

Farming Newsletter



WELCOME!



Welcome to the January 2026 edition of the Mersey Rivers Trust farming newsletter!

Read on to find out more about farming news and what's on offer this month, you can also keep up to date with our [Farming Hub](#) online.

NEW FARMING RULES TO CUT POLLUTION & SUPPORT FARMERS

New, clearer farming rules proposed will help to improve water quality, reduce pollution in rivers and give farmers the confidence to grow food sustainably.

Proposals include tighter controls on spreading sewage sludge on farmland, including options to bring it under the Environmental Permitting Regulations and simplifying existing agricultural water rules.

This simplified, clearer regulatory approach will sit alongside support through Environmental Land Management schemes, the Catchment Sensitive Farming advice programme and targeted infrastructure grants, helping farm businesses reduce pollution, protect water and strengthen their long-term resilience. For more information click [here](#).

Defra regularly updates their [Farming Blog](#). To subscribe to the blog and ensure that you receive their latest farming updates click [here](#).





NEW SFI OFFER FOR 2026

The new Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) offer will launch this year. It will continue to support sustainable farming in England

- The new scheme will limit how much land can be put into actions that take land out of production.
- There will be a review of payment rates for actions that take land out of production where uptake has been particularly high.

There will be 2 application windows

June

- Those with small farms
- Those without existing environmental land management agreements

September

- All farmers

For more information click [here.](#)

LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY IN CHESHIRE

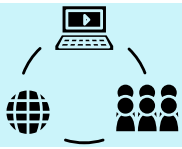
In Cheshire, over 400 farmers have pledged 30,000 hectares for nature recovery through the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

The strategy helps address biodiversity loss, flood risk, soil degradation, and water scarcity by enabling farmer-led solutions, including the Weaver-Gowy blended finance model that pays for wetland restoration to improve water availability, reduce flooding, and support resilient farming.

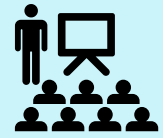
The process also created the farmer-led Future Farmers Group and the Hedgerow Recovery Scheme to restore hedgerows and wildflower margins for better soil health, yields, and wildlife.

For more information on this case study click [here.](#) To get involved, email naturesrecovery@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk





EVENTS



Tuesday 3rd February 2026
10AM - 3PM
Rostherene Mere

ROSTHERNE FARM DEMO DAY

Join us at Rostherne Mere for an informative demonstration on how farmers can manage less productive land through cost-effective, environmentally-friendly water filtration techniques.

This event will feature expert speakers and a guided walk around the site, showcasing how building ponds and reed beds can naturally filter surface runoff, improve water quality, and reduce costs associated with water management. This event includes a buffet LUNCH.

To sign up for this event, Call/Text Amber on 0783709293 OR email farming@merseyrivers.org



FREE PIE & PINT EVENING

Thursday 26th February 2026
6PM - 8PM
Audley Cricket Club

Discover what Mersey Rivers Trust can offer you, explore our work in the area, and find out about upcoming opportunities for farmers in 2026.

Hear from Agscope grassland management advisor James Bretherton as he explores the essential link between soil health, plant productivity, and animal nutrition.

To book your place, please text the name(s) of the attendee(s) and any dietary requirements to Amara on 07554900045 or email farming@merseyrivers.org

