
EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations.)

These Regulations, which come into force on 17th December 1999, provide for the administration of the Hill Livestock Compensatory Allowances Scheme in Northern Ireland in 2000. They re-enact, with modifications, the Hill Livestock (Compensatory Allowances) (Northern Ireland) 1996, as amended. In addition to minor and drafting amendments, they introduce a requirement that farmers claiming compensatory allowances must apply usual good farming practices on their land (regulation 6).

These Regulations comply with Council Regulation (EC) No. 1257/1999 on support for rural development from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, Commission Regulation (EC) No. 1750/1999 laying down detailed rules for the application of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1257/1999 and Commission Regulation (EC) No. 2603/1999 laying down rules for the transition to the rural development support provided for by Council Regulation (EC) No. 1257/1999.

Compensatory allowances are paid for breeding cows and ewes on farms in the less-favoured farming areas in Northern Ireland, at the same rates as in 1999 (regulations 3 and 4(1) and (2), and Schedule, Parts I and II). There are limits on the number of animals for which allowances may be paid (regulations 7 and 8) and on the total amount a claimant may receive per hectare of his forage area (regulation 4(3) and Schedule, Part III).

The Regulations impose penalties for unsuitable supplementary feeding methods (regulations 7(3) and (4) and 8(3) and (4)) and for overgrazing (regulation 10). Regulation 15 provides for withholding or recovery of compensatory allowances where there is a breach of the rules of the Scheme.

Powers of enforcement and offences and penalties relating to the Scheme are contained in the Hill Livestock (Compensatory Allowances) (Enforcement) Regulations 1999 (S.I. 1999/3315).