

Farming Newsletter



WELCOME!



As the extremely rainy weather continues this month, let us hope that the April showers bring May flowers. In our newsletter this month there are updates to farm schemes, training and events happening. Read on to find out more about what's on offer this month, and you can also keep up to date with our **Farming Hub** online.

WATER RESTORATION GRANTS

Funding is now available for groups of farmers to improve freshwater habitats, with a goal of farm clusters to work together and deliver projects at the catchment scale. The new Water Restoration Fund offers grants to support projects which improve the water environment. There are grants for both development and delivery of projects. The deadline for applications is **7 June 2024**. For more information and to read the Water Restoration Fund Guidance please click [here](#).



NEW MEASURES AGAINST AVIAN FLU

Defra has set out new measures to better protect the poultry sector from future avian influenza outbreaks. Under these new changes, there will be new requirements for **ALL bird keepers** to officially register their birds. The changes come following the UK's worst ever outbreak of avian influenza. Click [here](#) for more information.

Defra regularly updates their [Farming Blog](#). You can subscribe to the blog to ensure that you receive their latest farming updates. Click [here](#).



NEW SUSTAINABLE FARMING INCETIVE (SFI) MEASURES

On 26 March 2024 new measures came into force to limit the amount of land farmers can enter into 6 SFI actions in order to safeguard domestic food production. Under the changes, new SFI applicants will not be able to put more than 25% of agricultural land into one or more of these 'limited area' SFI actions. The changes do not apply to those farmers with existing SFI agreements and will realign these actions with their original intentions and ensure the scheme continues to support farmers to produce food sustainably alongside protecting the environment. Click [here](#) for more information on the new measures.



REDUCE DISEASE RISK FROM ANIMAL FEED STORAGE UNITS

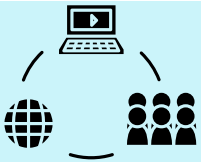
The Animal and Plant Health Agency APHA has recently published guidance on reducing the risk of disease such as Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) from animal feed storage units. Information and guidance for keeping your animals healthy and productive can be found [here](#).



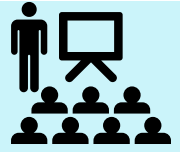
WOODLAND CREATION GRANT INCREASES TO BENEFIT FARMERS

England Woodland Creations Offer (EWCO) payment rate increased to benefit farmers, land managers and woodland creation. The increase offers more tailored tree planting incentives to encourage woodland creation where it is best suited, whilst also protecting farmland for food production. The current maximum rate per hectare from additional **contributions has increased from £8,000 to £11,600**. That will increase to £12,700 in stackable payments if the land is also eligible for the new Low Sensitivity Land Payment. For more information click [here](#).

Farmers in Crewe, Crewe Green and Barthomley, as well as Calverhall and the Market Drayton area are all eligible for a **FREE farm water management plan** produced by Mersey Rivers Trust. To chat to a Farm Advisor about this, please contact us [here](#).



TRAINING AND EVENTS



PIE AND PINT

Mersey Rivers Trust is hosting a Pie and Pint evening. Details are below, and please contact us [here](#) to book your place.

Thursday 25th April
6pm - 8pm
Calverhall Village Hall SY13 4PE

Presentations from Mersey Rivers Trust on projects happening on the Duckow, and a talk on soil and nutrient management and NVZ advice from FACTS qualified advisor Elaine Jewkes of Soil Sense.

ANIMAL HEALTH & WELFARE GRANT

You can now apply for an Animal Health and Welfare Grant through the [Farming Equipment and Technology Fund 2024](#). The grant available is for between £1,000 to £25,000 for items that improve animal health and welfare. The deadline for applications is **1 May 2024**. For more information on the grant and items which are included click [here](#).



MENTAL HEALTH IN AGRICULTURE

One Ash Training are offering a FREE one hour course on Mental Health in Agriculture for anyone who knows someone, or are themselves, going through a tough time with depression. The course gives an overview of how people become depressed, how our brains interpret depression, how to self-soothe and actions we may take to help elevate the symptoms we face. To book a place please click [here](#).

