

Farming Newsletter



WELCOME!



Welcome to the June 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.

SFI26 50% WINDOW 1 NOW ALLOCATED

After only 4 days 50% of SFI26 window 1 has been allocated. If you are eligible to apply in Window 1 and have not yet submitted an application, we encourage you to do so as soon as possible. Submitting a complete and accurate application early will help reduce the risk of delays.

Before submitting your application through the RPA make sure your digital maps cover all the land parcels you want to include in your SFI26 application, with the correct areas and land covers and at least 3ha of agricultural land.

Eligible applicants who do not apply during Window 1 will have the opportunity to apply during Window 2. Window 2 is expected to open in September. DEFRA will provide a further update when around 75% of the Window 1 budget has been allocated. 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](#).



25 YEAR FARMING ROADMAP

The government has published a new 25 year farming roadmap setting out it's long term vision for english agriculture in 2050.

The Farming Roadmap is divided into 2 sections:

- Section 1: the context and vision for farming to 2050
- Section 2: the actions needed to deliver the vision

These 2 sections of the roadmap are built around three core priorities:

1. Creating profitable and productive farm businesses - supporting farm business performance
2. Supporting sustainable farming, and improving resilience to climate change
3. Building a resilient farm business prepared for market volatility and other future challenges.

It also aims to provide greater certainty for farmers making long-term investment decisions.

Among the measures announced are additional funding for agricultural innovation, continued Seasonal Worker visas until at least 2030, plans to simplify regulation and digital services, further supply chain reforms, support for greater collaboration through farming co-operatives, and a review of how the economic contribution of agriculture is measured.

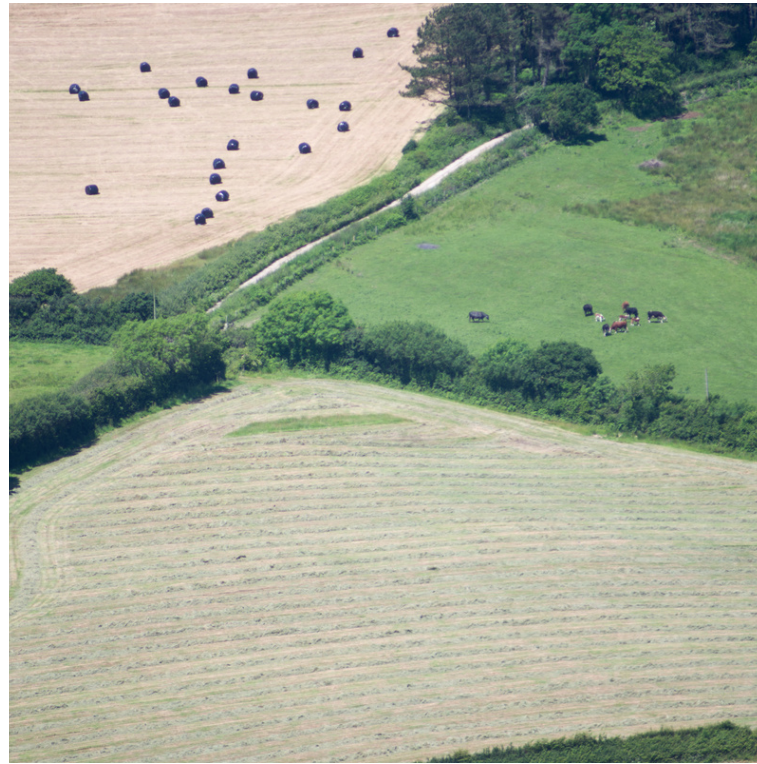
The roadmap also confirms the continuation and refinement of Environmental Land Management schemes, alongside new measures intended to improve farm profitability and resilience. For more information click [here](#).



HEDGE LINK - HEDGE HUB

Hedge Link is the go-to place for anyone seeking hedgerow knowledge and practical learning. Take a look at their excellent short videos discussing the many benefits of hedgerows, and tools to assess hedgerow health. Hedgerows provide vital habitat and corridors for wildlife, store carbon, benefit the soil, shelter livestock, and help regulate water in the land by intercepting surface runoff pathways.

