results will not show feed advisers’ individual details but will show the nearest feed adviser companies. From there, further details can be obtained from the individual company as required.

The Find a Feed Adviser search tool was created to offer farmers an intuitive and simple service that lets them find feed advisers, while delivering more transparency within FAR for stakeholders.

John Kelley, Managing Director of AIC Services, commented: “As FAR has developed over the years, we have always sought to add new capacity to the register for feed advisers. This initiative will add value for feed advisers and help farmers locate professional advice quickly and easily as they require it.”

Find a Feed Adviser search facility can be accessed via the Feed Adviser Website: www.feedadviserregister.org.uk

Government has formed a new Agri Climate team:

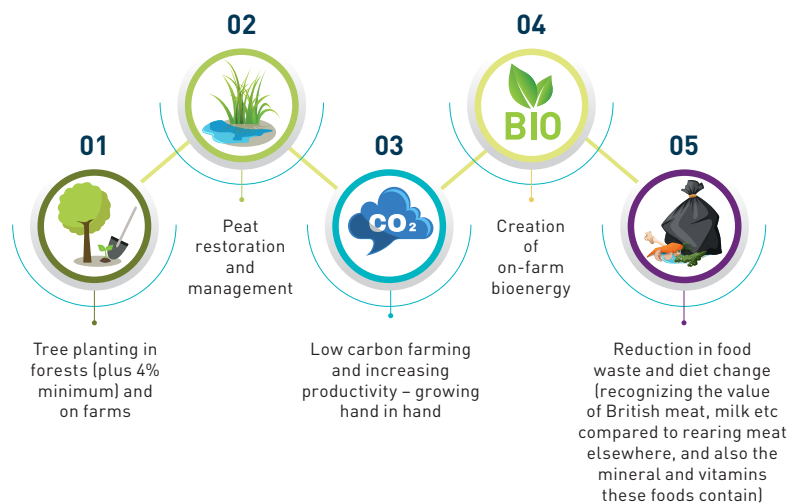
There has been a small restructure in Defra, bringing the Agri Climate and Food Chain Sustainability teams together. This is significant, as it recognises these policy priorities as interdependent.

The Agri Climate team are prioritising five areas over the next five to ten years in order to support carbon budgets and complement the new Environmental Land Management system when it launches. These areas are crop nutrient management planning, animal feed, advice and guidance to farmers and land managers, agroforestry and agrivoltaics.

FAR’s role, politically speaking, could not be more relevant than it is today. Advice and guidance from professionally-qualified advisers is absolutely key to supporting livestock farmers across the UK.

This change by Defra replaces the proposed Farm Emissions Reduction Plan, as announced by Michael Gove last year, in favour of a broader approach. This will recognise the need for a sustainable food chain, with an opportunity to relook at the National Food Strategy in light of COVID-19.

Leading industry bodies in agriculture – including AIC, CLA, NFU and other key partners such as AHDB, LEAF and devolved farming unions – will continue to work in partnership with Defra on achieving net carbon zero. The work could be structured around recommendations presented by the Committee on Climate Change earlier this year. These set out the priorities to ensure that agriculture and land use can reduce overall carbon emissions by two-thirds before 2050:



www.theccc.org.uk/publication/land-use-policies-for-a-net-zero-uk

Relations between AIC Scotland and NIGTA are similarly strong, with officials in devolved administrations intent on finding workable solutions.



Further information:
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FAR Academic Accreditation by Harper Adams University

AIC Services are working closely with BASIS and Harper Adams University to develop the FAR Core Competency Modules 1-4 to enable the course to become accredited as a level 5 qualification (first degree level) which is equivalent to a FACTS certification qualification for advisers within the fertiliser sector.

Forming the new Environmental Land Management policy

In February, Defra approved AIC's ELMs project, which will evaluate the role of professional advice through case studies. Unfortunately, COVID-19 has somewhat stalled our progress. We are still committed to delivering the project and are now looking at a likely time frame of September 2020 onwards for restarting the case study interviews.

Our project – one of only twenty-six approved – will add to Defra's knowledge around the provision of advice on farm and the role it plays in delivering environmental benefits alongside a productive farm business. We believe that the project will present an opportunity for FAR advisers to demonstrate their value on farm in advancing practice in animal nutrition, while supporting farmers in delivering their farm and land management plans.

Fifteen case study interviews form the core of our project. These informal conversations with the adviser and farmer will let us demonstrate the trusted relationship between professional advisers and their customers/clients, which in turn supports the delivery of combined objectives for farm businesses and the environment.

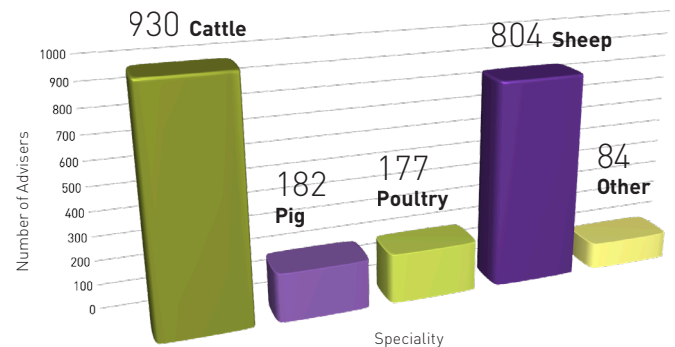
Six FAR advisers have volunteered to take part in the project. They will be showcasing the value of their advice across a range of farming systems. It is envisaged that advice around animal nutrition, health and welfare, feeding efficiency and the mitigation of emissions will feature heavily in our conversations. These have all been highlighted as aspects of a productive farm business that are public goods according to current ELMs thinking, for which farmers would be able to receive payment.

Andrew Pearson,
Policy Manager

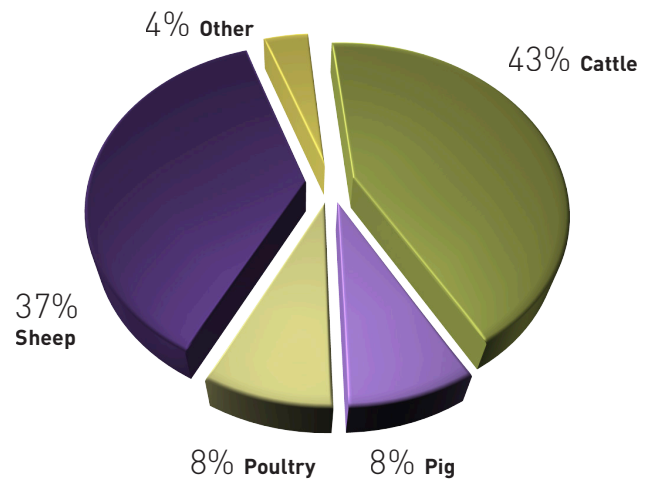


Feed Adviser Register – Statistics

Feed advisers by speciality as at 29 May 2020



Proportional breakdown of feed advisers by speciality as at 29 May 2020



David Moss
Technical Manager

New Technical Manager – Welcome to David Moss

We're pleased to announce David Moss as our new Technical Manager.

In his new role, David will focus on the Feed Sector and the Feed Adviser Register. He has previously worked within the food industry, with specialism in technical management – skills that will be of significant benefit to his work supporting the agri-supply industry.

For further information on COVID-19 at: www.agindustries.org.uk/coronavirus/



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