

**From: John Fay**  
**Director, College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise**

**Date: 25 October 2013**

**To: Stella McArdle**  
**Clerk, Committee of Agriculture and Rural Development**

1. Thank you for the invitation to submit evidence to the Committee of Agriculture and Rural Development in relation to the thematic review: 'To consider what gaps still remain to be addressed by DARD to enhance farm and farmer safety in Northern Ireland'.
2. Both I and my senior colleagues at the College welcome this review and would like to outline what is happening at the College and detail some emerging training needs.

#### Current Situation

3. Health and Safety is an integral part of education programmes delivered to Higher and Further Education students at CAFRE and in high risk areas, such as Agriculture Engineering, there is a focused unit on Health and Safety. This year we have over 700 students enrolled on Agriculture programmes and, as well as formal delivery, a number of projects have been used to raise the profile of health and safety with our students:
  - Participation in PTO Farm Safety Week. Students were involved in live demonstrations and spoke to a person injured in a PTO accident.
  - Translink presentation. Translink spoke to students during induction week about the dangers associated with railway crossings. They also sponsored a quiz.
  - UFU Farm Safety Competition. CAFRE students participated in a competition by the UFU to raise the profile of Farm Safety on Farms.

We welcome these opportunities and will work with the industry to develop more interactive learning opportunities.

4. In addition CAFRE also delivers a portfolio of 31 short courses to farmers and students. Each course develops the learners' skills in a specific work area, for example operating a tractor or shearing a sheep. Most of these courses are accredited through an awarding body and the learner obtains an industry recognised qualification when the course is successfully completed.

The College currently delivers 3500 training days to industry and a further 1250 training days to CAFRE FE and HE students.

The table below details the short courses with a particular health and safety focus:

Table 1: Number of people participating in Health and Safety short courses in 2012/13

<b>Training Course</b>	<b>Number trained in 2012-13</b>
Animal Handling	84
ATV	62
Welding Basic	38
Lawnmowers	7
FEPA Pa1	353
FEPA Pa2a	81
FEPA Pa6a	95
First Aid	73
Manual Handling	385
Sheep Dip	10
Sheep Shearing	128
Telehandler	111
Tractor 13 - 15	218
Tractor - PTO	59
Tractor - BTDS 4day	99
Tractor - BTDS 2day	178
<b>Total</b>	<b>1981</b>

5. The College is also an active member of the Farm Safety Partnership and has contributed to the design of health and safety workshops delivered through the Focus Farm network.

### Emerging Training Needs

6. The College is continually reviewing the training needs of industry. In relation to health and safety, two areas are under consideration:
- In conjunction with the Ulster Farmer Union, the College is considering the training needs of tractor drivers in the 18 - 24 year old age group. Both organisations realise that this age group are particularly vulnerable as they start to work with high-powered tractors.
  - The removal of 'grandfather rights' in relation to FEPA from 26 November 2015 will mean a whole new group of sprayer operators, born before 31 December 1964, will need to be trained. The college is considering how it will meet the particular needs of these older, experienced operatives.

### New Technologies and Equipment

7. CAFRE will be considering the findings of the DARD sponsored AFBI research work on the safe systems of work linked to slurry gases and in particular slurry gases. The College will be involved in the roll out of any new technologies and training from this project.

I trust this information is of help to the committee in its review of this important issue.

**John Fay**

**Director, College of Agriculture Food and Rural Enterprise**

CC: Private office  
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