

UTASS Briefing: 2nd June 2023.

COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP

Defra have announced a welcome increase in some CS payment rates by increasing payments in the SDA (uplands) to the same rate as in non-SDA (lowland). Payment rate for option GS5, *Permanent grassland with very low inputs (SDA)*, will increase from £98 to £151 and SW10, *Seasonal livestock removal on grassland (SDA)*, from £77-115. These and other increases will apply to existing agreements from the 1st January 2023 and all new agreements

The application window for CS Mid Tier did open on 21st March (see previous briefing) and will close on the 18th of August for agreements to start on 1st January 2024. The middle element of Environmental Land Management (ELM) will be a continuation/development of Countryside Stewardship (CS+) that will sit seamlessly with SFI. The low input grassland option for SFI, expected to be almost identical to CS GS5, will be paid at the same rate as the CS equivalent (£151). SFI also has a management payment (£20 per hectare up to £1,000). The details of the new SFI standards are expected soon with applications opening later in the summer. Please contact UTASS if you are considering applying for CS or SFI and require assistance. Access to both schemes is only available online.

These changes are most welcome as farmers in the uplands struggle to replace income lost through the phasing out of BPS. Ministers have recognised that upland farming needs to be economically sustainable if it is to continue to provide all the “public goods” (bio-diversity, landscape, access, clean water and air) that have been taken for granted for far too long.

ANIMAL HEALTH

A reminder for those who were fully absorbed in seasonal farming events when the last briefing went out. Farmers can now register for the SFI Animal Health and Welfare Review <https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/register-your-interest> There are set payments for different species (sheep £436, beef cattle £522) for your vet to carry out a review. The review is designed to tackle endemic diseases such as BVD in cattle and wormer effectiveness in sheep as well as improve welfare and increase productivity.

On Monday 26th June there will be “Test don’t Guess” workshops from Fiona Lovatt of Flock Health Ltd, Castle Farm Vets and other industry experts on controlling sheep parasites and more details on the Animal Health & Welfare Pathway.

Supper will be provided from 6pm and workshops will commence at 6:30pm.

To book your space please contact Julia by Monday 19th June on 01833 641010 or email julia@utass.org

For further advice and assistance please call UTASS 01833 641010.
Richard Betton.