

UTASS Briefing: 18th June 2021.

FUTURE AGRICULTURAL POLICY.

Defra have always planned to develop the different elements that make up the Agricultural Transition Plan using Tests and Trials, Consultation and Pilots. The process was late beginning due to the delays in completing Brexit and then considerably restrained by Covid. Ministers are still keen to stick to the time scale even though there are growing fears that the massive problems and delays experienced by farmers when SPS, BPS and Countryside Stewardship were launched could be repeated. Development has speeded up in recent months on the Sustainable Farming Initiative which will reward farmers for producing Public Goods and be the main replacement for BPS. At the moment most of the Standards that will be available for hill farmers (semi-improved grassland, unenclosed moorland, drystone walls, hedges, heritage) are not yet finished. The official pilot with 2000 farmers is due to begin later this summer with a roll out of some of the standards next year in anticipation of the full SFI launch in 2024. There are also other schemes that will continue to run such as the Hedgerow and Boundary Capital Grant Scheme. The Farming in Protected Landscapes, for most of our members the North Pennine AONB, also forms part of the ATP and will open soon. The Lump sum exit scheme and de-linked payments are currently out for consultation which closes on the 11th August 2021.

We have refrained from trying to update our members through briefings as the new schemes are still in development and liable to change, Past experience would suggest that the definitive details are absolutely essential to make an informed decision about participation. We appreciate that this is frustrating for most farmers especially with the trade deals currently being negotiated that do not give adequate recognition to our high animal welfare and environmental standards. We are considering arranging some local events for small groups of farmers where we can outline the current position, possible outcomes and have an informal discussion. It would also be a great help for us to understand your concerns and thoughts especially on the Lump sum exit scheme and de-linked payments. If you are interested in taking part please give UTASS a ring or drop us an email.

AGRICULTURAL CENSUS.

It is a legal requirement to complete the June census if your business has been selected. Please contact UTASS if you need any help to do this.

REMINDER UTASS MEMBERSHIP.

We are updating our computer system to enable us to be more efficient. If you have not yet done so we would really appreciate the return of completed paper forms or through the link below.

bit.ly/members-update

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

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June 2021 - Training Update

DRYSTONE WALLING TASTER COURSE (14+)

Northumbria Dry Stone Walling Association Taster course 24th July 2021 to be held at Woodland. Five trainees can be accommodated.

BRITISH WOOL SHEARING COURSE (16 or 15+with parental consent)

British Wool have confirmed the two day courses to be held on Thursday, 24th & Friday, 25th June, at Hill House, Woodland with spaces available.

NPTC Safe Use of Pesticides

Lantra Chainsaw Maintenance & Cross Cutting

LEVEL 2 FOOD SAFETY IN CATERING – 5/7/21 at UTASS

EMERGENCY FIRST AID – 16/7/21 at UTASS

Hedgelaying Introduction/Improvers (late October)

Please let us know of any training you are interested in, keep checking our Training Opportunities page to see what's happening and contact Julia on 01833 641010 or e-mail julia@utass.org to discuss training requirements and available funding.

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