

UK and Ireland Agricultural Grants Tracker – January 2025 Update

Compiled For



**NEW ZEALAND
TRADE & ENTERPRISE**
Te Taurapa Tūhono

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Disclaimer

This Grants Tracker report, prepared for New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) and its clients presents the findings from a research project compiled during 2023 and updated monthly thereafter. This document has been prepared in association with the client. We have taken all reasonable steps to ensure that the information in this report is correct. However, we do not guarantee that the material within the report is free of errors or omissions. We shall not be liable or responsible for any kind of loss or damage that may result as a consequence of the use of this report.

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Executive Summary

During the summer of 2023, The Andersons Centre (Andersons) has compiled an Agricultural Grants Tracker (compendium) to summarise the grant schemes that are available to UK farmers that could be potentially used to purchase products and services that NZ companies supply to the UK. In autumn 2023, it is planned to add the grant schemes that are available in the Republic of Ireland (Ireland).

Chapter 2 provides some top-level guidance on how to use this compendium in terms of searching for relevant grants and it also provides further details on how grant scheme updates will be managed.

Chapter 3 gives an overview of the UK policy landscape as the future direction of policy is critical for long-term planning. It mentions that farm support funding is likely to decline in real terms across the UK. It highlights that under almost all of the new UK systems, farmers will have to do more (i.e. incur more costs) to access support and many of these activities are focused on environmental issues – addressing biodiversity loss, climate change etc. Productivity is also a key focus. These changes will affect the profitability of UK farming – especially sectors reliant on the flagship Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) – cereals and beef & sheep. That said, these changes may require new goods and services.

A 'North-South' divide is emerging in terms of UK agricultural policy. Scotland and Northern Ireland appear to be more open towards 'coupled' schemes that safeguard livestock numbers (provided key productivity requirements are met). In contrast, England and Wales are focusing more on 'public goods' type schemes that could lead to more significant reductions in livestock numbers. As the BPS is removed there is likely to be a period of accelerated structural change across UK farming. Possibly more in the next 5-10 years than has been seen over the past 20 years.

Chapters 4-8 summarise the various grant schemes that are available across the UK, with Chapter 10 outlining the grant schemes in the Republic of Ireland (Ireland). Chapter 9 summarises the policy framework in Ireland.

The number of schemes examined are as follows;

- **Pan-UK (Chapter 4):** 2 grant schemes
- **England (Chapter 5):** 14 grant schemes
- **Scotland (Chapter 6):** 8 grant schemes are summarised
- **Wales (Chapter 7):** a further 8 grant schemes are outlined
- **Northern Ireland (Chapter 8):** 6 grant schemes are summarised
- **Ireland (Chapter 10):** 14 grant schemes now summarised.

Background information about The Andersons Centre and the authors is contained in the Appendix.

This compendium is a "live" document and as new grant schemes get announced in future, a summary will be added to this document. When a new grant scheme gets announced, a monthly alert will be provided via email by The Andersons Centre and will direct users to the section of this compendium which has been updated. All NZTE registered users will have access to the live document via a Sharepoint link which will be managed by The Andersons Centre.

Agricultural Grants Tracker – Update – January 2025

The tables below provide a top-level summary of the key updates since last month.

Grant Name	Royal Countryside Fund (Section 4.1.1)		
Territory	UK	Category:	Pan-UK Grant Opportunities
Overview	Offers free farm resilience programmes across the UK to help family farms, plus grants to enhance the viability and sustainability of rural communities.		
Key Changes	EOI opens on 10 th January and closes on 21 st February 2025 for the new Rural Communities Grant Programme.		

Grant Name	Higher Tier Capital Payments (Section 5.2.3)		
Territory	England	Category:	Equipment & Ancillary Items
Overview	Offers a selection of specialist Higher Tier capital items to help support the most environmentally significant sites and woodlands.		
Key Changes	New updated guidance now available for 2025.		

Grant Name	Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier (Section 5.3.2)		
Territory	England	Category:	Land Management
Overview	Pays for a change in land management practices to increase biodiversity, improve habitats, woodland areas, water & air quality, and natural flood management.		
Key Changes	New guidance available; by invitation only, applications not possible until mid-'25.		

Grant Name	Small Grants: Environment, Efficiency & Yard Coverings (Section 7.2.1)		
Territory	Wales	Category:	Equipment & Ancillary Items
Overview	A set of Small Grants to contribute towards the cost of capital items to improve the efficiency and environmental performance of farm businesses.		
Key Changes	Small Grants – Environment opens for applications from 13 th Jan- 21 st Feb 2025.		

