IFA Press Release

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**MINISTER CREED MUST IMPLEMENT EU REGULATORY CHANGES FOR AQUACULTURE WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT**

IFA Aquaculture Chairman Michael Mulloy said amendments to rules for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) have been introduced which allows for support measures to be implemented for aquaculture producers.

“Irish aquaculture producers are suffering cashflow problems with 40-60% losses in turnover compared with the same period last year, as the closure of food service sector across Europe has a direct impact on the industry,” he said.

IFA is proposing the adoption of these urgent, powerful and extraordinary measures to prevent the COVID-19 emergency from having irreversible negative impacts on the normal operation of Irish aquaculture.

“The measures allow for financial compensation to be granted to aquaculture farmers and processing enterprises for the temporary suspension and the reduction of production and sales, or **for the additional storage costs,** occurred between 1 February and 31 December 2020, as a consequence of the COVID-19 outbreak,” he said.

Michael Mulloy described the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on Irish aquaculture as severe and unexpected, with market closures and disturbances having an unprecedented level of disruption along with impediments to carrying out normal production activity.

“These support measures and amendments to the EMFF Regulation now have to be supported at national level. I am calling on Minister Creed to implement the regulatory changes with immediate effect. Due to an underspend of existing EMFF funds, there is considerable money available to deal with this crisis. In light of the urgent need of financial aid, consideration must be given to relaxing State Aid rules for grant aid eligibility to access available funds for aquaculture operators.”

The Minister must now implement the changes and redirect available EMFF funds as financial aid for the Irish aquaculture industry to support them in dealing with the Covid-19 crisis.

Ends.

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