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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Regulations)*

These Regulations amend the Land in Care Scheme (Tir Gofal) (Wales) Regulations 1999 (“the Tir Gofal Regulations”) and the Organic Farming (Wales) Regulations 1999 (“the Organic Farming Regulations”).

The Tir Gofal Regulations contain the provisions of an agri-environment scheme implementing in part a zonal programme approved by the European Commission under Article 7 of the Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2078/92 (OJ No. L215, 30.7.92, p.85) on agricultural production methods compatible with the requirements for the protection of the environment and the maintenance of the countryside (“the Agri-environment Regulation”). The Tir Gofal Regulations provide for payments of aid to be made to any person who enters a Tir Gofal agreement with the Countryside Council for Wales.

The Organic Farming Regulations provide for the payment of aid to farmers who undertake to introduce organic farming methods and comply with certain management conditions, pursuant to Article 2(1)(a) and (d) of the Agri-environment Regulation. The Agri-environment Regulation was repealed by Article 55(1) of Council Regulation (EC) No. 1257/99 (OJ No. L160, 26.6.99 p.80), but, by virtue of Article 55(3) of the latter Regulation, the Agri-environment Regulation continues to apply to actions approved by the Commission before 1st January 2000.

These regulations amend the Tir Gofal Regulations to—

- (a) permit a Tir Gofal agreement to include any provision that may be agreed between the Countryside Council for Wales and a Tir Gofal applicant (regulation 2(2));
- (b) impose an obligation on a Tir Gofal agreement holder to maintain records (regulation 2(4)); and
- (c) make compliance with the record keeping requirement (regulation 9A of the Tir Gofal Regulations inserted by these Regulations) and the obligation to permit entry and inspection (regulation 10 of the Tir Gofal Regulations) conditions for the payment of aid (regulation 2(5)).

These Regulations amend the Organic Farming Regulations to:

- (a) remove the requirement that an application for aid be accompanied by a certificate of registration for the first organic parcel and a declaration by the applicant that the inspection authority has approved a plan relating to the whole organic unit (regulation 3(2)); and
- (b) provide that the National Assembly shall not accept any applications for aid received on or after 4 December 1999 (regulation 3(3)).