Northern Ireland Institute of Agricultural Science
Constitution and Rules
Inaugurated 1962
Northern Ireland Institute of Agricultural Science

The organisation shall be known as the NORTHERN IRELAND INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE.

PURPOSE

To be a recognised association of persons professionally qualified in agricultural science and related disciplines in which the members will actively promote the advancement of agricultural science by sustaining and increasing individual and collective knowledge and understanding of specific areas of study, skills and expertise.

AIMS

1. To promote the study and development of agricultural science and associated disciplines;

2. To promote and maintain professional standards in the fields of agricultural science and associated disciplines;

3. To promote lifelong learning and increase knowledge and understanding between professionals (members and non-members) in the fields of agriculture and associated disciplines, through organised activities; and

4. To support the education and career development of those pursuing a career within the agri-food industry.

MEMBERSHIP

Full Membership of the Institute shall be open to those holding the following qualification:

1. Degree or Higher National Diploma (or equivalent level) in agriculture or associated disciplines

   or

2. Degree or Higher National Diploma (or equivalent level) in other disciplines when such persons are / have been employed in the agri-food industry.

Student Membership shall be open to:

3. Undergraduate or Higher National Diploma students (or equivalent level) currently enrolled in the study of qualifications as above. Student membership does not afford full member rights and privileges

Associate Membership shall be open to:
4. Those who are / have been employed in the agri-food industry who do not hold an approved qualification (as above) but who the Executive Committee deem appropriate to be able to bring benefit to the institute in the delivery of its purpose. Associate membership does not afford full member rights and privileges.

RULES

1 ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP:

1.1 Foundation Members shall be those who joined the Institute before 1st February, 1963. All subsequent applications for membership shall be made on the prescribed form.

1.2 All elections to membership shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

1.3 The Institute may, at its discretion, award Honorary Life Membership to persons who are members of the Institute and who have notably contributed to furthering the objects of the Institute. Honorary members shall have all rights and privileges of members.

2 PRESIDENT:

2.1 The President shall be a member of the Institute and shall be elected annually at the A.G.M for not more than three consecutive years.

3 OFFICERS:

3.1 The officers shall be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Executive Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and Public Relations Officer elected from membership of the Institute.

3.2 The Chairman, who shall conduct all business meetings of the Institute, shall be elected at the A.G.M and shall hold office for one year. The Chairman shall be eligible for re-election to the Executive Committee.

3.3 The Vice-Chairman shall be elected at the A.G.M each year, and in absence of the Chairman shall conduct all business meetings of the Institute. The Vice-Chairman shall be nominated for the office of Chairman for the following year.

3.4 The Executive Secretary shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and ratified at the A.G.M each year, and shall keep such records (including membership) and conduct such business of the Institute as the Executive Committee shall require.
3.5 The Honorary Treasurer shall be elected at the A.G.M each year. The Honorary Treasurer shall keep the accounts and be responsible to the Executive Committee for the investments of the Institute and for all financial transactions.

3.6 The Public Relations Officer shall be elected at the A.G.M each year and shall be responsive to the Executive Committee for effecting such publicity about the activities of the Institute as is considered appropriate in furthering the aims of the Institute. The Public Relations Officer shall have power to deal with authors, publishers and advertisers as may be necessary for the production of the publications of the Institute.

3.7 A Membership Secretary, if required, shall be elected at the A.G.M each year and shall be responsible to the Executive Committee for the maintenance of the database of members and their details, recruitment of new members and circulation of information to members. If a Membership Secretary is not elected then the Executive Secretary will carry out these functions.

4 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

4.1 The Executive Committee shall consist of twelve members including the office bearers named above, who shall be elected each year. No member of the Executive Committee may serve for more than five consecutive years.

5 STANDING COMMITTEE:

5.1 The Executive Committee may annually appoint a Standing Committee consisting of a Chairman and three members. The Chairman shall be appointed from the membership of the Executive Committee. The Standing Committee will have power to co-op one additional member for a specified purpose or time.

5.2 The functions of the Standing Committee shall be to advise the Executive Committee on the Constitution and Rules, development of professional standards, eligibility for membership, business requiring legal advice and on any other matters which the Executive Committee may require.

6 SPECIAL COMMITTEE:

6.1 The Institute shall have the right to set up special committees at any time to advise the Institute on matters of interest to the members. Any member shall be eligible to act on such a Committee.

7 ELECTION OF PRESIDENT, OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:
7.1 Nominations shall be submitted to the Executive Secretary not later than four weeks prior to the A.G.M. Each nomination must be supported by a proposer and a seconder. The Executive Committee shall have the power to submit nominations directly to the A.G.M.

7.2 The Executive Committee shall have the power to fill any vacancy arising between Annual General Meetings.

8 **POWERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

8.1 The Executive Committee shall manage all the general business of the Institute, convene meetings and shall have executive powers in matters relating to finance, membership and consultations with external bodies.

8.2 The Executive Committee shall have power to constitute Working Groups from the membership of the Institute to investigate and report on matters relevant to the objects of the Institute.

