

A close-up photograph of a bee on a yellow flower, likely a rapeseed flower, with a blurred background of more yellow flowers.

Farming
Advice Service

Welcome to the Farming Advice Service (FAS) newsletter

*Thank you for continuing to subscribe
to our monthly newsletter.*

*We hope you find the content useful
and we welcome any feedback
or suggestions on topics you would
like to see covered in future editions.*

Contact us

FAS technical advice line: 03000 200 301

advice@farmingadvice.org.uk
farmingadvice.org.uk

You can view a text-only version of the April
Newsletter [by clicking this link.](#)

**May 2023 –
Issue 87**

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Key dates to be aware of...

9 June	The deadline for late Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) 2023 applications (with penalty) is 11:59pm on 9 June. This is also the deadline for making certain changes without penalty to a BPS application already submitted by midnight on 15 May. (GOV.UK)
31 August	This is the deadline for making certain changes to a Countryside Stewardship (CS) revenue claim declaration that was submitted before midnight on 15 May (without reduction). If you missed the deadline for CS revenue claim declarations or Environmental Stewardship (ES) revenue claims without reduction on 15 May, 31 August at 11:59pm is also the deadline for late CS revenue claim declarations and ES revenue claims (with reduction). (GOV.UK)

In case you missed them...

30 April	You must have recorded the number of “specified” livestock kept on your farm during the previous calendar year and calculated the amount of nitrogen they produced. You must also record the number and type of livestock in a building or hardstanding during the previous storage period. (SMR**1)
1 May	You must not carry out hedge or tree coppicing or hedge laying from this date. (GAEC*7a and GAEC*7c)

*GAEC = Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions

** SMR = Statutory Management Requirements

For more details about the information provided in the key dates table, visit the [Guide to cross compliance in England 2023](#) and the [Rural Payments Agency key dates 2023](#) pages of GOV.UK.

How can we help you?

Free and confidential advice

The FAS is funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). We provide **free, confidential advice** to help farmers in England understand and meet the cross compliance requirements. These requirements apply to you if you are a BPS, CS or ES claimant.

We update the farming sector on relevant government farming policy that is applicable in England and on the actions that can be taken to help farmers comply with the relevant regulations. Our newsletter also provides articles on topics that are complementary to cross compliance, such as practices that benefit the wider environment and wellbeing support.

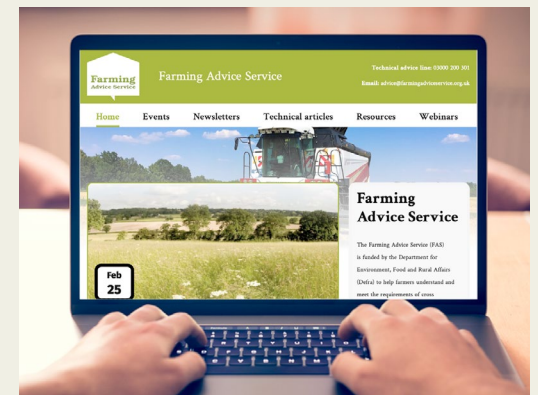
[Our website](#) hosts our previous newsletters, as well as technical articles and webinars that cover various topics in more detail.

Contacting the advice line

Farmers requiring telephone advice can contact the **FAS technical advice line** on **03000 200 301**, Monday to Friday, between **08:30** and **17:00**. The Rural Services Helpline provides a single number for all **FAS, RPA, Animal and Plant Health Agency, Natural England** and forestry enquiries.

You can also email enquiries to advice@farmingadvice.org.uk. Our helpline team aims to respond to all telephone and email enquiries within one working day.

The advice given to individual farmers is **confidential** – we do not disclose any personal or individual information or data obtained during advisory activities.



Watch our webinar recordings and listen to our podcasts

If you missed our latest webinar “Practical Nutrient Management Planning” on 29 March, you can watch the recording on our [webinar pages](#).

You can also listen to **podcasts** with expert speakers on the [FAS website](#), as well as through Spotify, Apple Podcasts and Google Podcasts.

The latest podcast on the Future Farming Resilience Fund, as well as **an introduction to nutrient management with Mel Holloway**, is [now available online](#).

