# DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS

**SCRAPIE MONITORED FLOCKS REGISTERS**

**Scrapie Registers Rules**

## Observation of Rules

1. All Registers Rules must be observed unless a written exemption from a particular rule has been obtained from the Department.

## Liability

2. The Department shall not be liable for expense, loss or damage arising out of any requirement under the Registers.

## Interpretation

3. In the following rules “animal” means sheep or goat.

### Department’s Decisions Final

4. The decision of the Department shall be final on:

1. Acceptance of premises, flocks and individual animals onto the Registers and retention on or removal of a flock from the Registers
2. Whether an animal is deemed to be a suspect for purposes of the Registers
3. The issue or withdrawal of all forms under the Registers
4. Interpretation of the Protocol/Rules
5. The type/breed of animals to be included in a registered flock.

### Application

5. Applications for entry onto the Registers must be submitted to the Department in writing on the prescribed form (SC(NI)1). Applicants less than 16 years of age must have the application form countersigned by their parent or guardian.

6. It is a requirement of the Registers that flocks must have had no evidence of Scrapie disclosed within the last 3 years to be registered as **Controlled Risk Status** flock\* or in the case of **Negligible Risk Status** flocks\*\* must have had no evidence of Scrapie disclosed within the last 7 years and they can demonstrate scrapie free status for a period of 7 years for all sheep in their flock. Therefore flocks which have been in existence for less than 3 years **will not** be eligible to join either Register highlighted above.

**\*This means that sheep must have been continually present on the premises for at least the previous 3 years.**

**\*\* This means that sheep must have been continually present on the premises for at least the previous 7 years.**

7. As a result of the introduction of the new all-numeric flock numbering system in Northern Ireland from 1st January 2005, it is not permissible for a flockowner to use a separate flock number for the Scrapie Monitored part of their flock.

**Flock Lists**

8. To facilitate the future export certification of sheep originating from a Scrapie Monitored Flock, applicants must provide the Department with details of **all** weaned sheep, born, bought and purchased sheep to be included in the Monitored flock. If this information is not provided at the time of application, the Department will be unable to accept the flock onto the SMF scheme.

9. Whether a flockowner intends to export SMF sheep or not, the completed Flock Record Form (SC(NI)99a) must be completed and returned along with the SMF application form. The continuation sheet (SC(NI)99b) may be used if necessary. (Further continuation sheets may be obtained by photocopying the blank sheet provided in the application pack, or by contacting Export and Animal Diseases on **(028) 7744 2298**).

10. **Flockowners are required to sign the declaration on the first sheet to confirm that the sheep details provided on the completed list are in respect of all SMF sheep in possession.**

### Identification

11. All animals in the flock must be individually identified in accordance with The Sheep and Goats (Records, Identification and Movement) Order (Northern Ireland) 2009 i.e. they have an EID device (tag or bolus), which has an identification code in the format required by the Order. In accordance with the SMFS rules lambs must be identified at 7 days old however a management tag is acceptable until full EID is required by the Order i.e. at 9 months old or when the animal leaves the holding, whichever is sooner.

## Flock Inspection

12. At least once every 12 months a Private Veterinary Practitioner (PVP) must carry out a flock inspection. This will involve a clinical inspection of all animals for signs of Scrapie. A report of the inspection will be forwarded to the Department by the PVP.

## Fallen Stock Collection by Approved Rendering Plant\*

13. The death on farm of an animal over 18 months of age should be notified to an approved TSE sampling site as soon as is reasonably possible so that they can arrange for collection of the carcase for compulsory Scrapie testing.

The approved TSE sampling sites and contact numbers are:

* Foyle Proteins - 028 7186 1120
* Linergy - 028 8775 0050

14. When the TSE sampling site is contacted, the following details must be given:

* + 1. Name and address of the flock owner

(b) Scrapie Monitored Flocks Register membership number

* 1. Flock number
  2. Approximate year of birth of the dead animal
  3. Approximate time of death
  4. Any signs of illness noticed before the animal died

15. The carcase must also be tagged with the flock number (even if it has already been tagged in a previous flock). This is essential so that it can be recorded for future reference. The carcase should then be brought to a hard-standing area of the premises to facilitate collection.

