

Unfair supply chain practices tops agenda in UFU meeting

THE Ulster Farmers' Union has met with UK Groceries Code Adjudicator Christine Tacon and her team to discuss a range of issues including unfairness in the supply chain and the impact of unfair practices on producer profitability.

Following the meeting, UFU President Harry Sinclair said: "For many years farmers and supermarket suppliers have highlighted the obvious unfair power balance in the supply chain. The Government has recognised this and appointed Ms Tacon as UK Groceries Code Adjudicator to help address these concerns. We covered a lot of ground at our meeting and for us unfair supply

chain practices, which can impact on producer profitability, must be addressed with urgency.

"We are aware of many examples of what we believe are questionable supermarket practices, which suppliers feel they cannot challenge for fear of being delisted. However, we believe the office of the Adjudicator will provide an opportunity to redress this unbalance of power.

"The recent horse meat scandal was another example of retailers putting intolerable pressure on suppliers to deliver product at a price which was clearly unsustainable.

"However, as retailers attempt to win

back consumer confidence an opportunity has been created for our top quality, local food and we have an expectation that the focus on supply chain fairness, which the Adjudicator will bring, will ensure that those suppliers are treated fairly and that they can trade profitably.

"Ms Tacon seems genuinely committed to ensuring the Grocery Supplier Code of Practice is enforced to the fullest extent and that farmers and suppliers are treated fairly. We will continue to keep in regular contact with her and bring to her attention any unfairness in the supply chain we become aware of."



MEETING: UFU leadership team with Groceries Code Adjudicator Christine Tacon. From left, Barclay Bell, UFU Deputy President; Angela Latta, Head of Office for Groceries Code Adjudicator; Christine Tacon, Groceries Code Adjudicator; Harry Sinclair, UFU President; and Ian Marshall, UFU Deputy President.