Grant Name	Small Grants – Woodland Creation (Section 7.3.1)		
Territory	Wales	Category:	Land Management
Overview	Small grants to support the planting of shelterbelts.		
Key Changes	Expected to open in 2025 for the following rounds: 3 rd March – 11 th April 2025; 19 th May – 27 th June 2025 and 21 st July – 29 th August 2025.		

Grant Name	Woodland Grants (Section 7.3.3)		
Territory	Wales	Category:	Land Management
Overview	Support for the creation, maintenance, restoration, planning and health of Welsh woodlands and associated infrastructure		
Key Changes	The window for applications to the Woodland Creation Grant in 2025 will run from 3 rd March – 21 st November 2025.		

Grant Name	Farming with Nature Scheme (Section 8.3.2)		
Territory	Northern Ireland	Category:	Land Management
Overview	Support for farmers and land managers to make contributions to environmental improvements and sustainability.		
Key Changes	New scheme to Grants Monitor - Advanced notice that the new Farming with Nature Transition Package will be available from Spring 2025.		

Grant Name	Woodland Schemes (Section 8.3.3)		
Territory	Northern Ireland	Category:	Land Management
Overview	Various schemes with funding for woodland creation, protection & restocking.		
Key Changes	The Small Woodland Grant scheme opened in December 2024 and closes on 20 th January 2025.		

Grant Name	Innovative Forest Technology Scheme: Module 3 Sustainable Forest Harvesting Machinery Grant (Section 10.1.3)		
Territory	Ireland	Category:	Infrastructure & Equipment
Overview	Support to purchase new updated low ground impact harvesting and extraction equipment.		
Key Changes	Application window now open, closes 4 th February 2025.		

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1 Introduction

In early 2023, New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) approached The Andersons Centre about setting up a monitoring service for UK grants for agriculture. The intention being so that NZTE could better inform its client companies on the grant opportunities that will be available for the products and services that its client companies provide. In May 2023, approval was given to launch an Agricultural Grants Tracker covering the UK and Ireland.

This compendium summarises the grant schemes that are applicable to companies supplying products and services to the UK farming industry. In autumn 2023, it is planned to add the grant schemes that are available in the Republic of Ireland (Ireland).

This compendium will be a “live” document and as new grant schemes get announced in future, a summary will be added to this document. When a new grant scheme gets announced, an alert will be provided via email by The Andersons Centre and will direct users to the section of this compendium which has been updated.

All NZTE registered users will have access to the live document via a Sharepoint link which will be managed by The Andersons Centre.

Chapter 2 below provides user guidance on how to use this compendium. This includes a video illustrating how the document can be navigated and how to quickly identify grants of relevance to a given business.

2 How to Use this Document

2.1 Introduction

This compendium (document) is intended for any NZTE client company that is seeking further information on the grant schemes that are available in the UK (and in Ireland from late 2023) that are potentially suitable for the products and services that NZ companies supply to agriculture and farming.

Before going into the detail of the grant schemes available, Chapter 3 firstly provides a general policy and funding overview for the UK as a whole, followed by a policy summary for each devolved country (i.e. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). This policy backdrop is useful in setting the scene for the grants' schemes available in each part of the UK. Some top-level implications are also set-out for companies supplying agricultural inputs (capital items, equipment and services) to UK agriculture. Taken together, this overview is helpful in understanding the long-term trajectory of agricultural policy across the UK which should be of interest to NZ companies when thinking about meeting the long-term demands of UK customers as the 2020's progress.

2.2 Document Access and Hosting

This document is hosted on The Andersons Centre's (Andersons) Sharepoint system. To access the latest document, one needs to be a registered user of Andersons' Sharepoint. If you do not have access, you can request access by contacting Oscar Beattie from NZTE via (Oscar.Beattie@nzte.govt.nz). Oscar will then ask Andersons to grant access.

When access has been granted, you will be notified via email and may be asked to provide login details when logging into Andersons' Sharepoint. From there, you will be able to get access to the Agricultural Grants Tracker via:

<https://theac.sharepoint.com/sites/Clients/N/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FClients%2FN%2FN020A%20%2D%20NZTE%20%2D%20Grants%20Monitor&viewid=e277d186%2D4bfe%2D41ba%2Db853%2D66ba321aa691>

When you login to the Andersons Sharepoint link above, you will be able to access the document and any associated information that Andersons has provided on the Agricultural Grants Tracker. Andersons Sharepoint will have a layout similar to Figure 2-1 below.

This will include the master compendium which is titled in a manner similar to "Agricultural Grants Tracker – UK and Ireland – September 2023 – Updated Master Version". As time progresses and updates are provided this document's name is likely to evolve as the months progress. For instance, the October 2023 version will mean that the document will be renamed to include "October 2023" in its title. That way users will know the date of the latest document and will be confident that they are always reviewing the latest version.

