

Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) & Delinked Payments

Just a reminder that **you do not need to submit a BPS form this year** as BPS has been replaced with a “Delinked Payment”. Delinked payment will be paid automatically in two instalments (one in July and the remainder in December) – no paperwork required. You will receive your delinked payment until it is phased out by 2028.

The RPA has recently informed farmers that if they wish to transfer their delinked payment to another business this must be done by the 10th May 2024. This is unlikely to be relevant to many farmers unless they have made significant changes to their business structure. For any advice on this matter please contact Charlotte or Richard at UTASS.

Current CS & ES (HLS) Revenue Claims

If you are currently in a Countryside Stewardship (CS) or Environmental Stewardship (ES/HLS) Agreement, **you must make an annual revenue claim by midnight on the 15th May. Please note any late claims will be subject to a penalty.**

CS Annual Claims are to be completed and submitted online through your Rural Payments portal (this includes any businesses that have just entered into a new agreement for 2024).

ES/HLS claims are being emailed or posted out by the RPA and they need to be filled in by hand and signed. They can then be either scanned and emailed to the RPA or sent by recorded delivery (this can be done at UTASS). If you haven't received a claim form by the end of next week it would be advisable to contact the RPA (03000 200 301 or ruralpayments@defra.gov.uk) to request one.

Countryside Stewardship (CS) & Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI)

CS is NOT currently open for new applications. The RPA is intending to reopen for online applications, including Higher Tier, in the early summer. It is their intention to have:

- rolling start dates to replace the mandatory January 1st start date
- some higher tier options available in the mid-tier
- a seamless interface with SFI (Sustainable Farming Incentive)
- introduce new SFI actions
- simpler transitions from HLS to CS

Past experience and current computer glitches would suggest that, even if the details of the system and the new actions and options are announced in the early summer, it may not be possible to make an actual application until rather later in the year. Anybody considering applying to SFI may find it sensible to apply for the limited offer available now as they will be able to take out an additional agreement later in the year to add additional actions. Payments are quarterly in arrears.

UTASS BRIEFING 5th April 2024

Farming Equipment and Technology Fund (FETF)

Just a reminder that the deadline to apply for Farming Equipment and Technology Fund: Animal Health and Welfare items is at midday on 1st May 2024.

For further advice and assistance please call UTASS 01833 641010.

Charlotte Fletcher and Richard Betton

Upcoming Training

- NPTC Safe Use of Pesticides – 24th, 28th & 29th May; £375 for theory and 1 practical (mounted/handheld) including training and assessment.
- Northumbria Dry Stone Walling Association Tasters – 8th June & 20th July; £40.
- NPTC Safe use of Sheep Dip – planned for mid-June.
- British Wool Shearing – 29th & 30th June; £240 inc vat.

Please contact Julia at julia@utass.org or call the office on 01833 641010 for more information or to book a place.

Funded Young Driving Training – Applications Now Open

UTASS is delighted to announce that we are once again providing the chance for young people across the Dales to apply for support with driver training to help improve their opportunities for the future.

Thanks to a recent grant from The Wellesley Trust Fund at the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland, over £7000 is available to support the cost of Car/Motorcycle Driving Lessons, Rough Terrain Telescopic, Quad Bike, Pre-Test Tractor Training or Lantra 13-15 Tractor Driving for young people.

Applicants are asked to demonstrate why they need the training and to indicate how it would improve their career prospects and/or enable them to access training and employment opportunities outside their immediate area.

All applications for this round must be received by UTASS by Sunday 5th May 2024 and applicants should be prepared to complete their training within 6 months, unless there are exceptional circumstances that prevent completion. To be considered for funding, please complete an application form which can be found online at <https://forms.office.com/e/tfRDx5Vw4p> or on the UTASS website. If you have any questions please contact UTASS on 01833 641010 or email caitlin@utass.org.

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