



UK collector newsletter

November 2012

New NFSCo Collector Liaison Group announced, with chair to report to main Board

A well-attended collector conference recently gave the thumbs up to the latest developments at NFSCo, including new software and a bespoke collector scheme. There will also be greater collector representation at Board level.

The NFSCo Board has agreed that a new Collector Liaison Group (CLG) is to be established, with the chair of that group joining the NFSCo Board as the collector representative.

Members of the group will be drawn from across the UK from those who have engaged positively with the company over recent years. Initially the group will consist of between five and eight individuals drawn from NFSCo collectors and renderers; will meet a minimum of twice a year, and be chaired by an elected representative who will join the main NFSCo Board.

The Chair of the CLG will have the job of reporting collector and rendering issues to the main NFSCo Board, and be in a better position to report back the details of all relevant discussions. An initial meeting to launch the plan, and to agree the details, has been set for 20th November at Ashbourne, with the view to having the CLG established, up and running immediately.

"I am pleased to announce our proposal to set-up a Collector Liaison Group, which I hope collectors and renderers will see as being a valuable development. Communication between NFSCo and collectors and renderers has always been good, but we believe that this will improve it further. We look forward to hearing

The initial meeting of the new Collector Liaison Group will be 20th November

the views of the industry and to taking the group forward."

At the same meeting the NFSCo Board confirmed the retirement of two Directors, Ian Duncan Millar, a founding Director of NFSCo and its Scottish representative, and Nigel Joice the Board's link with the Poultry Sector. Charles Bourns and Robert Forrest replace them, with Charles holding the poultry portfolio, and Robert becoming the Scottish director. "I am delighted to welcome Charles and Robert to the Board, and look forward to them making a positive contribution to the success of NFSCo and the fallen stock industry going forward," says Michael Seals, chairman of NFSCo.

Got a comment?

If you have a comment on these plans then please email or fax us so we can pass your comments directly to the Board.

The email address is:
collector@nfscO.co.uk
The fax number is
01335 324584.
www.nfscO.co.uk

ABOUT THE NEW DIRECTORS

Charles Bourns

Charles owns and runs a poultry farm, which produces 400,000 chickens per annum based in Charfield, Gloucestershire. He is a dedicated advocate of British poultry farmers and the British poultry industry and is a recognised spokesman for them at both National and International level, dealing with policy and regulation. Charles brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the board having previously held positions with the NFU Poultry Board, British Egg Industry Council and European Commission Poultry Advisory Group.

Robert Forrest

Robert is the MD of a 670 ha family farming business in East Berwickshire, and is also an independent rural consultant and agricultural valuer with diverse experience of the agricultural industry. In addition to these business interests Robert has gained invaluable experience in his involvement with many industry-related organisations, including being a consultant at FBR Ltd, a Director of the Royal Highland Agricultural Society of Scotland, and of the Scottish Agricultural Arbiters & Valuers Association Council.

Software review will bring major benefits and improve efficiency

NFSCO is undertaking a comprehensive review of the current collector software with the aim of improving the efficiency of the system and the time it takes to input data. Some of the key proposed enhancements and changes include:

1. The provision for individual access levels, allowing collectors to determine the access level for various staff – for example “input only” or “full access”;

2. The facility to bulk upload data, which will allow jobs to be uploaded to the website en-mass to eliminate duplicate keying-in of data, and to reduce the risk of human error. Collectors will be able to bulk select all jobs to be submitted, rather than have to select them individually. The bulk upload would be in addition to the standard manual input, which may still be required for collectors who don't have the facility for spreadsheets;

3. A process to streamline re-pricing for both manual and bulk upload of tariffs. This will simplify the input of tariffs where the postcode areas to be covered are being extended or contracted. Currently they have to be removed and reloaded manually;

4. The ability to see a year's worth of transactions. Currently collectors can only view the previous 60 days;

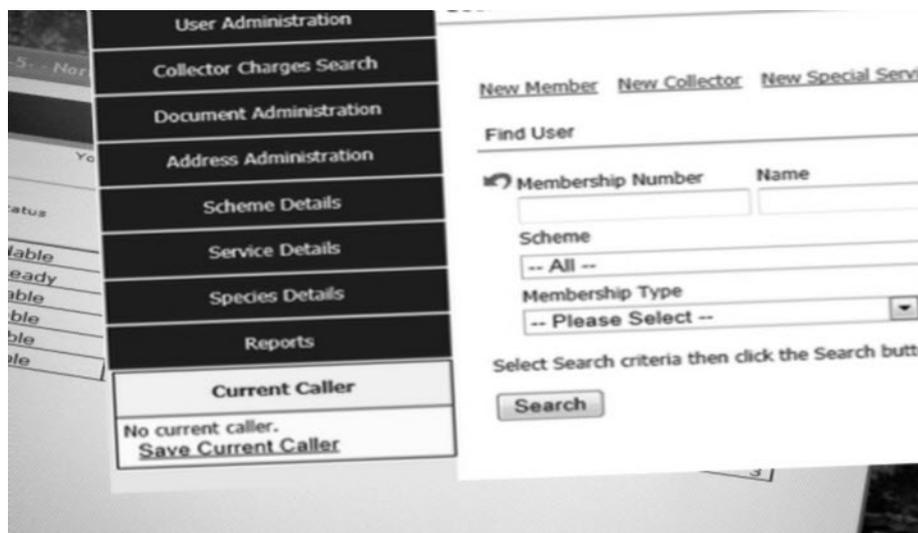
5. The facility to pick the job date from a calendar;