*\*(It should be noted that this arrangement applies only to fallen animals over 18 months of age. For disposal of animals under 18 months you may wish to contact the National Fallen Stock Scheme on 0845 054 8888).*

## Movement

16. Animals which meet the requirements for intra-community trade, i.e. animals from other Member States including the ROI, as set out in [Commission Regulation (EU) No 630/2013](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:179:0084:0084:EN:PDF) and Annex VIII TSE Regulation (EC) 999/2001- <http://ec.europa.eu/food/fs/afs/marktlab/marktlab14_en.pdf>

Only movement of the following animals will be permitted:

(a) **Controlled Risk Status -** there must be no evidence of classical scrapie within a flock for the 3 years prior to application. This reflects the status quo of the existing SMFS; current members of the SMFS should therefore be in a position to qualify for Controlled Risk Status. For new applications to the SMFS, flocks which have been in existence for less than 3 years will not be eligible to join the Controlled Risk Register.

(b) **Negligible Risk Status -** there must be no evidence of classical scrapie within a flock for the 7 years prior to application. Flock owners that have been members of the SMFS for 4 years or more *may* be in a position to qualify for Negligible Risk Status. However, they must be able to demonstrate that any animals brought into the flock during that period have also originated from holdings that can demonstrate Negligible Risk Status.

If any animals are added to a Monitored flock which do not meet either (a) or (b) above, that flock will immediately lose its Scrapie Monitored status. This applies to sheep moving from flocks within Northern Ireland and those being imported e.g. from Great Britain. The only exceptions to this rule are animals with the ARR/ARR genotype (detailed in paragraphs 23-28).

Flock owners **must request a copy of the Scrapie Monitored Scheme certificate issued to the exporting flock keeper in Great Britain.**

17. Flock owners are strongly advised to seek the advice of their local Divisional Veterinary Officer before acquiring animals, as flock status will be lost immediately if an animal is subsequently found to be affected by Scrapie.

**Markets**

18. Animals returning from a market where there have been facilities approved by the Department for Scrapie registered animals (i.e.: no close contact with animals from non-registered flocks) may rejoin the flock without loss of Scrapie Monitored status.

19. In instances where there has been no segregation from animals from non-registered flocks, no animals are permitted to rejoin the registered flock as this will result in immediate loss of flock status.

20. If a Scrapie monitored animal is taken to a non-monitored sale or market, it will immediately lose its status. If the animal is not sold, and re-joins the registered flock, then the whole flock will also lose its Scrapie Monitored status.

## Shows/Sales

21. Free movement of Scrapie monitored sheep is permitted at shows and sales only in the following circumstances:

* The show/sale accepts animals only from Scrapie monitored premises; or
* The show/sale is segregated; or
* The show/sale is held between 1st May until 31st October (Segregation during this period is not necessary); or
* Male sheep or goats only are present at the show/sale (i.e. no female animals are present).

The movement of Scrapie Monitored sheep from Northern Ireland to show/sales in GB is permitted where the respective DAERA and DEFRA mid-year ‘low-risk’ windows overlap. During this overlapping period, the SMF status in NI will not be compromised where Scrapie Monitored sheep are returned to their flock of origin. (This is on the understanding that all other DAERA/DEFRA trade conditions have been complied with).

The ‘low-risk’ window period in NI is 1st May to 31st October – segregation during this period is not required.

The ‘low-risk’ window period in GB is 1st May to 31st August - segregation during this period is not required.

Therefore, the above-mentioned overlapping window period where SMFS status would not be compromised is 1st May – 31st August annually.

### ARR/ARR Animals and the Scrapie Monitored Flocks Registers

22. Sheep which have the ARR/ARR prion protein genotype do not have to meet the Scrapie monitoring requirement for intra-community trade in breeding sheep. Sheep with this genotype may be certified for intra-community trade **without** any Scrapie monitoring requirement from the country of origin and regardless of the Scrapie Monitored status of the holding(s) of origin.

23. **The above relaxation applies only to animals that have the ARR/ARR prion protein genotype.** All other genotypes including animals with only one ARR allele (heterozygous ARR animals) must continue to meet the normal scheme requirements.

24. There is no requirement for animals with the ARR/ARR genotype to be registered under the Scrapie Monitored Flocks Scheme. However, if a SMFS holding has both ARR/ARR and non-ARR/ARR animals, the non-ARR/ARR animals will have to continue to meet the scrapie monitoring requirements.