For more information on how hedges on farms could benefit you click [here](#).



FREE WATER MANAGEMENT PLANS IN THE RIVER BOLLIN CATCHMENT

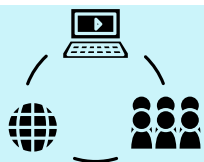
Farmers in the River Bollin and Dean catchments (including Mobberley, Sugar, Birkin, Pedley and Marthall Brooks) are all eligible for a FREE farm water management plan produced by Mersey Rivers Trust. To chat to a Farm Advisor about this, please contact us via our farming mailbox - farming@merseyrivers.org or call Amber on 07837098293.

HELP SHAPE NEW SUICIDE AWARENESS TRAINING FOR FARMING, RURAL AND AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITIES

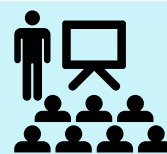
NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board has commissioned a new online suicide awareness training course for people living and working in rural and agricultural communities.

If you live or work in a farming, rural or agricultural community, or support those who do, they invite you to share your experience. The survey responses will help shape the development of this new national training resource.

To take part in the survey Zero Suicide Alliance - farming, agricultural and rural living experiences click [here](#).



TRAINING AND EVENTS



**FREE SUPPORT FOR
YOUR FARM BUSINESS**

Capital Grants & SFI Talks

SFI Questions? Get Answers.

Tuesday 8 July, Delamere Community Centre, CW8 2HU, 6PM

Monday 13 July, Tilstock Village Hall, SY13 3PL, 6PM



Water for the North West



CHESHIRE NFU & YFC

Farm Safety Event



WEDNESDAY 15TH JULY 2026 • 7PM

Smithy Farm, Buxton Road, Congleton, CW12 3PG



BBQ & Refreshments



Certificate of attendance



All welcome!

Working together to help keep everyone safe!

6 INTERACTIVE SAFETY STATIONS:

- Heartstart Lymm - First aid
- TWR Training - Quad Bike Safety
- Papyrus - Looking after your mental health
- NFU - Tractor and Trainers - Do you know the rules?
- Cheshire Fire and Rescue - Farm fire safety
- Wright & Morten Farm Vets & Richard Blackburn - Safe cattle handling

