

KAM/AK

Wednesday 6th May 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for getting in touch with us to hear our views on the *COM/2025/780 Proposal for a regulation amending Regulation (EU) 2018/848 as regards certain production, labelling and certification rules and certain rules on trade with third countries* and I appreciate your patience in awaiting a response.

Please see the views below from the UFU Poultry and Animal Health and Welfare Committees.

The proposed shorter conversion period for quail meat production:

- The Poultry committee believes that it would be difficult for the UFU to have a say on this, as we have very small numbers of quail meat producers in NI. There are no quail producers on the UFU committee.
- Most quail in NI are grown for egg production, so there would be a limited effect for the proposed changes.
- The UFU suggests that efforts should be focused on other proposals which would have a wider effect on NI agriculture.

Veterinary Medicine Withdrawal:

- No comment to make.

Loosening of rules around unfeathered birds requiring daytime open-air access:

- The UFU Poultry Committee consider that birds must be kept inside until they are physiologically ready to be outside. This is the current practice in Northern Ireland, where birds are reared in indoor units until around 18 weeks of age. This is in line with current EU legislation, which requires that poultry have access to an open-air area for at least one-third of their life.
- Indoor pullet rearing ensures high welfare, reduces disease risks and also the risks of predation.
- Northern Ireland does not have the climate to allow birds to have open-air access before 18 weeks of age, as this would lead to issues around illness, poor growth and future production.
- We therefore support the Commission's proposal, so long as national interpretation agrees that birds are not physiologically ready to have outdoor access until 18 weeks of age.

Total usable surface area for fattening poultry:

- The size which is being proposed (no larger than 1600m²) does not generally affect NI poultry farmers, as buildings in NI are relatively small in comparison to some EU countries.
- There would be a concern that limiting the sizes of buildings does not bring any additional benefit to animal welfare or the environment, as stocking densities and other set production factors would remain the same or be adapted for the size of the building.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our views on these matters. If you have any questions or would like any more details, please feel free to get in touch.

Thank you,



Parliamentary Officer



██████████
Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk
Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny
Committee (DSC)

Ref: DSC 41/26

26 February 2026

██████████
Parliamentary Officer
Ulster Farmers' Union

Issued via email to: ██████████; info@ufuhq.com

Dear Alexander,

[COM/2025/780 Proposal for a regulation amending Regulation \(EU\) 2018/848 as regards certain production, labelling and certification rules and certain rules on trade with third countries](#)

At its meeting on 26 February 2026, the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee (DSC) considered the above proposed EU act.

The Committee agreed to seek the views of the Ulster Farmers' Union (UFU) in relation to the proposed EU act, including:

- The proposed shorter conversion period for quail meat production;
- Changes to veterinary medicine withdrawal periods;
- Loosening of rules around unfeathered birds requiring daytime open-air access; and
- Adjustments to total usable surface area of fattening poultry.

The Committee is particularly interested in the views of the UFU's members within the poultry sector.

I would be grateful for a response by 27 March 2026 if possible.

Yours sincerely,

██████████

██████████ **Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk**
Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee

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