Previous documents or older versions will be kept in the "Archive" sub-folder in the above link.

As outlined below, as the compendium gets updated, changes will be made directly to the live document and users will be updated as set out in Section 2.5.

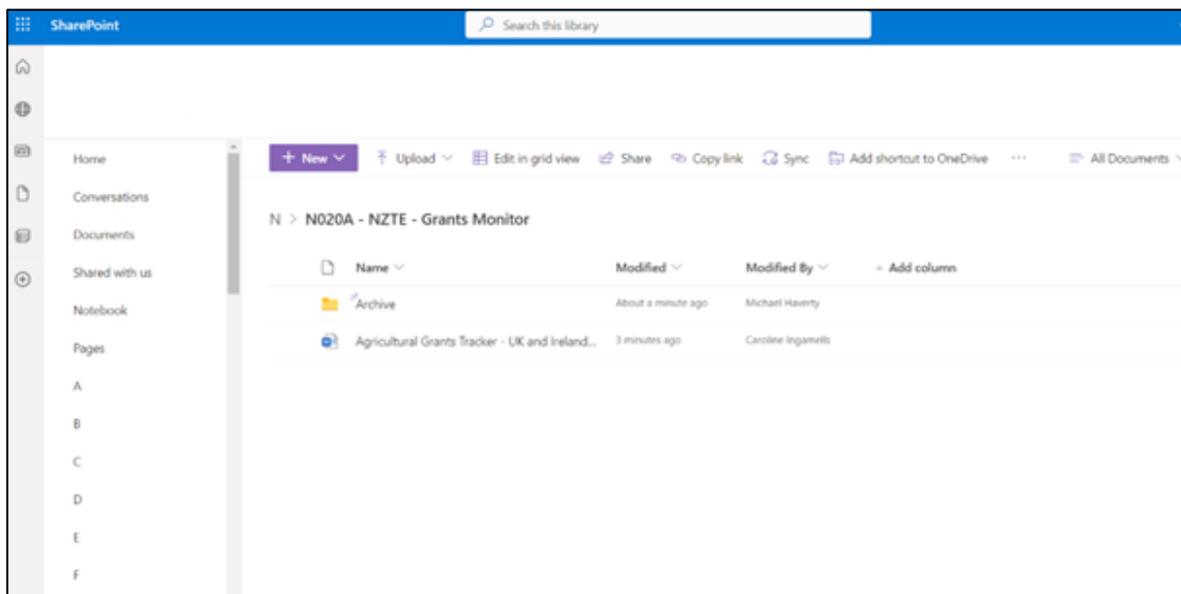
If you have any questions or have trouble accessing Andersons Sharepoint, please contact;

Caroline Ingamells (cingamells@theandersonscentre.co.uk)

Or

Michael Haverty (mhaverty@theandersonscentre.co.uk)

Figure 2-1: Andersons Sharepoint – Agricultural Grants Tracker – Layout



2.3 Structure of Grant Scheme Summaries

Chapters 4-8 then set out the grant schemes that are available at a pan-UK level (see Chapter 4) and for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively. Each grant scheme covers the following areas;

- **Grant Name:** official title name of the grant
- **Grant Purpose:** overall purpose that the grant is intended for. This helps to identify at a top-level whether a specific grant will be of relevance to a given company.
- **Grant Rate:** this is provided where available and can be expressed in various terms (e.g. percentages, minimum and maximum values, or grant rates per unit) depending on the nature of the grant.
- **Grant Detail:** contains the detail of what the grant scheme is designed for, what is eligible for funding (i.e. capital items, equipment and ancillary services etc.), who is eligible to apply and any exclusions that apply (e.g. farms in environmentally sensitive areas might not be able to apply for certain slurry grants). Links to further information are also provided.
- **Duration:** sets-out when application windows are open and requirements for carrying out work in order to be eligible for the grant funding.
- **Latest/ Update:** summarises the latest information on the grant including when new rounds of funding (funding windows) will be open.
- **Implications:** provides Andersons' views on the likely implications for NZ companies supplying the UK. This includes details that companies should be aware of when seeking to promote product sales by drawing upon grants or further insights on equipment and capital items that the grant scheme should be suitable for. As this Grants Tracker is designed with a broad range of users in-mind, there are limits to which the implications can be set-out for each type of business.