**If England reach
the semi-finals...**



**WE WILL
SHOW IT
ON A SCREEN!**

**To help with catering
please do book your place!**



Call NU North on 02476 939401



Email nfu_north@nfu.org.uk



**Or contact any member of
the Cheshire YFC top table**

Please advise if any dietary requirements



WATER FRIENDLY FARMING DIRECTORY



ORGANISATION	DETAILS
	Offers free, confidential advice and support focused on water quality, soil health, and sustainable farming. Develop tailored Water Management Plans for farms in specific catchments, identifying funding opportunities (such as small grants for capital works), and supporting natural flood management as well as pond and wetland creation or management. Also offer workshops, demonstration days and training. The Trust offers services across the Mersey Basin, with targeted projects in the Upper Weaver, River Bollin, and Alt-Crossens catchments. farming@merseryrivers.org.uk / 07920 095 753
	Provides practical environmental advice to protect nature and boost sustainability, focusing on water quality, soil health, and habitat creation. This includes supporting farmers with hedge planting, woodland creation, reconditioning compacted soils, and implementing sustainable drainage systems through catchment specific projects. info@groundwork.org.uk
	Catchment/Environmental Advice: Free advice is available for farmers in specific catchment areas regarding water quality, pesticides, and nutrient management. Southcatchmentteam@uuplc.co.uk Agricultural Water Supply: For new troughs or farm connections, call 0345 072 6067 Biosolids Usage: For information on biosolids, contact UUBioresource@uuplc.co.uk / 0345 672 3723
	Advice, guidance, and support aimed at helping farmers comply with environmental regulations, reduce pollution, and protect natural resources (soil, water, and air). enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk / 03708 506 506
	Provides a map identifying the best locations for nature recovery, which informs Biodiversity Net Gain delivery and ELMs, farmers can add their land to this map. Future Farmer Group - A dedicated group to showcase ways to boost wildlife while improving profitability. Support for regenerative farming methods including action plans promote low-carbon, agro-ecological methods and soil health improvement - naturerecovery@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk
	Cheshire wildlife trust have a number of schemes running and available to support you with up to 100% grant funding to plant trees or hedges, create or enhance meadows and establish ponds. - naturerecovery@cheshirewt.org.uk / farming@cheshirewt.org.uk or call 07394 568564
	Political lobbying, expert legal and technical advice (via NFU CallFirst), and business-specific guidance. Membership includes the Legal Assistance Scheme, a free Legal Health Check, and access to specialised advisers. Also offer networking, sector reports, and discounts on insurance and services. - nfu_north@nfu.org.uk / 02476 939401
	Can provide significant grants, expert advice, and financial incentives for planting trees, creating woodland, and implementing agroforestry, notably through the England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO) which covers up to 100% of capital costs and 15 years of maintenance payments. These schemes aim to increase farm income, improve biodiversity, and provide livestock shelter. North West and West Midlands team, based at Delamere Forest, reachable at 0300 067 4340 or delamere@forestryengland.uk
	Works collaboratively with farmers, water companies, and regulators to ensure water sustainability in the North West and Midlands, particularly focusing on water security for agriculture in the face of climate change. Provides advice on long-term investments in on-farm reservoirs and water storage, promotes Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR), increased rainwater harvesting, supports funding for farmer-led groups to identify options for improving water supply resilience, gives advice on water rights trading and water transfers. waterresourceswest@outlook.com
	A partnership between Defra, Natural England, and the EA, this program offers free, one-to-one advice from local advisers to reduce water and air pollution. Can offer visits to provide advice, refer to technical experts where needed, advice ahead of inspections or submitting applications for capital grants. csf.northwest@naturalengland.org.uk
	Free, expert, and tailored advice on tree planting, agroforestry, natural flood management and woodland creation. Provide significant funding, often covering up to 100% of project costs and maintenance through the Trees for Climate grant scheme. Their support includes designing projects for biodiversity, shelterbelts, and increased, sustainable productivity. 03033 300 410 / mail@merseyforest.org.uk

The Farming Advice Service (FAS) provides free, confidential advice for farmers and land managers in England to help protect people, livestock and the environment, Technical advice line: 03000 200 301 | Email: advice@farmingadvice.service.org.uk

This is produced by the Weaver Gowry Agricultural Group. For more information please email farming@merseyrivers.org



DATES FOR THE DIARY



JANUARY

16th - For any land located in a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ), this is the date from which you can apply manufactured nitrogen fertilisers to grassland and tillage land if conditions are suitable.

FEBRUARY

1st - For any land located in a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ), you can apply organic manure with a high, readily available nitrogen content to grassland and tillage land on all soil types if conditions are suitable and you adhere to the quantity application restrictions.

MARCH

1st - You must not cut or trim a hedgerow that is covered by the Hedgerow management rules between 1 March and 31 August. You must not cause or permit another person to cut or trim such a hedgerow.

31st - If you hold a winter or all-year-round water abstraction licence (authorising abstraction outside the period April to October). You have 28 days to submit your record of actual abstraction to the Environment Agency.

APRIL

1st - This is the end of the burning season for heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium. The burning season is from: 1 October to 15 April in upland areas & 1 November to 31 March in other areas.

30th - If your farmland is located within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ), by 30th April each year you must make a record of: the numbers and type of livestock you kept in buildings or on hard standing during the previous slurry/manure storage period & the dates for the start and end of use and locations of any field sites you use for storing solid manure.

JUNE

SFI 2026 application window 1 opens exact date - and will remain open for around 2 months - although it may close sooner if demand is high and the Window 1 budget is fully allocated. For more information click [here](#).

JULY

Capital Grants 2026 applications open (Date TBD). For more information click [here](#).

SEPTEMBER

SFI 2026 application window 2 opens

1st - in NVZs, closed period starts for high-nitrogen organic manure on grassland (shallow/sandy soils); manufactured nitrogen on tillage land.

1st - You may now cut and trim hedges until the 28th of February.

