Council Regulation (EU) 2026/1739, as regards strengthening the position of farmers in the food supply chain: Follow up to Committee Appearance on 06/08/2026 – Questions and Answers

Number of producers affected

DAERA does not hold comprehensive data on the number of Northern Ireland businesses producing vegan or vegetarian meat alternatives, meat-flavoured snack products, cell-cultured or other products that may potentially fall within scope of the new meat-related term restrictions. This is because many of these products are not agricultural products. Furthermore, they are not recorded under a specific commodity code or regulatory data set held by DAERA.

We understand there are currently no cell-cultured products approved for sale on the UK market.

DAERA has already engaged with the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland, Invest NI, Defra and Cafre regarding information they may hold on the number of businesses potentially affected by the new restrictions on meat-related terms. There are limitations to the data currently held. Ultimately, the number of businesses affected will depend on the final interpretation of the scope of the Regulation, including whether products such as meat-flavoured snacks are within scope. The UK Government is seeking further information from the Commission on this point and DAERA will be in a better position to assess the potential number of local businesses affected and the likely scale of impact, once that clarification is available.

DAERA is engaging with local stakeholders in the farming and food sectors to establish their feedback on the Regulation.

Impact of equitable, fair and short supply chain optional reserved terms

In relation to the likely impact of the provisions on the optional terms “fair”, “equitable” and “short supply chain”. At this stage, DAERA does not hold evidence to suggest that these provisions would have a significant impact specific to the everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist, primarily because their use is optional. Furthermore, the provisions will not apply immediately, and the Commission may bring forward further implementing or delegated acts to specify additional conditions for use of the terms. DAERA will consider any such future acts when they become available. As with all food law, should domestic legislation be required to implement the implementing and delegated acts, DAERA will consult with stakeholders in NI before bringing this forward.

EU/UK SPS Agreement

It is expected that key CMO (Common Organisation of Agricultural Markets) marketing standards, with the possible exception of wine, may fall within scope of a future UK-EU SPS Agreement. However, the final scope, timing and legal effect of any Agreement remain subject to ongoing negotiations and have not yet been confirmed.

Assuming the relevant provisions of this Regulation fall within the scope of an SPS Agreement, and that Agreement provides for alignment between GB and EU marketing standards by the time these provisions apply, this would be expected to reduce the likelihood of regulatory divergence between GB, NI and the EU, including Ireland. This could in turn help to limit potential frictions for businesses operating across UK and EU markets.

Pending, conclusion of an SPS Agreement, NI goods continue to have unfettered access to GB markets and GB goods that do not currently comply with the new rules could continue to move to NI under the existing NIRMS.

Next Steps

The Department recognises that the Committee is seeking further detail on practical impacts. However, the available evidence remains limited, particularly in relation to the number of businesses affected and the extent to which relevant products currently use meat-related terms or the optional terms covered by the Regulation.

DAERA will continue to engage with key NI stakeholders, including representatives from the farming unions, meat, and food and drink sectors, to communicate the new requirements and seek feedback on potential impacts. DAERA also continues to engage with relevant government counterparts.

Similarly, the FSA in Northern Ireland is engaging with district councils to better understand the potential local impacts of the Regulation for food businesses in their area.

More generally, DAERA recognises the importance of providing robust and comprehensive information to the Committee, and the Department always strives to do so when this is available. To this end, the Department is currently considering how it can more pro-actively engage with stakeholders who may have an interest in, or whom may be affected by proposed EU Regulations that may apply in Northern Ireland under the Windsor Framework.

From: +Windsor Framework Committee Public Email <WindsorFramework.Committee@niassembly.gov.uk>
Sent: 06 August 2026 16:22
To: [redacted]
Subject: TEO DSC notification - Reg (EU) 2026/1739

Good afternoon,

Regulation (EU) 2026/1739 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 8 July 2026 amending Regulations (EU) No 1308/2013, (EU) 2021/2115 and (EU) 2021/2116 as regards the strengthening of the position of farmers in the food supply chain

At its meeting on 6 August 2026, the DSC considered the above published replacement EU act and agreed to hold an inquiry.

The Department is therefore required to formally brief the Committee at its next meeting on Thursday 13 August 2026.

Officials are asked to provide further information on any questions which were not fully addressed in today's evidence session.

Please provide details of the officials who will be attending to give oral evidence, using the attached template.

Kind regards,