2.4 Reviewing and Searching for Suitable Grant Schemes

Given the wide-ranging nature of agricultural grant schemes and the broad plethora of capital items, infrastructure, equipment and ancillary services that are potentially funded, the ability to quickly review and identify the grant schemes listed is important. In this regard, the authors recommend the following steps when scanning the document to identify potentially suitable grants:

1. Determine whether your offering is a capital item, infrastructure, equipment, or a service to the agricultural sector. Some of the grant schemes will be quite generic and focus on these general categories as opposed to specific pieces of equipment.
2. By doing a word search on the document, you can quickly identify the number of mentions of a term such as "capital item" or "equipment". The shortcut for doing this is by using the "CTRL+F" keys on your keyboard. This should bring up the Navigation Pane on the left hand side of your screen. In the space provided, please type in the required search item. From there, use the arrow keys to move through the document to identify the instances that your search term appears. Taking the term "capital item" for instance, there are 40 mentions of this term in the document (as at 8th September 2023). By navigating (clicking) through the mentions of these terms, you can quickly identify which grant schemes will be most relevant for your business.

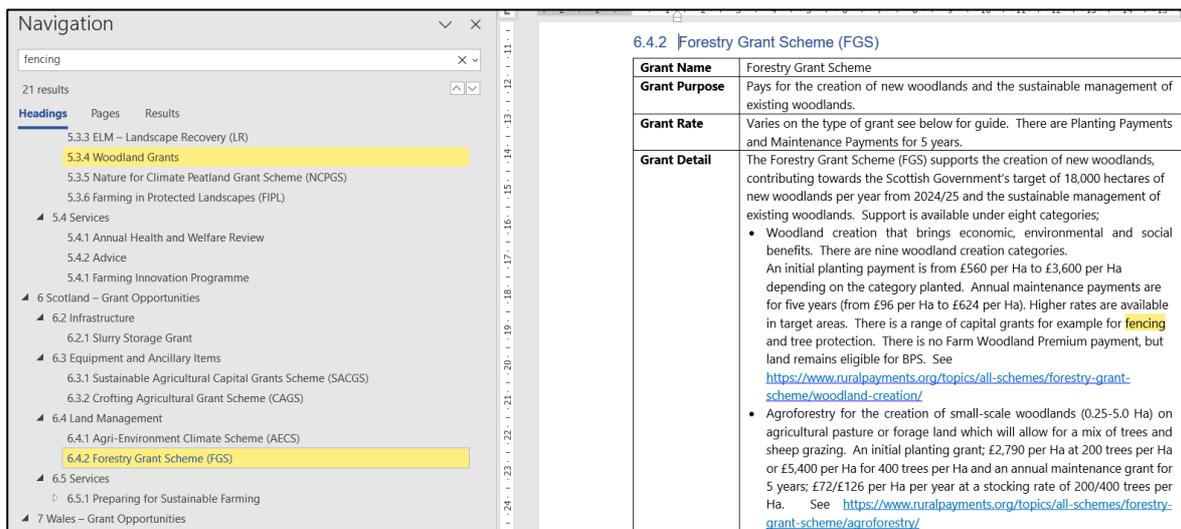
Figure 2-2: Example Word Document Search for Capital Item

The screenshot shows a word document search interface. On the left, a 'Navigation' pane displays search results for 'capital items', showing 38 results. The results are organized into a tree structure under '5 England', including categories like '5.1 Infrastructure', '5.2 Equipment & Ancillary Items', '5.3 Land Management (Environmental Land Management - ELM)', '5.4 Services', and '6.2 Infrastructure'. The '5.1.1 Farming Transformation Fund (FTF)' is highlighted. On the right, the detailed view of the '5.1.1 Farming Transformation Fund (FTF)' is shown, including a table with the following information:

Grant Name	Farming Transformation Fund (FTF)
Grant Purpose	Provides grants towards large capital items to help businesses improve productivity, profitability, animal health & welfare and environmental sustainability. The FTF is part of the Farming Investment Fund (FIF). The grant funds projects in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Water Management – reservoirs and irrigation systems.• Slurry Infrastructure – to improve or expand on-farm slurry storage capacity to 6 months, plus covers & accessories.• Adding Value – equipment for processing, 'second-stage' processing of grain, retailing (eg vending machines) or premises for preparation or processing.• Improving Farm Productivity - support for robotic or autonomous equipment and systems to aid crop and livestock production and the installation of slurry acidification equipment.• Calf Housing for Health & Welfare - grants to build new or refurbish existing calf housing will be made available for the beef and dairy sectors.
Grant Rate	40% of eligible costs. Minimum £25,000 Maximum £500,000, unless stated otherwise.
Grant Detail	The FTF is open to contractors as well as farmers. The grant is competitive, meaning the likelihood of a full application being successful will also depend on the number and value of other applications received. An Agreement must be accepted before any work commences or items are purchased. Payment is made in arrears. Grants are available under the following themes: Water Management - available to arable and horticultural businesses growing, or intending to grow, irrigated food crops, ornamentals or forestry nurseries in