Technical articles available on the FAS website

The FAS and partners have produced a number of technical articles covering a range of topics, from farming practices to cross compliance. To access these articles, please click on the links below:

- [Nutrient management and farming rules for water](#)
- [Reducing agricultural emissions of ammonia](#)
- [Supporting farmers to become resilient](#)
- [Net zero in agriculture](#)
- [Environment Agency updated prospects for irrigation – forecast for 2023](#)

Supporting tenant farmers: the Defra response to the Rock Review

In a statement from Defra on Wednesday 24 May, the government set out its [next steps to support tenant farmers](#);

“Tenant farmers are at the heart of our rural economy and are critical to a successful agricultural transition. From day one of the transition, we have worked with tenant farmers as we’ve co-designed our farming schemes, using their input through tests, trials and pilots to develop our schemes so that they are accessible to all. The government supports tenant farmers, and it’s one of the best routes to bring new people into the sector.

We are grateful to Baroness Rock and the Tenancy Working Group for their time and dedication in producing the Review. We strongly agree that tenant farmers should be able to access farm offers, make their essential contribution to restoring the natural environment and produce food for the nation.

Please [read our blog post](#) to find out about the actions we’re taking to ensure our schemes are as accessible as possible to tenants.”

Applying the farming rules for water – a reminder

The farming rules for water were introduced to reduce and prevent diffuse water pollution from agricultural sources. They cover applying and storing fertilisers and the management of soil and livestock. The Environment Agency enforces the farming rules for water in accordance with its published enforcement and sanctions policy and guidance.

Recent inspection failure data from the Environment Agency indicate the following are some of the most common issues:

- Failure to show a nutrient management plan
- Not having up-to-date (< 5 years old) soil test results

In addition to ensuring you are compliant with the rules for protecting the environment, effective nutrient management planning can save unnecessary input and application costs.

The FAS has recently produced a range of resources around **nutrient management planning**; you can watch our [webinars](#), listen to our [podcast](#) and read our [technical article](#) on this topic through these links.

There is also a new 'Farming rules for water' module on the [FAS Online Training Portal](#). This training portal is free to all users and requires registration to access the content. BASIS points can be earned for completing the quiz at the end of each training module.

The following four steps to nutrient management planning come from our FAS technical article, and were provided by a FACTS qualified adviser:

STEP 1

- **Understand what the crop needs**
 - Nutrient Management Guide (RB209). Online tools are also available

STEP 2

- **Understanding what nutrients are in the soil through soil testing**
 - Phosphorus, potassium and magnesium
 - Soil pH
 - Nitrogen

STEP 3

- **Consider nutrients from organic manure applications**
 - Estimate with RB209 tables
 - Test with a sample
 - Incorporate quickly to avoid ammonia loss

STEP 4

- **Top up with fertiliser to meet the crop requirement**
 - Applying it at the correct rate, at the right time and in the right place

Nutrient management planning guidance and industry information can also be found on the [Tried & Tested \(nutrientmanagement.org\)](#) webpage.

The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) maintains a list of **soil and forage testing companies** on its [website](#).

Further detailed guidance on applying the farming rules for water can be found on [GOV.UK](#).

Trees on farms – the latest updates

Tree Health Pilot – ash dieback offer update

This month, Defra has updated and made improvements to the Tree Health Pilot's ash dieback grant offer.

Defra has:

- **Made changes to eligibility**, meaning that lower-tier local authorities, such as Parish Councils, are now eligible as a group member
- **Simplified the application form**, which will mean agreements, and in turn payments, can be issued quicker
- **Improved guidance with an easy-to-follow case study included** to help lead facilitators through the Tree Health Pilot processes
- **Expanded restocking eligibility**, which enables higher-tier local authorities that act as group facilitators to apply for restocking where they have felled infected ash trees

[Read the blog post](#) about the announcement for more detail and take a look at the new [ash dieback guidance on GOV.UK](#).

Landscape Recovery: apply for the second round

Minister Spencer announced on Thursday 18 May at the Devon County Show that the second round of [Landscape Recovery is now open for applications](#).

This round is open to any land managers, including groups of farmers and tenants, who want to come together to deliver projects targeting net zero, protected sites and habitat creation across landscapes of at least 500 hectares.

