

UTASS Briefing: 30th June 2022

SUSTAINABLE FARMING INCENTIVE 2022

The Sustainable Farming Incentive has opened today for applications for three year agreements. The scheme is available to all farmers who currently receive Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) payments. Its aim is to reward sustainable practices which support food production and benefit the environment. It is the first of three new environmental land management schemes being introduced under the Agricultural Transition Plan. The scheme will open with two soil standards recognising the importance of healthy soil for successful farming and the environment, and a Moorland standard (eligible land parcels have to be above or mainly above the Moorland Line) to assess the condition of the Moorland as a basis for further action in future through our existing and new schemes. At present there is no standard for grassland that is not defined as “intensive”. Details of the proposed payment rates were in the last briefing. At the moment there is no deadline for applications.

Applications are made online through Rural Payments.

This is the initial rollout of the scheme: Defra are planning to expand it over the next three years as Direct Payments are reduced. The full set of standards should be in place by 2025.

BPS 2022

The RPA expect to start making advance payments in July and to issue the majority by the end of July. For the remaining claims that require additional checks, payments are expected to be made by the end of August. The RPA are intending to contact anyone not paid by then to explain why. Final payments as usual are scheduled to begin in December 2022. All payments are subject to the progressive reduction forming part of the Agricultural Transition Plan.

UTASS TEAM

Tessa’s retirement after years of being such an integral and important part of our team is going to require some adjustments. We are hoping to be able to pick up her work in as seamless a fashion as possible. It is planned to replace Tessa but this may take some time to find the right person. In the interim we would welcome your help and cooperation to make sure that nothing important gets missed. If you have any outstanding paperwork with which Tessa was assisting, please do get in touch with the UTASS office as soon as possible.

For further advice and assistance please call UTASS 01833 641010.

Richard Betton