3. It is also possible to do a similar search for specific pieces of equipment (e.g. slurry infrastructure, calf housing, fencing or robotic milking). This will again identify the grant schemes of most relevance. See Figure 2-3 below for an example.
4. Based on the initial feedback provided by NZTE clients, it is intended to develop a glossary of search terms to make the document more user-friendly to specific users whilst still retaining the Grants Tracker's appeal to a wide-ranging audience.
5. An example video has also been compiled on Vimeo to illustrate how to use this document. This video is available via: <https://vimeo.com/863613380/519ffe0116?share=copy>

Figure 2-3: Example Word Document Search for a Specific Item such as “Fencing”



2.5 Grant Scheme Updates

Given the agricultural policy reforms currently underway in the UK, there has been a steady stream of new announcements over recent months and this is set to continue. Accordingly, this compendium will be regularly updated over the coming months and years.

At the beginning of each month, Andersons will provide an update if a new grant scheme becomes available, or if an existing grant scheme is updated. This will be emailed to each NZTE client company contact that NZTE has shared with Andersons. The update will contain the following elements;

- **Grant name:** will also include in parenthesis the section of compendium that the grant is outlined on (e.g. Section 5.2.1 (Farming Equipment & Technology Fund (FETF) – England)
- **Grant purpose (or update):** a 1-2 sentence summary of its purpose, areas of focus or an outline of what the grant scheme update encompasses.
- **Grant rate:** will be set-out if it is announced
- **Grant duration:** the application window that it is available to farmers for.

If multiple grant schemes have been simultaneously updated, or newly announced, these will be summarised as above in the monthly email.

That said, if there is a major new scheme announcement, or if a major existing scheme gets updated (e.g. Farming Equipment & Technology Fund (FETF)), Andersons will compile an extra update during the month.

Similarly, if there is a grant scheme announcement with a very tight application timeframe, for instance a year-end top-up scheme that is intended to use up spare funding, then Andersons would also compile an extra update for such schemes.

As mentioned above, all updated or new schemes will be added to the compendium which will be a “live” document.

3 UK Policy Overview

3.1 General

Following Brexit, the UK is free to set its own farm support policies after having been part of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) since 1973. As agriculture is a devolved policy each of the four component parts of the UK can set its own rules. Thus, there are four different farm support systems operating in the UK.

Under the previous CAP, support for farmers was through two main mechanisms. Firstly, the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) saw an area-based payment made to farmers. There were some conditions attached to the receipt of the BPS - notably the 'Cross-compliance' rules on farming standards and 'Greening' on environmental management. However, for most farms the cost and effort of complying with these rules were minimal – thus the BPS was a 'profitable' scheme. The second element of support was 'Rural Development' – this encompassed a range of schemes from environmental programmes through to diversification support. Funding for Rural Development was always lower than that for the BPS.

In the short term, the BPS and 'legacy' Rural Development schemes are continuing in all parts of the UK. Over time, these will be phased-out and completely new, national, schemes will replace them. The timetable for this varies for each of the Devolved regions of the UK. A separate Chapter below briefly sets out the process for each UK country.

3.2 Funding

The budget for farm support has been fixed by the UK Government at the same levels as it was under the CAP. This protection will last for the lifetime of the current Parliament (likely to be to 2024). However, the fix is in nominal terms and does not adjust for inflation. In real-terms, with inflation above 10%, the value of support declines by 10% per year. After 2024, we expect a similar situation to continue – support 'maintained' in nominal terms but never updated for inflation - therefore a gradual real-terms reduction. Farm funding is relatively small compared to total Government spending (circa £3.5bn out of a normal total of around £850bn). The move to more 'public goods' payment systems will help secure continued support.

3.3 England

Out of the four UK nations, England is the one that is moving quickest in changing its farm support system. The BPS started being phased-out in 2021. There will be no direct support to farmers by 2028. Further change will take place in 2024 when these (declining) BPS payments will be de-linked. This means there will be no requirement to occupy farmland each year to receive the remaining payments – they will be a personal right for past claimants. Most of the previous Rural Development schemes in England have been replaced by new programmes.

The BPS is being replaced by schemes that offer payments for 'public goods' – services that agriculture can provide to society that are not delivered by the market. Most funds will go to Environmental Land Management (ELM). This has three sub-schemes within it;

- Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI)
- Countryside Stewardship (CS) – *an 'improved' version of a scheme previously running under the CAP*
- Landscape Recovery

As well as ELM, the Agricultural Transition sees significant funding going into a 'productivity' strand of policy. This includes capital grants for equipment to improve the performance of English farming. There are also advice schemes, training programmes etc.

