

**ULSTER FARMERS' UNION NEWS RELEASE****Date: 25 March 2010****Cyclo No: PR52/10****Enhanced support for micro-generation a positive step**

The Ulster Farmers' Union has welcomed the approval given this week by the Northern Ireland Assembly to increase the number of NI Renewable Obligation Certificates (NIROCS), which will be available from 1 April for specified micro-generation renewable energy projects.

UFU Rural Enterprise Chairman, David McElrea described the decision as a welcome boost to the Renewable sector and a positive step in reaching Northern Ireland's Renewable obligations and targets.

David McElrea said; "I am especially encouraged by the commitment from the Minister that she will be calling for further evidence from stakeholders on Anaerobic Digestion (AD). The UFU will be an active participant in any review and we eagerly await news on the form the process will take".

"We want to ensure that incentives are available for those wishing to invest in AD. Whilst AD has much to offer the NI agricultural economy, the level of up-front capital commitment needed is an obstacle to start-up for many farm businesses. We therefore welcome the fact that the Minister has kept the door open on this subject".

Mr McElrea added; "Looking ahead, it is essential that all renewable energy technologies are treated equally and that the review being undertaken by our Department of Enterprise, Trade & Industry (DETI) into anaerobic digestion is completed quickly. Despite some disappointment that enhanced NIROCs will not be applied retrospectively to existing microgeneration wind projects, we are still encouraged by the fact that the Minister has agreed to continue to monitor the situation."

**ENDS//...****Media Contact: Michelle Ferguson 028 9037 0222**