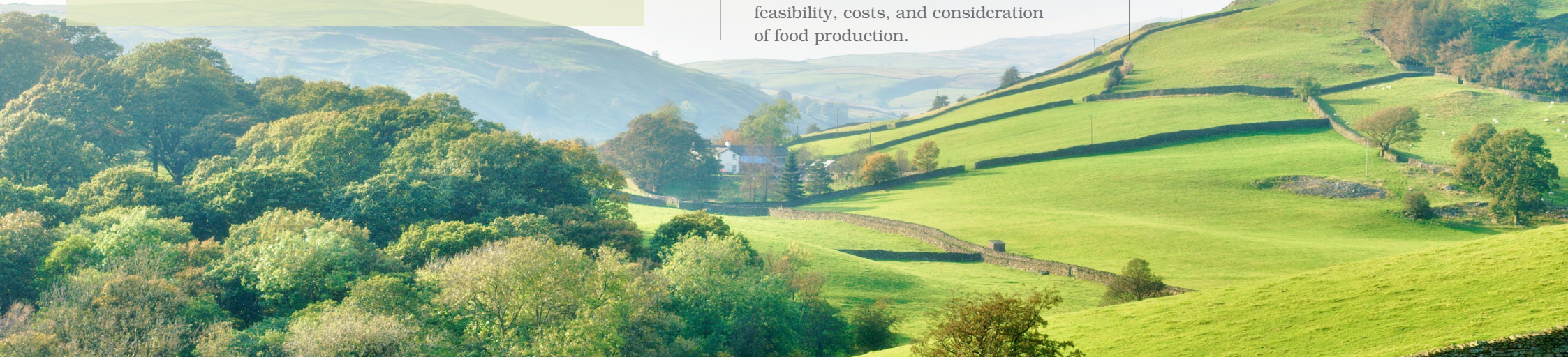
You can find all the key information and links to the guidance and policy paper in a [post](#) on the Defra Farming Blog.

Round two, which closes at **midday on 21 September**, will offer up to 25 of the highest-scoring projects a place on the scheme. The maximum amount of development funding an individual project can apply for in this round is £750,000.

Bids will be assessed against set criteria focused on the project's potential environmental and social impact, feasibility, costs, and consideration of food production.

Defra hopes to build on the success of the first round by supporting even more projects across the country to instigate large-scale, long-term positive environmental change.

Over the coming years, these projects will deliver a wide variety of environmental and social outcomes, as well as making an important contribution to national targets outlined in the Environmental Improvement Plan and the 25 Year Environment Plan.



The Institute of Agriculture and Horticulture (TIAH) invites farmers and growers to join their new skills and careers platform

At the beginning of May, TIAH opened free access to the test version of its online skills and learning service.

Designed to support sector workers in fulfilling their potential, the TIAH service will connect users with training and learning opportunities tailored to their individual sector, role and skill level.

Development opportunities

The service will locate development opportunities for individuals at every stage in their career, helping them review their skills, plot their training journeys and record achievements along the way.

TIAH has invited all those working in farming and growing to [road test the beta version of the service for free](#) in return for user feedback. This will allow them to add improvements and complete the next stage of development of the service.

The service also offers a range of information about [careers in farming and growing](#) to help those already working in the industry.

A truly bespoke service

Tom Bradshaw, the NFU Deputy President and TIAH Board Member said: 'What we have set out to do – deliver a truly bespoke service tailored to sector, training and skill levels – has never been done before, so there is a lot to do.

"While we have made great strides towards achieving our goals, we need the input from end users to ensure we are offering the best possible service. That's why we have opened up the beta version for all. Not only will testers benefit from free access and the opportunity to kick start or progress with their training, development and careers, but their feedback will also allow us to fine-tune the service for future users.

"Our ambition is not only to help those of us who work in the sector – we also want to support the industry as a whole, while promoting agriculture as a progressive, professional and exciting career choice – I urge people to join us in achieving this goal."

Career development

Janet Swading OBE, TIAH Chief Executive, added: "We know being a farmer or grower is full-on, so we make it easy for you to keep on top of your learning and career development.

"By signing up to the beta service, you will receive personalised learning and development recommendations and reminders to flag when you need to complete time sensitive training.

"Essentially, we're here to take away the worry and give you the power to forge ahead with your career while not detracting from the day job!"