3.4 Scotland

Scotland is not making any major change to its farm support policies until 2026. Until then the current BPS and a suite of Rural Development schemes continue largely unchanged. However, from 2025 increasing requirements on 'conditionality' will be introduced. This requires farmers to undertake action of biodiversity, GHG emissions etc. in order to receive full payments. In Scotland, much of the Rural Development budget goes on supporting upland/hill areas through a scheme known as LFASS.

The new support arrangements from 2026 are still being designed. However, it is proposed there will be four tiers;

- Tier 1 – Base Level Direct Payment – to support active farming and food producers. Conditional on 'Essential Standards' being met in areas such as climate change, biodiversity, business efficiency, animal welfare etc.
- Tier 2 – Enhanced Level Direct Payment – conditional on achieving high levels of GHG reductions, nature restoration and enhancement.
- Tier 3 – Elective Payment – an indirect payment focused on targeted measures for nature restoration, innovation support and supply chain support.
- Tier 4 - Complementary Support – to include delivery of CPD, advisory services; measurement tools for nature restoration & enhancement and GHG emissions & sequestration. Support for tree planting, peatland restoration and an Agricultural Transformation Fund.

Tiers 1 and 2 will commence in 2026 and Tiers 3 and 4 from 2027. A 'National Test Programme' is underway to collect information from farmers and to develop the new programmes to be introduced from 2025 onwards.

3.5 Wales

In Wales, a new Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) will be phased in from April 2026 (originally 2025 but has been delayed by one year). Until that point the BPS will continue to be the main source of support. There is likely to be a phase-out of the BPS from 2026, but details are not yet available. Previously, the main environmental programme in Wales has been 'Glastir'. This is now closed to new applicants and an Interim Agri-environmental scheme will open in 2024 to bridge the gap between Glastir ending and the start of the SFS.

The proposal is for the SFS to have three layers;

- Universal Actions - the aim is for these to be practices that most farmers will be able to undertake and that can be integrated into the current farming practice i.e. nutrient and livestock management, but also includes managing and enhancing habitats across at least 10% of the farm and 10% tree cover on farm. Farmers will be expected to perform the Universal Actions to receive their baseline payment.
- Optional Actions - farmers will be able to choose which actions they undertake; these will be targeted towards specific land or landscape feature issues.
- Collaborative Actions - these will be carried out by multiple land managers at a landscape, catchment or national scale where they can deliver more than the sum of the individual parts.

The proposals also include support to continue the Farming Connect programme, including a 'redesigned' advisory service and a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Programme. There are also likely to be capital grants – both on-farm and for the wider food chain. Details of these are not currently available as the scheme is still being designed.

3.6 Northern Ireland

The farm support system in Northern Ireland will begin to change in 2025. For the 2024 year the BPS will continue to operate under the existing rules. The new support system will have the following elements;

- Farm Sustainability Payment (FSP) – providing a basic safety net, the payment will be area-based. A Farm Sustainable Transition Payment will be introduced in 2025 with 'conditions' attached. The full FSP will commence in 2026.
- Beef Sustainability Package – including a Suckler Cow Measure and a Beef Carbon Reduction Measure. Both aim to increase productivity, whilst driving down carbon emissions – they are likely to be in the form of a headage payment with conditions. The scheme is expected to be rolled-out from 2024 – but details are awaited.
- Farming with Nature Package – would provide payments for creating and restoring habitats that are important for species diversity. Pilots will commence in 2024.
- Farming for Carbon measures – supporting low carbon emission farming practices. Some elements expected to open in autumn 2023.

There will also be funding for items that improve productivity, innovation, co-operation and environmental outcomes. A Generational Renewal programme will encourage longer-term planning for farm businesses; and the Northern Ireland Government will invest in the initiation of an industry-led Ruminant Genetics Programme. The current Farm Business Improvement Scheme will continue in 2024; a new capital investment scheme is expected to commence in 2025. Support will remain available for woodlands.

