



Emailed to: private.office@daera-ni.gov.uk

Ref: JA/RS/DAERA/12000

Mr Andrew Muir MLA  
DAERA

15 February 2024

Dear Minister

**Re: Blue Tongue restrictions**

I refer to correspondence I have been having with your Permanent Secretary before your appointment.

A further case which has been raised with me illustrates the impossible burden being placed on farmers by these 'out of season' blue tongue blanket restrictions.

This farmer describes his predicament in these terms:- " In November I bought 25 heifers and a pedigree bull in Scotland at Castle Douglas Premier Sale. They were due home on the 18th of December but due to Bluetongue restrictions this did not happen and I am paying £1700 a month to keep them over there. This has now been on going for 3 months and it is an expense I cannot afford at the minute. Also the business keeping the stock has informed me that they are not liable for any injury or death to the cattle during this time. Understandably I am extremely concerned as there seems to have been no indication as to what is going to happen going forward. I would appreciate if you could give this matter immediate attention as this is an everyday additional expense that is not factored in to the original purchase or everyday running of the farm through this difficult time."

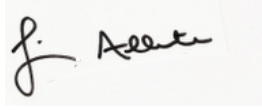
You will note these cattle were purchased in Scotland hundreds of miles away from the affected area. So, I repeat, why can the restrictions not be proportionate to the risk and limited to cattle from the area at risk?

I implore you to revisit this issue rather than pursue to an unworkable and damaging dogma.

James H Allister KC MLA, 38 Henry Street, Harryville, Ballymena, Co Antrim BT42 3AH

Tel: 028 25 640250

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is written in a cursive style and appears to read 'J. Allister'.

Jim Allister MLA

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