25. For the ARR/ARR genotype to be recognised the testing must have been undertaken either:

1. by a Private Veterinary Practitioner as part of the Northern Ireland Scrapie Plan (NISP) or the National Scrapie Plan (NSP) in Great Britain.

**OR**

1. by a Private Veterinary Practitioner and tested at either the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) or SAC.

**OR**

1. by a Private Veterinary Practitioner and tested at any officially approved EU laboratory with ISO17025 accreditation.

You must provide a certificate, produced under any of the above schemes, to confirm the ARR/ARR genotype.  **Please note,** any certificates produced using option **(c) must** state that a Veterinarian took the blood sample and include the name and address of the Veterinarian.

If the animal was imported from another Member State a copy of the certified Intra Trade Animal Heath Certificate (ITAHC) which accompanied the animal will suffice.

26. If one of the above points is not fulfilled, the sheep cannot be certified for export until genotyping has been carried out in line with one of the processes detailed in paragraph 25(a-c). It is the responsibility of the flockowner to arrange this genotyping. The AVI must then check the genotype certificate/result sheet to ensure the animals have the ARR/ARR genotype, BEFORE certifying the sheep for export.

27. If a flock owner wishes to export ARR/ARR breeding sheep, or trade them with other SMFS members within the UK, under the revised arrangements it will be the responsibility of the flock owner to provide satisfactory evidence of the ARR/ARR genotype of the sheep as produced by one of these laboratories. When purchasing ARR/ARR breeding sheep, the flockowner should also ensure that the vendor provides him with evidence of the animals’ genotype.

**Goats**

28. The ARR PrP allele does not occur in goats. Goat herds must therefore continue to meet all requirements of the register in respect of all their animals in order to remain eligible for export.

## Record Inspection

29. At least once every 12 months an officer of the Department will carry out an inspection of flock records to ensure that the records required at paragraph 41(II) are being kept and that all animals are accounted for.

## Registration

30. Provided the rules of the nominated Register and any special conditions have been observed a flock will be entered on the nominated Register of Scrapie Flocks and subject to the flockowners agreement it will also be available on the DAERA website.

**Renewal Requirements**

31. To ensure membership renewal of the Scrapie Monitored Flocks scheme, the following requirements must be met every year, **before** the membership expiry date:

1. **An annual flock inspection by your Private Veterinary Practitioner. A completed Flock Inspection form (SC (NI) 6) must be submitted for this visit.**

**(b**) **A completed and signed renewal of membership form must be submitted.**

32. A reminder letter will be issued 11 months into the monitored period (one month before membership is due for renewal). On receiving this letter, flockowners must endeavour to fulfil all necessary requirements before the renewal date.

33. If the renewal date is reached and any requirements are still outstanding, membership of the nominated Register will be suspended. This means you will not receive a new Scrapie Monitored Flock certificate, your monitored flock status will be removed from the Department’s records and trade with other EU Member States or at local Scrapie Monitored sales **will not** be permitted.

34. If your membership remains suspended for more than twelve months you will be withdrawn from the Scheme. Should you subsequently wish to reactivate your membership at any time following the twelve month period of suspension you will be required to reapply as a new member with the associated costs to the nominated Register recorded on your application form.

#### Withdrawal from Registers or Loss of Status

35. An owner may withdraw his flock from their nominated Register at any time. If scrapie is confirmed in the flock, the flock will immediately lose its status. In the case of a Controlled Risk Status flock, if scrapie is confirmed in an animal which has left the flock within the last 3 years the flock of origin, the current flock and any flock the animal has been in, in the interim, will lose their status if they are on a nominated Register. In the case of a Negligible Risk Status flock, if scrapie is confirmed in an animal which has left the flock within the last 7 years the flock of origin, the current flock and any flock the animal has been in, in the interim, will lose their status if they are on the NRS Register. (See paragraph 38 for penalties)

## Re-Admission following Withdrawal or Loss of Status

36. Re-admission to the nominated Register will be at the discretion of the Department. All aspects of the health and management of the flock will have to be of a standard acceptable to the Department.

## Change of Ownership

37. Where ownership of a scrapie registered flock changes, the flock may be re-registered in the new owner’s name provided:

(a) The new owner undertakes to comply with the rules of their nominated Register and any special conditions

(b) The flock concerned remains a separate entity on the same approved premises

(c) The proposed new flock is made up of the same animals as the original flock.