[Sign up now](#) and provide your feedback.





Updates from the Future Farming blog and industry announcements

Defra regularly updates the [Future Farming blog](#). Please [subscribe to the blog](#) to ensure you receive all the latest news.

Delinked payments guidance

The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) plans to replace the BPS in England with delinked payments in 2024, and the 2023 scheme year will be the last. The RPA plans to make delinked payments each year from 2024 to 2027, and the amount you receive will decrease each year as the RPA applies progressive reductions.

The [guidance about delinked payments](#) has been updated and explains who is eligible for the payments and how they are calculated. It also has information about the effect on delinked payments of business changes since the BPS of 2020 and about how you can transfer reference amounts to other businesses, as well as other useful information.

The RPA Podcast

The RPA Podcast is a new communication channel from the RPA to help farmers, land managers and rural communities keep up to date on developments at the RPA, offer support and guidance, and navigate the agricultural transition. A range of subjects are covered in each episode – from scheme updates and application guidance to case studies, wellbeing and business support. Updates can be found via the [RPA blog](#) and RPA's social media channels. The first episode of the podcast was published in February 2022 and you can listen to all the latest episodes on [Apple](#) and [Spotify](#), or through [Buzzsprout](#). If you would like the RPA to cover a particular topic with subject experts, please email the RPA at External.Affairs@rpa.gov.uk.

Animal health and welfare grants: applications closing soon

This is a reminder that you have only two weeks left to apply for the [Animal Health and Welfare Equipment and Technology grant](#). The portal for applications will close at **midday on Thursday 15 June**. The grant is open to livestock farmers who keep cattle, pigs, sheep, laying hens or broiler chickens. This is the first time grants of this type have been made available to poultry keepers.

The grant supports investment in equipment and technology by offering between £1,000 and £25,000 towards the cost of selected items, all of which are listed in [Annex 4](#) of the guidance. The list has been developed through co-design with farmers, academics, vets and industry groups to target the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway health and welfare priorities. This includes welfare-improving technology, such as 3D weighing cameras for poultry and automated monitoring systems and sensors for pig housing, which free up farmer time and allow adjustments to be made more quickly and efficiently, thereby reducing environmental stress.

Don't forget to look at the ["General Livestock" list](#), which has items suitable for multiple sectors.

Happier, healthier and more productive livestock are good for business. Find out more about the benefits these grants can bring by reading our [farming blog](#). Please also read the [guidance on GOV.UK](#) and the [full list of items on offer](#) before making an application.



Updates from the Future Farming blog and industry announcements

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New regulatory reform for pig sector

Defra has [outlined new support](#) for the pig sector, including a commitment to bring in regulations on pig contracts to support the supply chain and provide greater certainty across the whole sector. You can find more information in the full summary of responses and in the UK Government's response to last year's consultation.



National quality assurance scheme for wild venison launches

A new scheme to boost consumer confidence in the venison market and support the sustainable management of wild deer in the countryside has launched.

The British Quality Wild Venison scheme is open to applicants in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The scheme aims to create a more robust marketplace for British wild venison as a sustainable and healthy meat and will ensure a set of audited standards are met throughout the supply chain, from forests to the processing chain to supermarket shelves.

It is hoped the first quality-assured meat badged under this scheme will go on sale next year.

The scheme is a cross-sector initiative developed by the Forestry Commission, Grown in Britain, Forestry England, Natural Resources Wales, the National Game Dealers Association, the British Association for Shooting and Conservation, the British Deer Society and the National Gamekeepers Organisation.

To apply for the British Quality Wild Venison scheme, visit: [British Quality Wild Venison – Quality assurance for British Wild Venison](#).



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Follow us on [@DefraFAS](https://twitter.com/DefraFAS) for up-to-the-minute updates on publications, events and industry information.



Subscribe to our free monthly newsletter

If you don't already receive our monthly FAS newsletter, please visit farmingadvice.service.org.uk and enter your email address into the newsletter sign-up box.

Alternatively, please email bookings@farmingadvice.service.org.uk with **"Register for newsletter"** in the subject line.

In line with data protection regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018, FAS has updated its privacy policy to explain how your data is kept safe.

To view the policy, please visit www.farmingadvice.service.org.uk/events/privacy/.