



Information

Farm and Forestry Improvement Grant (FFIS)

July 1st 2011 saw the formal transition of the delivery of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) to Defra. Taking over from the Regional Development Agencies, Defra have been working on the new delivery arrangements in recent months. The new delivery arrangements should lead to better consistency across the programme and a stronger national lead. At the same time, eight offices have been maintained at the local level to help provide accessible support to RDPE applicants, maintaining the local expertise that was previously within the RDAs. Contact details for these offices are available at the end of this document.

The focus to date has been on the physical transition of staff and resources. However, once complete, attention will focus on future delivery. Defra anticipate the remaining funds to be increasingly competitive as delivery continues through to 2013. A small grants scheme is set to be launched in the autumn, with a likely focus on Axis 1 ('improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sector') measures. In line with making things simpler, it will give applicants a menu of options so choose from as well as building on best practice from across the regions in devising application process and operation of the new scheme. More details on other RDPE aspects, including larger scale grants and the uplands theme, are expected in the coming months.

In some regions where RDAs had committed a large share of their budget, the small grants scheme may provide growers with the first opportunity to access RDPE funds for a number of months – it has been advised that you keep in touch with your local RDPE delivery team. Local staff will be best placed to advise on specific details of future delivery as details become available, particularly those growers that may have had applications placed on hold as the programme delivery went through transition.

£20 million is available to help rural businesses in England increase profits and reduce their impact on the environment.

Growers can apply for grants of between £2,500 and up to £25,000 to invest in green projects and new machinery so their businesses can grow in an environmentally friendly way.

The Farming and Forestry Improvement Scheme will fund new profit-boosting green schemes that:

- Save energy and reduce carbon emissions;
- Reduce dependence on artificial fertilizers through better use of manures;
- Improve soil quality;
- Improve animal health and welfare;
- Save and recycle water; and
- Promote woodland management by processing timber more efficiently.

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Funds will be allocated between now and December 2013. Grants will cover a maximum of half of the total cost of projects in uplands areas and at most 40% of the total cost of projects in non uplands areas.

The Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) aims to improve competitiveness in the agriculture and forestry sectors, safeguard and enhance the rural environment, foster competitive and sustainable rural businesses and thriving rural communities.

What can be funded under FFIS?

To be eligible for funding under FFIS the project must fall within one of the following key areas of activity:

- **Nutrient Management:** Improvements in use of farm manures and slurries so as to improve soil quality and reduce reliance on artificial fertiliser. Eligible items include slurry injectors, mechanical slurry separation systems and Global Positioning Systems.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Projects to reduce or recover energy use on farm resulting in a reduction of farm energy bills and carbon dioxide emissions. Eligible items include heat exchangers, gel coolers and ice builders.
- **Water Resource Management:** Rainwater harvesting, recycling and reuse systems to reduce reliance on mains water. Eligible items include pipe-work specifically to intercept and divert roof water to a storage facility, rainwater harvesting equipment.
- **Animal Health and Welfare:** Projects which bring about significant improvements in farm animal health and welfare.
- **Forestry:** Projects which improve the economic value of forests through the efficiencies of improved processing and adding value. Eligible items include timber processors, forwarders, forestry trailers, tractors mounted forestry grabs.

Who can apply?

Farmers, foresters, contractors and horticulturalists across England are eligible to apply.

Completed application forms will only be accepted if submitted during an open round. The first round of the scheme closed on 17 January 2012. The second round is expected to open in late April/early May.

East of England

T: 0300 060 0541

E: rdpedelivereast@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Defra RDPE Delivery Team, Eastbrook, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8DR

East Midlands

T: 0300 060 2526

E: rdpedelivereastmidlands@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Defra RDPE Delivery Team, Blocks 6 & 7, Chalfont Drive, Nottingham, NG8 3RA

North East

T: 0191 2265436

E: rdpedeliverynortheast@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Defra RDPE Delivery Team, Lancaster House, Hampshire Court, Newcastle Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7YH

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E: rdpedeliverynorthwest@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Defra RDPE Delivery Team, Edenbridge House, Lowther Street, Carlisle, CA3 8DX

South East

T: 01932 357083

E: rdpedeliverysoutheast@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Defra RDPE Delivery Team, Block 142, AHVLA, Woodham Lane, New Haw, Addlestone, Surrey, KT15 3NB

South West

T: 01392 266367 and 03000 604326

E: rdpedeliverysouthwest@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Defra RDPE Delivery Team, Clyst House, Winslade Park, Clyst St Mary, Exeter, Devon, EX5 1DY

West Midlands

T: 01905 768854

E: rdpedeliverywestmidlands@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Defra RDPE Delivery Team, Government Buildings, Whittington Road, Worcester, WR5 2LQ

Yorkshire and Humber

T: 0300 060 4459

E: rdpedeliveryyorksandhumber@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Defra RDPE Delivery Team, 25 Queens Street, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS1 2UN

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