8.3 In the event of the Institute being dissolved, disbanded or wound up, its assets remaining after the settlement of all debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to institutions having objectives in common with the NIIAS, or to suitable agricultural charities and which shall prohibit the distribution of its assets among its members.

9 **ELECTION OF HONORARY AUDITOR:**

9.1 An Honorary Auditor shall be appointed annually at the A.G.M.

10 **MEETINGS:**

10.1 The Institute shall hold an A.G.M at which a report of the activities of the Institute and a statement of accounts shall be presented. At the A.G.M, elections of President, Officers, six (or five if a Membership Secretary is appointed) members of the Executive Committee and appointment of Auditor shall take place.

10.2 The Executive Committee may convene a General Meeting at any time, provided at least fourteen days' notice is given to members and shall convene a General Meeting if required to do so in writing by at least 10 members within twelve weeks of such a request.

10.3 At all General Meetings, twelve shall form a quorum. At all meetings of the Executive Committee, five shall form a quorum. In the event of a quorum not being present one half-hour after the time for which the meeting has been summoned, the meeting shall be adjourned until a time agreed by the majority of those present.
10.4 In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman at a meeting of the Executive Committee, or at a General Meeting, the Executive Committee shall have power to appoint a deputy for that meeting.

11 FINANCE:

11.1 The Executive Committee shall manage the financial affairs of the Institute through the Honorary Treasurer.

11.2 The amount of the annual membership fee shall be determined by the Executive Committee and confirmed at the A.G.M. Student membership is free whilst studying and for the first year following achievement of qualification. Associate membership fee shall also be determined by the Executive Committee and confirmed at the A.G.M.

11.3 Annual subscriptions shall be due on 1st July.

11.4 The annual membership fee is recognised for Income Tax Relief.

12 REGISTER OF MEMBERSHIP:

12.1 The Executive Secretary (or Membership Secretary, if one is appointed) shall maintain a register of membership. It is the responsibility of members to ensure that the Institute holds the most current contact details.

12.2 The names of members whose subscriptions are more than one year in arrears shall be removed from the register of the Institute following periodic reports on subscription arrears (information to be provided by the Executive/Membership Secretary). Formal notification will be sent to non-paying members of their impending removal from membership.

12.3 The Executive Committee may, without assigning a reason, terminate the membership of any member who is considered by two-thirds majority of the Executive Committee to have been guilty of conduct prejudicial to the Institute. Provided that prior to such action by the Executive Committee the member concerned be afforded an opportunity of presenting their case before the Executive Committee if they desire.

13 ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION AND RULES:

13.1 Proposed amendments to the Constitution and Rules must be supported by at least ten signatures of members, and shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Secretary at least six weeks prior to the A.G.M.

13.2 The Constitution and Rules may only be amended at an A.G.M of the Institute, provided that members receive at least fourteen days' notice in writing of the proposed amendments.
13.3 Changes in the Constitution and Rules may be passed by a simple majority of those present.
Record of Changes to Constitution Documentation:

**Change 1:**

Document created on 12 March 2003 to incorporate the changes arising from:

- the 1995 Review of the Constitution;
- the 1998 decision to allow the outgoing Chairman to be re-elected to the Executive Committee; and
- the comments made regarding the draft revisions to the Constitution at the AGM held on Wed 10th April 2002, at the ECOS Centre.

IE-Removed italics from 12b & included new sentence on formal notification being sent to members of their removal from membership:

- Left 12c as per the 02 Feb draft
- Changed chairperson back to chairman

Agreed to enhance role of PRO as per 02 Feb draft and leave reference to "editor" of amended constitution

**Change 2:**

Amendment made to number required for quorum as result of 2004 A.G.M

**Proposed Change 3 (20th February 2017):**

Constitutional Document (dated 27/5/2004) reviewed, reformatted and the following proposed changes made (approval subject to approval at 2017 AGM):

- **Purpose** (page 2) - in line with The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland guidance, the Purpose (previously Mission Statement) and Aims have been redefined to take into consideration the Institute falling under the 'advancement of education' description of charitable purpose.
- **Membership** (page 2) - reworded to provide clarification of criteria. Introduction of 'Student' and 'Associate Membership'.
- **Rules** (page 3):
  - **Officers:**
Honorary Secretary changed to Executive Secretary.

Executive Secretary appointed by Executive Committee and ratified at AGM.

Chairman - removal of 'shall not be eligible for election to an office bearer’s post for a period of two years'

Election of Membership Secretary redefined

- Executive Committee (page 4) - redefined to state the total number on Committee
- Auditor (page 5) redefined as 'Honorary Auditor'
- Finance (page 6):
  - Annual membership to be determined by Executive Committee and confirmed at AGM.
  - Moved statement relating to Income Tax Relief into this section
- Register of Membership (page 6):
  - It is the responsibility of members to ensure that the Institute holds the most current contact details.

Change 4 – amendments made post 2017 AGM:

Louise to insert after Comm meeting on 20th Nov