3.7 Key Implications

There are some key points to take away from the changes in support over the next few years;

- 1. Farm support funding is likely to decline in real terms across the UK.*
- 2. Under almost all of the new UK systems, farmers will have to do more to access support. Doing these actions will have a cost, and therefore the margin under the new arrangements will be lower than previously under the BPS (the BPS was almost all profit). This will affect the profitability of UK farming – especially those sectors reliant on the BPS – cereals and beef & sheep.*
- 3. As the BPS is phased-out, the money is generally being recycled into other types of farm support. Much of this is 'environmental' – addressing biodiversity loss, climate change etc. Often this involves changing the management of land (it seldom sees land being taken out of agriculture completely). This change of land use may require new goods and services.*
- 4. Not all of the focus of new support schemes are on the environment. There is also a strong policy drive to increase the productivity of UK farming. Indeed, policymakers would say that the environment and agricultural productivity are not in conflict – especially in the area of emissions. The drive for higher productivity will increase the demand for certain products (and services) in UK farming.*

5. A 'North-South' divide is emerging in terms of agricultural policy across the UK. Scotland and Northern Ireland appear to be more open towards 'coupled' schemes that safeguard livestock numbers (provided key productivity requirements are met). In contrast, England and Wales are focusing more on 'public goods' type schemes that could lead to more significant reductions in livestock numbers. This will have significant implications for businesses targeting the UK grazing livestock sector.

The BPS has effectively kept some businesses in operation that would otherwise not have survived. As it is removed there is likely to be a period of accelerated structural change in UK farming. Possibly more in the next 5-10 years than has been seen over the past 20 years.

4 UK Grants

4.1 Pan-UK Grant Opportunities

4.1.1 Royal Countryside Fund (Previously The Prince's Countryside Fund)

Grant Name	The Royal Countryside Fund
Grant Purpose	Offers free farm resilience programmes across the UK to help family farms, plus grants to enhance the viability and sustainability of rural communities throughout the UK.
Grant Rate	Rural Community Grants are for a maximum of £25,000 over two years. The Farm Resilience programmes are free to farmers
Grant Detail	<p>Formerly the Prince's Countryside Fund, the Royal Countryside Fund provides support to rural communities via a 'two-pronged' approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Farm Resilience</i> - Family farms are offered a programme of free support across the UK to help family farm businesses improve business performance. • <i>Community Grants</i> - for projects taking places in villages and towns in rurally isolated areas, where access to services is limited. The aim is to address the challenges faced by those who live and work in rural areas. The main grant programme 'Supporting Rural Communities' supports community-led solutions that enhance the viability and sustainability of rural communities. Not-for-profit organisations can apply for up to £25,000 over two years for projects that support people to find solutions to issues in their local community. Applications are invited from properly constituted, not-for-profit and community-led organisations in rural areas with a turnover under £500,000 per year. Local authorities, including Town and Parish Councils, are not eligible to apply. A new UK-wide, supporting Rural Communities grant programme is being launched from Friday 10th January 2025. This new differentiated funding will support transformative, community-led initiatives across the UK. The aim is to support innovative solutions that will "power up, not prop up" communities, inspiring change and encouraging economic vibrancy. Organisations can apply for grants of up to £25,000 over a period of 24 months to deliver activities along the themes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Keeping young people in the countryside ➤ Powering up rural communities ➤ Increasing environmental sustainability ➤ Building emergency resilience in rural areas. <p>For more information on this new project go to https://www.royalcountrysidefund.org.uk/how-we-help/rural-communities/supporting-rural-communities-uk/</p> <p>For more information go to https://www.royalcountrysidefund.org.uk/</p>
Duration	Rural Community Grants run for 2 years and are open in Rounds
Latest/ Update	<p>January 2025: EOI open on 10th January and close on 21st February 2025 for new Rural Communities grant programme.</p> <p>October 2024: A new, differentiated UK-wide grant scheme will be launched on 10th January 2025 focusing on: Keeping young people in the countryside;</p>

	Powering up rural communities; Increasing environmental sustainability; Building emergency resilience in rural areas. Aug 2023: The grant funding opens for applications on 8 th September 2023. The Farm Resilience Programme is open to sign up to at any time.
Implications	<i>This would be of interest to those who are able to deliver business advice or skills to groups of farmers. This could include farm policy, environmental, climate change, accountancy, benchmarking, livestock husbandry, grassland management etc. This is through 1:1 support, workshops or online learning. In terms of community grants, this is wide ranging. It is community-led so will include such things as community shops, accessible vehicles, transport schemes etc. There is probably little direct relevance to NZ farming supply businesses.</i>

