

Answers to the Written Assembly Questions for answer on 14 October 2010

[R] signifies that the Member has declared an interest.

[W] signifies that the question was tabled in Welsh.

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To ask the Minister for the Economy and Transport

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): Has a tender been prepared for the construction of a Newtown bypass. (WAQ56590)

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): When will the tendering process commence for the construction of a Newtown bypass. (WAQ56591)

Answer issued on 20 October 2010

We will start the process to appoint our technical consultant later this year followed by the tendering process for the contractor in summer 2011.

To ask the Minister for Health and Social Services

Nick Bourne (Mid and West Wales): What is the Minister doing to promote screening for Chlamydia in Wales. (WAQ56588)

Answer issued on 13 October 2010

The planning and delivery of effective services to diagnose and manage sexually transmitted infections, such as chlamydia, is a matter for Local Health Boards (LHBs). I am about to issue a Sexual Health Action Plan to inform LHB service planning. A key action in the Plan is for Public Health Wales NHS Trust to develop a service specification for sexual health services, including testing for chlamydia. This will promote preventative health checks.

To ask the Minister for Rural Affairs

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): Will the Minister give an update on the development of a Welsh Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds Reared for Sporting Purposes. (WAQ56589)

Answer issued on 20 October 2010

We conducted a consultation exercise between the 22 January and 16 April 2010 which sought views on the draft Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds Reared for Sporting Purposes. The Code of Practice covers the time up to the point of release (that is when they are under the control of man and therefore under the provisions of the Animal Welfare Act 2006).

We received 35 responses to the consultation. A summary of consultation responses has been published on the Welsh Assembly website.

I have met with representatives from the Game Farmers Association, the Countryside Alliance and the British Association of Shooting and Conservation to discuss the Code.

The Code advises farmers on a number of areas including inspection, husbandry and housing. It advises that barren raised cages for breeding pheasants and small barren cages for breeding partridges should not be used. All laying systems used for the housing of birds should be designed and managed to ensure the welfare of the birds. Any system should be appropriately enriched.

The final version of the Welsh Code of Practice for the Welfare of Gamebirds Reared for Sporting Purposes was laid before the National Assembly for Wales on the 23 September, with a coming into force date of the 1 January 2011.

Mick Bates (Montgomeryshire): What action is the Minister taking to support the dairy industry, in light of recent figures released by DairyCo which revealed that dairy farmers in Wales and England received a lower price per litre for their milk this year than last. (WAQ56592)

Answer issued on 20 October 2010

I appreciate that these are challenging times for the Welsh Dairy Industry. The average milk prices for 2009-10 were less than the previous year, however, since May, DairyCo report that prices have increased and are slightly higher than they were this time last year. With consumer demand for milk and cheese products strong, and with volatility in prices looking set to continue, the industry must endeavour to increase the proportion of milk being used for value added products.

The Welsh Assembly Government is unable to intervene directly in the price producers get for their milk or their contracts for supply although we do have a number of support mechanisms in place for the sector.

This includes the project funded by the Rural Development Plan and delivered by Coleg Sir Gar and DairyCo - 'Improving the Welsh Dairy Supply Chain'. This project supports producers to improve their efficiency allowing the profit margin between production costs and price to improve.

The Dairy Development Centre delivers the Farming Connect Development Programme to deliver knowledge transfer to the dairy industry in Wales, ensuring that information is available to help producers adopt new practices, benchmark performance, share ideas, address market needs and encourage innovation.

Dairy farmers gearing up for entry into 'Glastir' were given an opportunity to attend a series of 40 'on farm' training events across Wales over the summer with two additional dairy specific events held where farmers could familiarise themselves with the new scheme. The training events enabled attendees to identify between agriculturally improved and habitat land and identify the suitability of options for their own businesses. This information will be of assistance to farmers when completing the Glastir application.

The Young Entrants Support Scheme (YESS) is a package designed to offer support, guidance and grant aid to encourage young people into the industry. One third of the successful applicants to the YESS in 2010 were from the Welsh dairy sector with successful scheme applicants spread across all four regions of Wales.