

Ref No	Member	Question	Tabled	Answered	Index Terms
AQW 17896/11- 15	Mr Phil Flanagan ( <i>SF - Fermanagh and South Tyrone</i> )	To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department is taking to ensure that farmers who are subject to an inspection receive their Single Farm Payment without delay.	11/12/2012	Awaiting Answer	Farms; EU grants and loans; Payments; Farmers
AQW 17294/11- 15	Mr Gregory Campbell ( <i>DUP - East Londonderry</i> )	To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what is the expected percentage reduction in the Single Farm Payment Schemes in 2009 and 2010 as a result of the European Commission disallowance.  The financial correction for 2009 has not been finally confirmed, but is expected to be 5.19 percent. The financial correction for 2010 is currently estimated at 3 per cent.	27/11/2012	Answered	Farms; Payments; EU grants and loans
AQO 3016/11- 15	Mrs Dolores Kelly ( <i>SDLP - Upper Bann</i> )	To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to outline the steps that are being taken to regularise the dual claim use on applications under the Single Farm Payment and the Less Favoured Area Compensatory Allowances Schemes to meet EU requirements.  <a href="#">View Official Report for AQO 3016/11-15</a>	22/11/2012	Answered	Farms; EU grants and loans; Payments; Marginal land; Common agricultural policy
AQW 16790/11- 15	Mr Peter Weir ( <i>DUP - North Down</i> )	To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many farms in each constituency are in receipt of single farm payments.  The number of farm businesses in each constituency that submitted a Single Farm Payment	15/11/2012	Answered	Farms; EU grants and loans; Payments; S

(SFP) application in 2011 is as follows:

<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Number of Applicants to the 2011 Single Farm Payment Scheme</b>
Belfast East	127
Belfast North	82
Belfast South	150
Belfast West	34
East Antrim	1152
East Londonderry	2393
Fermanagh and South Tyrone	6100
Foyle	309
Lagan Valley	1684
Mid Ulster	4386
Newry and Armagh	4350
North Antrim	3616
North Down	233
South Antrim	1671
South Down	3832
Strangford	1534
Upper Bann	1343
West Tyrone	4479
Others *	398

\*The constituency information is drawn from the postcodes of businesses that submitted a SFP in 2011. The “ Other ” figure represents farm businesses that either do not have a valid postcode recorded against their business or are businesses where the addresses held is outside the 18 constituencies listed

		above.															
AQW 16668/11- 15	Mr Gregory Campbell (DUP - East Londonderry)	To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of Single Farm Payments in each of the last five years.  The number of Single Farm Payments claimed in the last five years are as follows: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Scheme Year</th> <th>Number of Applications Received</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2008</td> <td>38,648</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2009</td> <td>38,451</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010</td> <td>38,181</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011</td> <td>37,873</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012</td> <td>37,583</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Scheme Year	Number of Applications Received	2008	38,648	2009	38,451	2010	38,181	2011	37,873	2012	37,583	13/11/2012	Answered	EU grants and loans; Farms; Payments; S
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AQO 2794/11- 15	Mr Peter Weir (DUP - North Down)	To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many Single Farm Payment farm inspections were completed by remote sensing in 2012.  For the 2012 Single Farm Payment scheme year we will complete 250 On The Spot (OTS) checks by Remote Sensing.	18/10/2012	Answered	EU grants and loans; Farmers; Subsidies; Inspections; Remote sensing; Surveying												
AQW 16388/11- 15	Mr Leslie Cree MBE (UUP - North Down)	To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the number of farms in the North Down constituency, broken down by (i) size of herd numbers; (ii) in receipt of single farm payments; and (iii) which are arable producers. <b>[Priority Written]</b>  Based on the applications for Single Farm Payment in 2012, the number of farms in the North Down constituency broken down	06/11/2012	Answered	Farms; North Down; S												