6. The recording of date, time and username when data is entered – to all appropriate pages;

7. The facility for collectors to correct raised jobs up to the monthly cut off point – without having to call the NFSCO office. (Currently the process goes from “submitted” to “raised” and once a job is “raised” the only way to amend it is to call the office);

8. The provision of collector statements in a format each collector can amend. This will allow collectors to then download the relevant information into their own accounts/database software;

9. The facility to allow collectors to input their reference number which



would be shown on the statement for reconciliation purposes;

10. The addition of the farmer's membership number to the job search page, which will allow collectors to search all collections for an individual farmer for a year;

11. The display of the member's telephone number on Member Collection Points – removing the need to call NFSCO administration;

12. The introduction of the option for a discount facility, and/or a re-badge of special services;

13. The provision of an additional notes facility, which would allow collectors to add a foot note against a particular service which, in turn, would be published on their tariff and distributed to members. For example:

(a) Three sheep or more £5 each

(b) Two cows or more, £45 each;

14. The additional space will be available to enter the ear tag number, with a facility to enter multiple ear tag numbers per job line;

15. The facility to record holding numbers and herd numbers;

16. The facility to check member status while mobile by following a link on a smartphone.

If you have any comments about these proposed improvements, or suggestions for more then please let the office know.

ABP Investigation

NFSCO has been alerted by Trading Standards to an ABP investigation in which it is alleged that the farmer involved has supplied a number of NFSCO collection receipt invoices which were initially accepted by Trading Standards, but where subsequent investigation showed that there had not been a collection via a NFSCO collector on the farms for several years. The implication is that the collector, or one of his drivers, could be implicated in a fraud.

NFSCO has now run a report on all issued receipt pads which have never been billed through the system. We would like to alert all collectors to the fact that we intend to investigate missing receipt pads, and where there is clear evidence of a fraud will take instant and decisive action.

In an attempt to close the loop on this practice NFSCO is also intending to agree new procedures with Trading Standard's and other inspection authorities to ensure any NFSCO receipts which are submitted are verified as live.

We know the vast majority of collectors will understand and co-operate with any new procedures as it does not help you or us if farmers are encouraged to illegally dispose of carcasses by a collector or driver who is giving them an easy mechanism to do so via the supply of receipt pads.

Let us know your views as we progress new bespoke collector scheme

NFSCo is also continuing to progress the bespoke collector scheme, which, in effect, would combine a collector's "own brand" scheme but have all the advantages that NFSCo brings. The bespoke scheme could operate in place of the current NFSCo scheme, or alongside it. The key features are:

1. It would be collector driven, but administered by NFSCo who would effectively become the back office;
2. Collectors would still have all the benefits that NFSCo currently provide, in that we administer the scheme, produce member invoices, mail them out and, most importantly, guarantee your monthly payment on 100% of the agreed collections;
3. Each collector would determine their own pricing structure, services and postcodes offered, and how often they re-price. That could be as often as every day;
4. Each collector chooses whether to apply an administration fee to their scheme members or not;
5. All NFSCo and collector's private customers can join the collector's bespoke scheme – reducing mailing costs and debt chasing;

6. There will be an option to circulate tariffs with other NFSCo schemes on either NFSCo or the collector's letterhead;

7. Only members who are registered to the bespoke scheme will have access to the collector's prices within their postcode area. Bespoke prices could be publicised on NFSCo's website, subject to secure login by the registered member. This could even feed into the collector website;

8. Member invoices can be personalised with the collector logo;

9. The collector's levy would be based on a fixed %, or a sliding scale so that the more business they do, the less NFSCo would charge;

"Private collections are becoming more expensive to manage due to increasing costs of postage and chasing outstanding money," said Ian Potter at the NFSCo collector conference. "With that in mind there appears to be a growing appetite from collectors for the immediate development of a bespoke collector scheme and we are continuing to work up that idea. If any collector has suggestions or wishes to be part of the development please get in touch."

