

UTASS Briefing: 22nd November 2022.

AVIAN INFLUENZA (BIRD FLU).

Bird Flu has been on the increase amongst wild birds resulting in the Government introducing compulsory control measures to try and limit the spread.

Since the 7th November there has been a national legal requirement to house all poultry and captive birds.

There are no exceptions for small “back yard” flocks or birds kept as pets and includes ducks, geese and game birds.

On the 21st November an outbreak was confirmed near Barnard Castle which has introduced a 3k protection and 10k monitoring zones with extra restrictions and a licensing regime.

It is also a legal requirement to register your flock if you have more than 50 birds in total.

Voluntary registration for those with less than 50 birds is strongly encouraged.

The relevant forms can be downloaded from the gov.uk website or at UTASS.

SHEEP AND GOAT ANNUAL INVENTORY.

All keepers of sheep and goats need to complete an annual inventory showing the number of animals on their holding on **1st December 2022**.

This needs to be done by 31st December or it may incur additional inspections and possible penalties.

Those keepers who have done this online in the past should receive an advisory email which will be followed by an email on 1st December with a link to a partially prepopulated form.

Paper copies should be sent to everyone else. However, if you do not receive a form or link you should contact Defra on 03000 600140 or surveys@defra.gsi.gov.uk

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FARM FOR THE FUTURE.

We know the continual delays and general lack of urgency in the development of the Agricultural Transition Plan and the new schemes to replace BPS have been irritating for farmers and we very much share your frustration.

In a time of great economic and political upheaval and market turmoil the one thing that is needed is some certainty on future schemes and the direction of government policy.

We have postponed the start of our Farm for the Future programme meetings until the New Year.

It is hoped that by then there will be greater clarity but, even if there isn't, the FFTF programme gives farming families the opportunity to improve their understanding of their business and the economic climate in which they are functioning.

There is no single blueprint for a profitable farming future but, through FFTF, we can help you prepare for the inevitable changes ahead, whether it is succession planning, managing input costs or new business opportunities such as carbon trading or diversification. Doing nothing and awaiting for things to unfold could be a risky course of action.

To sign up for the free advice, support and sessions available through Farm for the Future contact the office (you can sign up even if you were involved in the last programme.)

For further advice and assistance please call UTASS 01833 641010.

Richard Betton.

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