		<p>by: size of current herd numbers are:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Herd size (cattle)</th> <th>Number of farm businesses</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Up to 20</td> <td>20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21 - 100</td> <td>27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>101- 300</td> <td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Greater than 300</td> <td>11</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>in receipt of single farm payments: 233 farm businesses submitted a claim for 2012 Single Farm Payment (SFP). Payment in respect of these claims will only issue once the claims have been fully verified; which are arable producers: Of the 233 farm businesses that submitted a claim for 2012 Single Farm Payment, 81 indicated they are involved in arable production.</p>	Herd size (cattle)	Number of farm businesses	Up to 20	20	21 - 100	27	101- 300	23	Greater than 300	11			
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AQW 16178/11- 15	Mr Phil Flanagan ( <i>SF - Fermanagh and South Tyrene</i> )	<p>To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, given the Countryside Management Scheme is claimed using the same form as the Single Farm Payment, was paid in conjunction with the Single Farm Paid in 2009 and 2010 and is still to be paid for 2011, meaning a delay of 10 months compared to previous years, can she clarify that it will be subject to a delayed payment for the remaining years of the scheme.</p> <p>Participants in the NI Countryside Management Scheme (NICMS) must claim their payment annually on the Single</p>	26/10/2012	Answered	Countryside management scheme; Payments										

		<p>Application Form (SAF). Whilst the SAF is also used to claim Single Farm Payment, DARD does not make payments for NICMS in conjunction with Single Farm Payment. My Department cannot process NICMS payments until inspections are completed, the claims are validated and we are sure that payment can be correctly verified.</p> <p>In line with these requirements my Department started making payments for 2011 NICMS claims in September 2012. One of the main reasons which caused a delay between claims being submitted and payments commencing is that additional inspections have been needed. This is because my Department discovered that a high number of claims had over-declarations, especially for Field Boundary Restoration where work was either not done or not done to the correct standard.</p> <p>I plan to start inspections for 2012 claims in early 2013, but as NICMS is claimed annually, it will be the outcome of subsequent years' inspections that will determine the timing of future payments. However my Department aims to make payments as quickly as possible within the regulatory framework of the Scheme each year.</p>			
AQW	Mr David	To ask the Minister of	24/10/2012	Answered	Farmers;

16086/11-15	McIlveen ( <i>DUP - North Antrim</i> )	<p>Agriculture and Rural Development what plans there are to ensure that the additional ?15 million, made available by reducing the amount of modulation, will be directed to farmers who are most in need.</p> <p>The 2013 Single Farm Payment (SFP) will not be subject to voluntary modulation deductions. The additional €19 million (?15million at current exchange rates) will be made available to all those SFP applicants that receive a payment from December 2013 onwards. The amount received by individual farmers under the Single Farm Payment Scheme is determined by the value of entitlements held and by the amount of eligible land used to claim those entitlements. The allocation of entitlements with a few minor exceptions took place back in 2005 when the SFP scheme commenced and the current allocations will not change prior to a new CAP Reform agreement, except where entitlements are traded between farm businesses.</p>			Finance; EU grants and loans; Payments
AQW 15448/11-15	Mr Phil Flanagan ( <i>SF - Fermanagh and South Tyrone</i> )	<p>To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the percentage of (i) land; and (ii) landowners, who were eligible to establish entitlements for Single Farm Payments in 2005, that did so; and for her assessment of this figure.</p> <p>In 2005, approximately</p>	11/10/2012	Answered	EU grants and loans; Farmers; Subsidies; Payments

		<p>1,010,000ha of agricultural land was used to establish Single Farm Payment entitlements. This represents around 97% of all agricultural land. My Department does not hold information on the legal ownership of land.</p>			
AQW 15394/11- 15	Mr Paul Frew (DUP - North Antrim)	<p>To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) when farmers will receive the additional ?15 million, made available by reducing the amount of modulation money; and (ii) to what scheme/programme the ?15 million was allocated before this decision was taken. <b>[Priority Written]</b></p> <p>The additional €19m (roughly ?15m at current exchange rates) that I have made available to farmers as a result of my decision not to apply voluntary modulation in 2013 relates to the 2013 Single Farm Payment scheme year. These payments are due to commence in December 2013.</p> <p>The €19m is part of the overall budget available for Single Farm Payment in 2013. Before this decision was taken it was not allocated to any scheme or programme within either the current or next Rural Development Programme. The funds available through the application of voluntary modulation in 2013 would only have been available to the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme for which the</p>	10/10/2012	Answered	Farmers; Finance; Payments