Update on the rendering scene

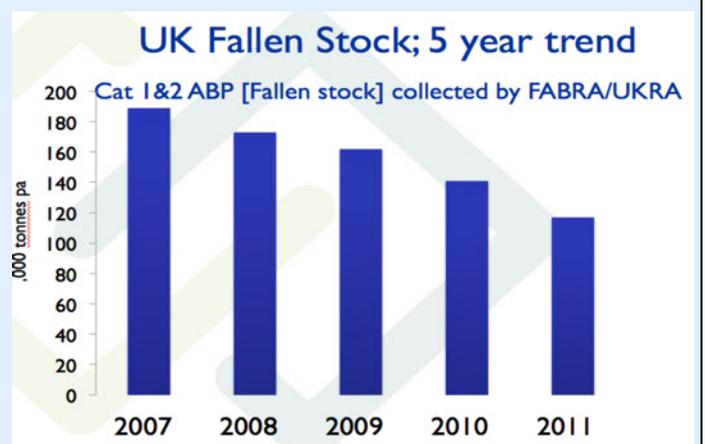
The amount of Category One and Two fallen stock material collected and processed by renderers has fallen to a five year low – at just under 120,000 tonnes compared to over 180,000 tonnes in 2007, according to Stephen Woodgate, chief executive of FABRA.

One of the main reasons for this is improved animal husbandry, he said at the recent NFSCo collector conference.

Rendering fallen stock material would always be the best option because renderers were not interested in dealing with the "sludge" residue of composting as an alternative, as the costs of disposing of it would be high. Composting had not been thought through, he added. "Rendering is considered to be biosecure in context of the animal by-product regulations and disease contingency. Are alternative processes as biosecure, or do they provide even better biosecurity? We (including the EU) have real concerns that they do not," he said.

The best way of increasing the value of deadstock was to minimise transport costs, maximise the use of protein meal and rendered fat, and minimise the

environmental impact of odour emission and water use. Chilled stores could be used to prevent decomposition, leading to higher yield and a lower environmental impact, he believed, however the evidence for any economic benefit from chilled stores has not yet been proven in the UK. "We are open to all new initiatives to add value to animal by-products," he said. "Research is essential for future developments, but must be practical and deliver value by increasing product yield and quality."



The following is a copy of a Press Release issued by Devon County Council in early October, regarding a non-NFSCo collector. One bad operator can cast a bad light on all collectors, so NFSCo is pleased the Trading Standards involved commended the vast majority of collectors for their high standards.

Devon carcass collector pleads guilty to animal by-product offences

“A South Devon based licensed slaughter man and fallen stock collector has been convicted of offences under Animal By-Products regulations following an investigation by Devon County Council.

Appearing at Exeter Magistrates Court, Andrew Goatman, 33 of North Huish, South Brent, pleaded guilty to two offences relating to TSE (Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies) Regulations 2010 and two further offences relating Animal By-Products Regulations (2011). The offences occurred in January and April 2011.

Using a former refuse collection vehicle, Mr Goatman collected livestock carcasses and by-products mainly from local farmers. The law requires animal carcasses to be disposed of without undue delay (accepted industry practice is that disposal should be within 48 hours), however the court heard how Mr Goatman often delayed delivering carcasses to the rendering plants, sometimes by over two weeks.

Devon County Council’s Trading Standards team had received a number of complaints about Mr Goatman’s business and launched an investigation into his activities in April 2011 when they were notified by a local rendering plant that he arrived in the middle of the night with a large amount of animal material that was so decomposed it was almost impossible to identify carcasses individually.

During their investigation, the Council’s Trading Standards team also discovered that Mr Goatman failed to comply with his legal duty to submit cattle carcasses for brain stem testing for BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathies or mad cow disease) within the legal time limit. This testing is vital in the control and eradication of BSE in cattle. One carcass was never submitted.

Councillor Roger Croad, Devon County Council’s Cabinet Member for Trading Standards, said:

“Animal By-Product Regulations are vital to the protection of our farmers and the associated livestock businesses,

as well as the animals themselves, and the interests of Devon’s farming community are something we take very seriously.

“When farm animals die, they need to be disposed of properly, they cannot simply be left to rot in a field or be thrown in a ditch to decompose and spread bacteria.

“It is essential for both animal and human health as well as the monitoring of certain high priority public health issues like BSE, that the collection, disposal, recording and testing of such dead animals is done properly, that is why these laws exist.

“Licensed slaughter men and stock collectors are an important part of the livestock industry, and the vast majority operate to very high standards and remain within the law, but unfortunately Mr Goatman is not one of them.

“His actions to reduce the number of deliveries he made, jumble different carcasses together and keep them for a long period of time so that fewer trips to the factory were required saved him time and money in diesel costs and gave him a commercial advantage over his competitors. His unscrupulous and careless actions disadvantaged the conscientious law-abiding operators who follow these important regulations to the letter, and put profits ahead of health which is unacceptable.

“This case sends a clear message to those who take chances with public health and the welfare of farmed animals, and jeopardise the business interests of those who operate within the law.

“Devon County Council, through its Trading Standards Service, will continue to take all necessary steps to protect residents and legitimate local businesses from such illegal business activities.”

Mr Goatman was fined £535 and ordered to pay £1500 to the County Council as a proportion of the costs.

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