



Media Release

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GILDERNEW URGES FARMERS TO GRASP FNMS FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Minister Michelle Gildernew MP MLA has congratulated the organisers of a joint seminar to encourage more builders to take on slurry tank work.

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD)/Construction Employers' Federation (CEF) and Quarry Products Association NI (QPANI) Seminar "Give Tanks for £100m" was run for companies that are interested in finding out more about building slurry tanks under the Farm Nutrient Management Scheme (FNMS). It was hosted by the CEF in Belfast on Wednesday 18th June and was attended by 38 local construction companies.

Discussing the seminar's success the Minister said: **"The high level of interest shown at yesterday's seminar by the building industry was very encouraging. The more builders that can take on slurry tank building work the better! I am determined to ensure that farmers in the FNMS don't miss out on the funding opportunity currently available under scheme between now and the end of the year.**

"I fully endorse the CEF efforts to increase capacity for building slurry tanks across the north as some 2,000 slurry tanks have still to be built. It is only through innovative partnership such as this and a sustained push, that we can meet the EU deadline for completion. The newly updated list of interested builders compiled by the CEF following the seminar is a great help. I urge farmers to progress their FNMS

approvals and use this new resource to get their work underway as soon as practicable.”

Gordon Best, QPANI, speaking on behalf of the concrete and precast sectors, said:

“The concrete supply sector is geared up to ensure FNMS grant approvals are delivered on time. However, we are calling on farmers to place their orders now so not to miss the deadline as this work can only take place in a scheduled manner.”

Ciarán Fox, Construction Employers Federation (CEF), added:

“More of our members are now ready and willing to take on this work and help farmers to avail of the FNMS grant. Time is short as concrete slurry tanks must be designed and built to meet strict standards.

Therefore, we need those farmers who have grant approvals to engage contractors immediately if we are going to build over 2000 slurry tanks by the end of the year.



“The construction industry is ready to step-up output but farmers need to act now to make sure this work can be delivered by the deadline.”

Farmers can obtain details of builders interested in FNMS works on the CEFs' updated list online at: <http://www.cefni.co.uk>. The list is also available on request from CEF on 028 9087 7143

Notes to Editors:

1. The FNMS provides capital grant support to farmers for investment in slurry and manure storage facilities. It is the key support measure to help farmers comply with the EU Nitrates Directive. EU State Aid approval for the FNMS requires that works are completed and claims submitted by 31 December 2008.
2. 4,891 applications were received to the scheme when it closed on 31 March 2006. Currently 4400 applications are being progressed and some 4,000 approvals to commence work have issued. 1,371 claims for

payment have been received, of which 1,108 have been paid amounting to £33.4million.

3. The Construction Employers Federation is the only certified employers' organisation for the construction contracting industry based in Northern Ireland. It has a membership of approximately 1,300 companies of all sizes and across all sectors of the construction industry from civil engineering to general construction, house building and maintenance and repair companies. Federation member companies account for just over 72% of Northern Ireland's total construction output. CEF headquarters are on the Malone Road, Belfast. Contact 028 9087 7143. or visit the [CEF website](#) 
4. The Quarry Products Association is the trade association representing the UK aggregates industry. In Northern Ireland their members produce over 90% of aggregates extracted – sand and gravel and crushed rock as well as non aggregate minerals such as agricultural and industrial lime including limestone, clay and shale for cement. QPANI is based at Nutts Corner Business Park. Contact 028 9082 4078 or visit the [QPA website](#) 
5. All media enquiries to DARD Press Office, telephone 028 9052 4619. Out of hours, contact the Duty Press Officer via pager number 076 9971 5440, and your call will be returned.