

ULSTER FARMERS' UNION NEWS RELEASE**Date: 21 November 2012****Cyclo No: 142/2012****UFU RESPOND TO CALL FOR EVIDENCE ON ONSHORE WIND**

The Ulster Farmers' Union has submitted its response to the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) call for evidence on onshore wind. The DECC call for evidence was UK-wide and has been developed with the support of the Devolved Administrations. It was also referred to in DETI's Government response to the consultation on proposed changes to the Northern Ireland Renewables obligation in 2013.

UFU Rural Enterprise Chairman Gary Hawkes said; "The UFU's response to the Department of Energy and climate change call for evidence will play an important part in identifying any changes to the costs faced by developers, investors and operators of small-scale onshore wind. With no cost reduction achieved for the small scale wind sector in Northern Ireland, the Union in its response submitted "raw data" from five wind turbine case studies, highlighting pre-development costs, capital costs , operating costs and financial costs of small scale onshore wind development in Northern Ireland. These case studies demonstrate that the only viable projects were those where the landowners provided significant upfront capital and grid connection charges were a small proportion of the upfront costs.

Gary Hawkes added; "DETI in their recent NIRO consultation response confirmed that Northern Ireland will need to introduce a small scale Feed-In Tariff, before the NIRO closes to new generation in 2017. The work to introduce a FIT will include a review of ROC levels for small scale generation and this call for evidence will contribute to that work. Therefore, the UFU are urging DETI to note that since cost reduction has yet to be achieved for the majority of small scale generators, incentive levels should remain at their current levels."

**Media Contact:
Deborah Quinn 028 9037 0222**