

SUSTAINABLE FARMING INCENTIVE

The Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) pays farmers for actions that support food production and can help improve farm productivity and resilience, while also protecting and improving the environment.

To get paid under SFI, you can apply for:

- a 3-year SFI agreement to do environmental land management actions – we plan to start accepting applications from August 2023
- a one-off payment for a vet visit annually to review the health and welfare of livestock – you can register your interest to apply now

KEY FEATURES OF SFI AGREEMENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LAND MANAGEMENT

You will be able to:

- apply for the scheme online yourself, with the simple online service telling you which actions will work on which land parcels
- choose what combination of actions to do so you can make it work for your farm
- choose what area of eligible land to do actions on – there's no minimum or maximum land area
- combine more SFI actions with CS options, as long as the land is eligible for both, they're compatible and we're not paying you twice for the same activity
- choose how to complete the actions as long as they're done in a way that achieves your aim – so that you can make the actions work for your farm, without lots of prescriptive rules
- be confident that you will be treated fairly and supported if things go wrong - if you have to repay money already paid to you, there won't be additional financial 'penalties' applied

AM I ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR AN SFI AGREEMENT?

You can apply for a 3-year SFI agreement if:

- you're a farmer who was eligible for the Basic Payment Scheme on 16 May 2022 or 15 May 2023
- you've got eligible land in England for the SFI actions you choose
- you'll have management control of the land for the 3-year SFI agreement

TENANTS AND SFI

The person who's actively farming the land will typically have management control of that land. This will usually be the owner occupier or tenant. If you occupy land on a rolling year-by-year tenancy, you can enter this land into SFI if you expect to have control of it for the full 3 years. If, as a tenant, you unexpectedly lose management control, you can leave the agreement without penalty.

SFI AND OTHER SCHEMES

It's possible to include the same land in SFI and another scheme (e.g. Countryside Stewardship, Environmental Stewardship) if:

- you and your land are eligible for each scheme
- the activities or outcomes you're being paid for under each scheme are compatible
- you're not being paid for a similar activity or outcome on the same area of land at the same time

To find out which environmental land management actions and options you can do on the same area within a land parcel as each SFI action, read the details of the SFI actions in the SFI Handbook. Search GOV.UK for 'SFI handbook'.

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WHAT CAN I APPLY FOR?

We've designed the actions in the SFI 2023 offer to be more flexible, so that you can choose:

- what combination of standalone 'pick and mix' actions you want to do
- which area of land to do each action on

Some of the actions are rotational, so that you can move them around your farm to work with your farm system.

You can also vary the coverage of rotational actions to make them work with your crop rotation and different sizes of land parcels.

The SFI actions that will be available in the SFI 2023 offer are summarised on the reverse side of this leaflet.

SFI MANAGEMENT PAYMENT

In 2023, we're introducing an additional 'SFI management payment' to help farmers with the management time and administrative costs of entering into and managing an SFI agreement. This is an annual payment of £20 per hectare, up to the first 50 hectares entered into an SFI agreement. The maximum payment will be £1,000 per year for each farm business (SBI).

ADDITIONAL PAYMENT FOR COMMON LAND

If a group of 2 or more people apply for an SFI agreement on common land, there's an additional payment of £6.15 per hectare to help with costs of administering the agreement on common land.

HOW TO APPLY FOR AN SFI AGREEMENT

You'll apply for an SFI agreement online via the Rural Payments service. We plan to start taking applications from August 2023. We'll roll out the SFI application service in a controlled way, so that we can make sure we're able to offer everyone the right level of service and support.

During this initial controlled rollout phase, there will be different ways to apply. When you sign in to the Rural Payments service, you'll either be able to apply online, or you'll be asked to contact RPA so that we can support you with the next steps of your application.

Register your interest for an annual health and welfare review of livestock



If you are a BPS-eligible farmer who keeps cattle, sheep or pigs, you can get a one-off payment to help with the costs of a vet's annual health and welfare review of your livestock. Register your interest now – you don't need to wait for SFI applications to open.

This review includes a vet of your choice visiting your farm to:

- carry out the relevant endemic disease or condition testing of the livestock type you choose to have reviewed
- advise on the health and welfare of these livestock – including issues such as lameness, body conditioning or mobility scoring

To register your interest for a vet visit search for 'annual health and welfare review' on GOV.UK.

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT SFI AND OTHER FUNDING

You can find out more about SFI on GOV.UK by searching for 'SFI handbook'.

As well as SFI, farmers can apply for a range of other payments to help improve farm productivity and the environment. Search 'Funding for farmers' on GOV.UK to find out what payments are available.



SFI actions for soils

Annual payment: £5.80 per hectare and an additional payment of £95 per agreement

SAM1 - Assess soil, test soil organic matter and produce a soil management plan

Annual payment: £129 per hectare

SAM2 - Multi-species winter cover crops

Annual payment: £382 per hectare

SAM3 - Herbal leys

SFI actions for moorland

Annual payment: £10.30 per hectare and an additional payment of £265 per agreement

MOR1 - Assess moorland and produce a written record

SFI actions for hedgerows

Annual payment: £3 per 100 metres – one side

HRW1 - Assess and record hedgerow condition

Annual payment: £10 per 100 metres – one side

HRW2 - Manage hedgerows

Annual payment: £10 per 100 metres – both sides

HRW3 - Maintain or establish hedgerow trees

SFI actions for integrated pest management

Annual payment: £989

IPM1 - Assess integrated pest management and produce a plan (this action applies to an SFI agreement, rather than a specific area of land (an 'agreement level SFI action'))

Annual payment: £673 per hectare

IPM2 - Flower-rich grass margins, blocks, or in-field strips

SFI actions for integrated pest management

Annual payment: £55 per hectare

IPM3 - Companion crop on arable and horticultural land

Annual payment: £45 per hectare

IPM4 - No use of insecticide on arable crops and permanent crops

SFI actions for nutrient management

Annual payment: £589

NUM1 - Assess nutrient management and produce a review report (agreement level SFI action)

Annual payment: £102 per hectare

NUM2 - Legumes on improved grassland

Annual payment: £593 per hectare

NUM3 - Legume fallow

SFI actions for farmland wildlife on arable and horticultural land

Annual payment: £614 per hectare

AHL1 - Pollen and nectar flower mix

Annual payment: £732 per hectare

AHL2 - Winter bird food on arable and horticultural land

Annual payment: £590 per hectare

AHL3 - Grassy field corners and blocks

SFI actions for farmland wildlife on improved grassland

Annual payment: £333 per hectare

IGL1 - Take improved grassland field corners or blocks out of management

SFI actions for farmland wildlife on improved grassland

Annual payment: £474 per hectare

IGL2 - Winter bird food on improved grassland

Actions for buffer strips

Annual payment: £451 per hectare

AHL4 - 4m to 12m grass buffer strip on arable and horticultural land

Annual payment: £235 per hectare

IGL3 - 4m to 12m grass buffer strip on improved grassland

SFI actions for low input grassland

Annual payment: £151 per hectare

LIG1 - Manage grassland with very low nutrient inputs (outside SDAs)

Annual payment: £151 per hectare

LIG2 - Manage grassland with very low nutrient inputs (SDAs)

CONTACT US

If you have any questions about SFI, email us at ruralpayments@defra.gov.uk

or telephone
03000 200 301

(Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm, except bank holidays).