		budget is not yet known.			
AQW 14914/11- 15	Mr Alex Easton ( <i>DUP - North Down</i> )	<p>To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department intends to take to increase the income of farmers.</p> <p>My Department will continue to do what it can to support producers and is involved in a range of initiatives to help farmers produce and market high quality produce and to maximise their income. Under the competitiveness measures of the Rural Development Programme, my Department provides funding of ?45m for a number of measures aimed at supporting restructuring, development and innovation in farming. Measures include the Focus Farm Programme, Benchmarking, Farm Family Options, Farm Modernisation and the Supply Chain Development Programme – all of which are designed to inform farmers and support them in the business decisions they make to maximise incomes. In the area of animal health, I am pleased with the progress being made that will help to reduce costs for producers and increase trading opportunities. Our active work on tackling animal health issues, in partnership with the industry, is an example of where we can start to make a real impact on the</p>	01/10/2012	Answered	Income; Farmers; EU grants and loans



		<p>profitability and competitiveness of our farms – crucial in these difficult economic times. Farmers can also benefit from the ongoing programme of research undertaken by the Agri Food Biosciences Institute and obtain advice on farm management and planning through CAFRE.</p> <p>In addition to the actions that my Department is already taking I also recently announced a new measure to support the farming sector.</p> <p>I have decided not to apply a further year of voluntary modulation for the 2013 Single Farm Payment year. This will have the effect of adding an additional €19m - about ?15m at today's exchange rate - to the total funding available for the 2013 Single Farm Payment. This is money directly into farming pockets through next year's SFP. This will provide some much needed additional income for farmers in their 2013 SFP payments and will help stimulate the rural communities in which farmers live and spend their money.</p> <p>Unfortunately, a lot of the issues affecting farming incomes, such as pricing and global markets, are beyond our control. My Department will however continue to offer advice and assistance to the sector in these difficult times to ensure they are operating</p>			
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		in the most efficient and cost-effective way they can.			
AQW 14484/11- 15	Mr Alex Easton ( <i>DUP - North Down</i> )	<p>To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development what action her Department is taking to encourage farmers to grow and maintain hedgerows.</p> <p>My Department recognises the importance of well-managed hedges in our landscape, which provide food and shelter for wildlife and act as a barrier to livestock.</p> <p>All farmers who receive direct payments, such as Single Farm Payment, contribute to maintaining hedgerows by meeting Cross-Compliance standards and keeping their land in good agricultural and environmental condition which includes requirements for cutting, retention and maintenance of hedges.</p> <p>Agri-environment participants go beyond the minimum cross-compliance standards by managing hedges for wildlife and planting hedges by carrying out field boundary restoration.</p> <p>To manage hedges for wildlife Agri-environment Scheme participants are encouraged to maintain a variety of hedge heights, widths and shapes to provide an invaluable habitat for wildlife, cut a hedge no more than once in two years, and leave a 1m uncultivated strip as a</p>	19/09/2012	Answered	Hedges and ditches; Farmers

		<p>buffer from farming operations from the edge of the field boundary. Scheme participants are encouraged to plant new hedges through payments in return for field boundary restoration. Restored hedges are required to have a mix of native hedge and tree plant species and must be protected from grazing animals and weeds. All hedge restoration and planting must follow the exact line of an original boundary. Agri-environment scheme participants restore over 500 km of hedgerows annually.</p>			
AQW 14157/11- 15	Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson (UUP - <i>Upper Bann</i> )	<p>To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, for each of the last three years, to detail the number of Single Farm Payment applicants who received late payments after 30 June deadline; (i) how many applicants were paid interest; and (iii) what was the total amount of interest paid.</p> <p>The number of Single Farm Payment claims not finalised after the 30 June deadline for each of the last three scheme years are: 2009:451 2010:416 2011:1,261</p> <p>There are a variety of reasons in any year for claims not being completed by 30 June, and in many instances these are beyond the control of my Department, for example, probate not completed, disputes between</p>	12/09/2012	Answered	EU grants and loans; Farmers; Subsidies; Payments; Interest payments; Administrative delays