## Penalties

38. Any breach of the Rules of the nominated Register, failure to comply with all or part of the renewal requirements, or non-compliance with a special condition applied to a flock may lead to suspension or removal of the flock from the nominated Register.

## Representations

39. Where the Department proposes to suspend or remove a flock from the nominated Register, the owner will be so informed in writing and given an opportunity to make representations to the Department within 14 days.

## Suspect Cases

40. All animals showing evidence of nervous disorder or itching must be reported to the local Divisional Veterinary Office in accordance with Schedule 4 of The Transmissable Spongiform Encephalopathies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010.

41. **THE OWNER SHALL:**

I. Provide and maintain:

## Fencing

(a) boundary fences/walls/gates which, to the satisfaction of the Department, are calculated to keep the flock within approved premises and to prevent contact with other animals;

##### Segregation Facilities

(b) such premises/facilities as the Department deems necessary for segregating animals, having regard to the type of flock and the management system.

**Nature of Flock Records**

1. Maintain a flock record in the form required by the Department giving the following details:

(a) A full flock list of individual animals including identification, breed and sex;

(b) Details of dam and sire of all animals born;

(c) A record of all movements on and off the premises identified by individual markings;

(d) A record of all deaths of animals;

(e) A record of all live births (within 7 days);

(f) Agistments, ie pasturing on land not owned by the flockowner;

(g) Hiring of breeding males.

## Notification of Contact with non-Register Animals

1. Take all possible precautions to keep the flock within the approved premises and ensure that it does not come into contact with animals from a lower Status Flock. The flock owner shall immediately notify the Department of any straying or other accidental contact with animals from a lower Status Flock. If your flock is registered as Negligible Risk Status you must ensure that any animals moved onto your premises come from flocks that are also of the same status. If you bought in animals from a Controlled Risk Status flock then your flock status will be downgraded to a Controlled Risk Status flock.

**Management System**

IV. Notify the Department before any substantial change to the flock management system on the approved premises is undertaken, e.g. change of use of buildings, introduction of winter housing, etc.

###### Precautions Against Contamination

V. Comply with any written notification from the Department requiring:

(a) Isolation of any animal or any contaminated material or article;

(b) Cleansing and disinfection of any specified part of the premises;

(c) Prevention of access by animals to specified land and buildings;

(d) Any other reasonable action necessary to safeguard the flock or limit the spread of infection.

## Semen/Ova

VI. Ensure that no sheep semen, ova or fertilised embryos are brought onto the premises which are from non-Scrapie Monitored animals or non ARR/ARR animals. For controls on Semen/Embryos see Annex 1.

## Assistance

VII. Provide all necessary facilities and assistance to enable an officer or authorised agent of the Department to inspect animals, premises and records and furnish such information as may reasonably be required for the purposes of the nominated Register.

## Marking of Animals

VIII. Permit the Department to paint, stamp, tag, clip or otherwise mark any animal in the flock and shall not permit the removal, obliteration or duplication of such a mark.

## Suspicion of Infection

IX. Notify the Department of any signs of nervous disorder or itching among animals in a Registered flock on approved premises.

**Preservation of Records**

X. Retain the records as required in paragraph 41(II) for not less than 10 years from the time the entry was made or after the animal was disposed of and make these available to an officer of the Department at any reasonable time as required. These records are in addition to any records required to be kept under existing statutory legislation.

**Annex 1**

To note that Regulation No 630/2013 amending 4.2 of Annex VIII of 999/2001 relates to Intra-Union trade in semen and embryos:

4.2. semen and embryos of ovine and caprine animals shall:

(a) be collected from animals which have been kept continuously since birth on a holding or holdings with a negligible risk or a controlled risk of classical scrapie; or

(b) be collected from animals which have been kept continuously for the last three years before the collection on a holding or holdings which have complied with all the requirements laid down in Part 1, point 1.3. (a) to (f) for three years; or

(c) be collected from animals which have been kept continuously since birth in a country or zone with a negligible risk of classical scrapie; or

(d) in the case of ovine semen, be collected from male animals of the ARR/ARR prion protein genotype; or

(e) in the case of ovine embryos, be of the ARR/ARR prion protein genotype.’