

FAQs on Speed Rating of Agricultural Vehicles

What is meant by the term speed rating? This means fitting a speed disc to the vehicle to show its design speed in kilometres per hour (km/h).

What vehicles must have a speed disc fitted? The new speed rating laws – that is, fitting and displaying a speed disc – apply to all agricultural tractors, self-propelled agricultural machinery, agricultural trailers and pieces of interchangeable towed equipment manufactured or first registered on or after 1 January 2016, irrespective of the design speed of the vehicle. Vehicles of these types manufactured or first registered *before* 1 January 2016 will only need to have a speed disc fitted if they are designed to be driven or drawn at speeds over 40 km/h.



Model speed disc showing a maximum design speed of 50 km/h

Are there any exemptions? Yes. As mentioned above, agricultural tractors, self-propelled agricultural machines, agricultural trailers and pieces of interchangeable towed equipment manufactured or first registered before 1 January 2016 don't need to have a speed disc fitted if their design speed is 40 km/h or less.

What if I don't know my tractor's / trailer's design speed? Please contact the original manufacturer or authorised distributor for this figure.

Who can fit these speed discs? Speed discs must only be fitted by the original vehicle manufacturer or authorised distributor.

Where can I buy speed discs to fit to the vehicles in my yard? There is no need for you to buy speed discs. If you need to have them fitted to the vehicles in your yard (because they are capable of being driven or drawn at speeds over 40km/h), then you must contact the vehicle manufacturer or authorised distributor who will arrange to fit the discs for you.

How much is this service likely to cost? The Regulations do not state the fee to be charged for this service. It is a private arrangement between you and the manufacturer or distributor.

If a speed disc is required, where on the vehicle should it be? The speed disc should always be in a prominent position on the rear of vehicle. For self-propelled agricultural machines, it should be displayed in a prominent position on both sides and on the rear of the vehicle. On an agricultural trailer or interchangeable towed equipment where, due to its design or use, the disc can't be seen from behind, it should be in a prominent position on the right side of the vehicle when looking from behind. If a speed disc cannot be attached directly to a vehicle, a plate has to be attached to the vehicle to display the disc.

What technical specifications must speed discs adhere to? Refer to Page 59 of RSA Booklet on [Revised Standards for Agricultural Vehicles](#)

My tractor is capable of being driven at a speed over 40km/h which is greater than the design speed of the trailer / towed equipment. What rules apply here? You may draw such a trailer or another piece of interchangeable towed equipment with a tractor which is capable of speeds over 40km/h, but, when it is in use in a public place, you must not exceed the maximum design speed of the slowest vehicle in the combination. In other words, if a trailer or piece of interchangeable towed equipment does not have a speed disc fitted, the law considers that the vehicle combination – no matter what the design speed of the tractor is – is not capable of speeds over 40km/h.

What if neither my tractor nor trailer or piece of interchangeable towed equipment is capable of exceeding 40km/h? In this case, no speed disc is required on either the tractor, trailer or piece of interchangeable towed equipment. The law considers that if none of the vehicles in a combination is fitted with a speed disc, none of them is capable of or should be operated at a speed over 40km/h.

Are agricultural vehicles permissible on motorways? What are the requirements and are any changes being introduced? In Ireland, the motorway speed limit is 120km/h and, in order for vehicles to be allowed to use motorways, they must be capable of reaching a minimum speed of 50km/h. Therefore, as many modern tractors have a design speed of over 50km/h, these vehicles can legally use the motorway network. From 1 January 2016, if they are towing a trailer, the trailer must also be capable by design (as indicated on its authorisation plate and speed disc) of being drawn at a speed of 50km/h or higher.