		<p>landowners and tenants about the availability of land to one of the parties, the same field claimed by more than one applicant and bank account details not provided to enable payment to be credited to a bank account.</p> <p>While the EU rules governing the SFP require us to make payments in full by 30 June each year, there is no obligation within these rules to pay interest. However payments made after 30 June do provide a principled basis on which to pay interest where the delay in payment has been solely caused by my Department. Because of the general delay experienced in finalising inspection cases for the 2011 scheme year I have made a commitment to pay interest in those claims paid after 1 July 2012 where the delay was solely caused solely by my Department and the interest is a minimum of ?50.</p> <p>Interest payments were not deployed for the 2009 and 2010 scheme years.</p> <p>For the 2011 scheme year, the payment of interest that exceeds the ?50 minimum cap value will begin from late September 2012. It is anticipated that figures in respect of the amount paid to farmers will be available in November 2012.</p>			
AQW 14156/11- 15	Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson (UUP - <i>Upper Bann</i> )	To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development how many Single Farm Payments made after the 30	12/09/2012	Answered	EU grants and loans; Farmers; Subsidies;

		<p>June deadline (i) were assessed for interest payments; and (ii) were not paid with interest because of the ?50 minimum cap.</p> <p>I have arranged for the review of approximately 600 inspection cases that were paid 2011 Single Farm Payments after 30 June 2012 in order to identify those cases where the delay in payment was caused solely by my Department and then to calculate the amount of interest accruing. The payment of interest will begin from late September 2012.</p> <p>Figures in respect of the number of interest payments made and the number of cases in which interest is not payable will be available in November 2012.</p>			<p>Payments; Interest payments; Administrative delays</p>
<p>AQW 14015/11- 15</p>	<p>Mr Jim Allister (TUV - North Antrim)</p>	<p>To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the community background of staff employed in the Single Farm Payment Section at Orchard House, Londonderry. [<b>Priority Written</b>]</p> <p>The Department does not retain information on community background of its staff. Such information is collected by the NI Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) and is used by the NI Civil Service for monitoring purposes as required under the Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998. The examination of</p>	<p>10/09/2012</p>	<p>Answered</p>	<p>Personnel; Religion; EU grants and loans; Payments; Farmers; Foyle</p>

		individual offices by community background is not carried out.			
AQW 13894/11- 15	Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson (UUP - Upper Bann)	To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail the arrangements for the payment of interest on late Single Farm Payments as provided for within EU legislation,  In my Press Release of 3 July 2012, I made a commitment to pay interest to farmers who received their 2011 Single Farm Payment (SFP) after 1 July 2012 and where the delay was caused solely by my Department. My officials are currently assessing a number of cases and payments of interest for any that exceed the ?50 de minimis value will begin from late September 2012.	05/09/2012	Answered	EU grants and loans; Farmers; Subsidies; Payments; Administrative delays; Interest payments
AQW 13890/11- 15	Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson (UUP - Upper Bann)	To ask the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development to detail (i) whether farmers who have received late single farm payments are entitled to interest on their payments; and (ii) the total interest paid to applicants in each of the last three years.  In my Press Release of 3 July 2012, I made a commitment to pay interest to farmers who received their 2011 Single Farm Payment (SFP) after 1 July 2012 and where the delay was caused solely by my Department. While the EU rules governing SFP require us to make payments in full by 30 June each year, there	05/09/2012	Answered	EU grants and loans; Farmers; Subsidies; Payments; Administrative delays; Interest payments

		<p>is no obligation within these rules to pay interest. However, as payments made after the 30 June are in breach of our statutory duty, we have a principled basis to on which to pay interest.</p> <p>Interest payments are calculated on a daily basis at the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) +1% and are subject to a minimum interest payment level of ?50 per producer. The total interest paid in the last 3 financial years is as follows:</p> <p>2009/2010 - ?3,701.91 (covering SFP scheme years 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008)</p> <p>2010/2011 - ?561.15 (covering SFP scheme years 2007,2008)</p> <p>2011/2012 - ?Nil</p> <p>No interest has yet been paid for the 2011 scheme year. The focus has been on processing the remaining 2011 cases to avoid any further delays in their payment.</p>			
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