

Farming Newsletter



WELCOME!



In our newsletter this month you will find out about webinars you can attend and recent changes to farm schemes and regulations, as well as free workshops. Read on to find out more about what's on offer this month. You can also keep up to date with our [Farming Hub](#) online.

Discussing the farming offer in 2024 Webinar



On Wednesday 21st February following the popular series of Sustainable Farming Incentive Webinars from September 2023, and the recent FAS webinar 'The farming offer in 2024' with Janet Hughes and Jonathan Marsden, partnering with the Ricardo Farming Resilience Fund team to discuss the farming offer in 2024 with Amelia Rome of The Andersons Centre and Fraser Hugill, Yorkshire Farmer and advisor.

FOREST FOR THE NATION COMPETITION

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is running a multi-million-pound grant funding competition to identify a new Forest for the Nation.

The competition is inspired by the achievements of [the National Forest](#), which has transformed the landscape across 200 square miles of the Midlands since the 1990s.

The Forest for the Nation will connect more people to nature through woodland creation and woodland management. Stage one opens for applications on 3 February 2024 and closes at 10am on 18 March 2024.



FARMING INNOVATION PROGRAMME - RESEARCH STARTER



Farming, growing or forestry businesses based in England can apply for a share of up to £850,000 for feasibility projects to improve productivity, sustainability resilience and move the agricultural sector to netzero.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) will invest up to £850,000 in innovation projects.

This funding is part of Defra's Farming Innovation Programme which is a partnership with UKRI's Transforming Food Production Challenge and delivered by Innovate UK.

This is an expression of interest (Eoi) stage of a 2 stage competition. No funding will be awarded at this stage. If your application is successful, you will be invited to apply to a full stage competition.

Deadline is Wednesday 14 February 2024 12:00pm

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT INVESTMENT READINESS FUND

The Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (NEIRF) supports the government's goals in the [Environmental Improvement Plan](#), [Green Finance Strategy](#), [Nature Markets Framework](#), [Agricultural Transition Plan](#)

The NEIRF is a competitive grants scheme providing grants of between £10,000 and £100,000 to support the development of nature projects in England that:

- help farmers achieve one or more natural environmental outcomes from the Environmental Improvement Plan
- have the ability to help farmers produce revenue from ecosystem services to attract and repay investment
- produce an investment model that can be scaled up and reproduced by farmers

FARMING INNOVATION PROGRAMME - LARGE R&D PARTNERSHIPS

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) will invest up to £7.8 million in innovation projects.

The aim of this competition is to fund industrial research and experimental development projects that will address major on-farm or immediate post farmgate challenges or opportunities

Your proposal must be able to demonstrate how the project will benefit farmers, growers or foresters in England. Competition closes Wednesday 13 March 2024 11:00am



FARMING INVESTMENT FUND

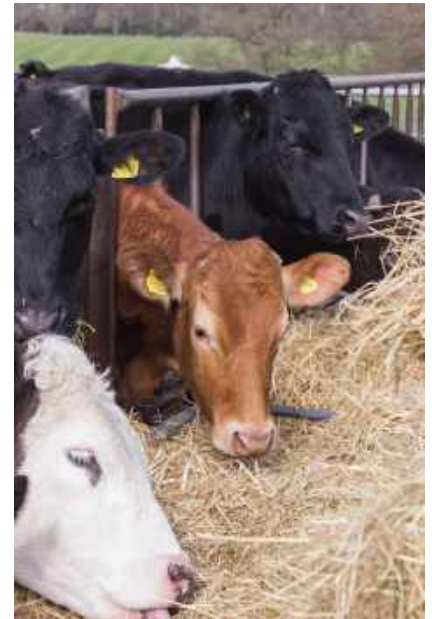
You can apply for a grant for capital items to improve farm and horticulture productivity through:

- the use of robotic or automatic equipment and systems to aid crop and livestock production
- wavelength specific LED lighting for horticultural crops
- advanced ventilation control units
- solar photovoltaic (PV) systems

The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) will prioritise funding for projects that:

- improve productivity
- improve the environment
- introduce innovation
- introduce technology to address labour shortage (farm productivity projects)

The more your project meets the grant's funding priorities, the higher your application will score.



MERSEY RIVERS TRAINEES

Mersey Rivers are hiring two full time trainees, the roles are for an initial fixed term period of 6 months. This is an excellent opportunity for a young person to gain valuable experience and training in the area of river conservation, farm advice, agricultural engagement and environmental management. Working with a dynamic and enthusiastic team the role offers a wide variety of activities which will help to further develop communication, planning, teamworking and engagement skills.

Farm Advice Trainee

Water Environmental Management Trainee

