

EFT Payments in the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food

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Operational Environment

- 140,000 farmers and rural dwellers received payments under Department schemes in 2007.
- Expenditure under these schemes amounted to €2.213 billion.
- Single Payment Scheme accounted for €1.3 billion, also REPS and On Farm Investment Schemes.

Developing the use of EFT

- Department using a modern financial management system since 2001, able to issue large scale EFT payments.
- Government Decision of December 2004 on increasing the use of EFT.
- New EU requirement that all payments under the CAP must be made by EFT, with effect from mid October 2008.

Progress so far

- First publicity campaign in May 2003.
- In total 7 campaigns completed with another starting this week.
- Over 80,000 farmers now set up to receive payments by EFT.
- Approx 60% of payments issued by EFT, 40% by payable order.

More to do

- Need for 55,000 more farmers to move to EFT for issue of EU payments towards the end of this year.
- Over 85% of payments for goods and services are by EFT.
- Look briefly at some of the issues and realities that affect the move to EFT

Credit Unions

- Farmers who use Credit Unions as their financial services provider.
- Around 15 Credit Unions set up for EFT
- Beneficial if this could be more widely available.

Post Offices

- POSTBANK set to provide a range of banking services through the Post Office network.
- Indications that this would be welcomed by some farmers
- Use Post Office for other services and may choose to use it as a bank for receiving payments.

Movement of bank accounts

- Notice more movement of bank accounts.
- New account details have to be notified and recorded by the paying agency.
- More significant aspect now than previously.

Conclusion

- Short account of our efforts in the Department to move to widest possible use of EFT.
- Tried to show what has been achieved and set out the scale of the challenge ahead to meet EU requirements by the end of this year.
- Thank you