4.1.2 UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Grant Name	UK Shared Prosperity Fund
Grant Purpose	Lead local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland and the UK Government in Northern Ireland have been given an allocation of funding to invest in local priorities as a central part of the UK's Levelling-Up agenda.
Grant Rate	Each lead local authority will receive an allocation from £1.5bn in 2024-2025, reducing to £900m in 2025-2026. This has been allocated based on a formula and grants vary between local authorities and depending on the project being funded.
Grant Detail	Lead local authorities and UK Government in Northern Ireland have developed investment plans to decided how best to invest in three local priorities, Communities and Place; Support for Local Businesses and People and Skills. Each have been given a set allocation of funding. Revenue and capital funding can be used to support a wide range of interventions. Each will have different priorities and will 'call for projects' with those that best fit the priorities receiving funding. Calls for projects are likely to be made in rounds. This funding is not specific to rural areas; in England the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) is a rural 'top-up' to the UKSPF (see below). For more information on the UKSPF go to https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rural-england-prosperity-fund-prospectus/rural-england-prosperity-fund-prospectus
Duration	Grants will continue for another 12 months from April 2025 to March 2026.
Latest/ Update	November 2024: UKSPF will continue for another 12 months from April 2025 to March 2026, but with reduced funding of £900m. Compared with this year's allocation of £1.5bn. August 2023: Refer to individual Councils, and Mayoral authorities to access calls for projects.
Implications	<i>This scheme is probably of limited relevance to NZ farming supply businesses. It may be of interest to those who support diversification projects or community spaces and these businesses are advised to contact Local Authorities to see what is on offer.</i>

5 England

5.1 Infrastructure

5.1.1 Farming Investment Fund (FIF)

Grant Name	Farming Investment Fund (FIF)
Grant Purpose	<p>Provides grants towards large capital items to help businesses improve productivity, profitability, animal health & welfare and environmental sustainability. The grant funds projects in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Management – reservoirs and irrigation systems. • Slurry Infrastructure – to improve or expand on-farm slurry storage capacity to 6 months, plus covers & accessories. • Adding Value – equipment for processing, ‘second-stage’ processing of grain, retailing (e.g. vending machines) or premises for preparation or processing. • Improving Farm Productivity - support for robotic or autonomous equipment and systems to aid crop and livestock production. New for 2024, support for support roof-top solar and solar equipment that can float on irrigation reservoirs. • Calf Housing for Health & Welfare - grants to build new or refurbish existing calf housing will be made available for the beef and dairy sectors. • Laying Hen Housing for Health and Welfare – New from June 2024, grants to add a veranda onto, or upgrade or replace existing laying hen or pullet housing.
Grant Rate	40% of eligible costs, 25% for solar equipment. Minimum £25,000 Maximum £500,000, unless stated otherwise.
Grant Detail	<p>The FIF is open to contractors as well as farmers. The grant is competitive, meaning the likelihood of a full application being successful will also depend on the number and value of other applications received. An Agreement must be accepted before any work commences or items are purchased. Payment is made in arrears. Grants are available under the following themes;</p> <p>Water Management - available to arable and horticultural businesses growing, or intending to grow, irrigated food crops, ornamentals or forestry nurseries in England. The minimum grant is £35,000. Funding can be used for reservoir construction & infrastructure and irrigation equipment. A list of eligible items can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-management-grant-round-2/about-the-water-management-grant-round-2-who-can-apply-and-what-the-grant-can-pay-for.</p> <p>Slurry Infrastructure - available to pig, beef and dairy farmers whose farming systems produce slurry. It helps replace, build new or expand existing slurry stores to provide 6 months’ (8 months for pigs) of storage. This grant is competitive. The maximum grant is £250,000 per business. Grant payment is based on the standard cost contribution for the items required or 50% of the actual invoice costs at claim stage, whichever is the lower amount. This grant can be used for slurry stores including tanks, lagoons and concrete stores fitted with impermeable covers and large permanent bags. The grant will also fund items necessary for the basic functioning of new or expanded slurry stores, such</p>

as reception pits, slurry pumps and agitators. The full list of item specification and grant contribution can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slurry-infrastructure-grant/item-specification-and-grant-contribution>

Adding Value – available for farm buildings, machinery or equipment that will add value to crops or livestock by increasing productivity and improving the environment. The maximum grant is £300,000. Eligible projects include processing agricultural products e.g. potatoes to crisps, milk to cheese, wool to yarn or adding value to agricultural products e.g. washing, sorting, grading, topping & tailing, dicing or cutting, bottling, packing, second-stage grain processing (colour sorting, blending) or retailing e.g. buildings for retail sales, display and retail equipment, automatic vending machines. Other eligible costs include upgrade of electrical supply related to the project and website design. Full guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adding-value-grant-for-farmers-to-improve-crops-or-livestock/about-the-adding-value-grant-who-can-apply-and-what-the-grant-can-pay-for>

Improving Farm Productivity – grants for capital items to improve farm and horticultural productivity via the use of autonomous equipment and the installation of slurry acidification equipment. The minimum grant is £35,000. Eligible items include robotic harvesting, spraying and weeding systems, autonomous driverless tractors or platforms, voluntary robotic milking system, robotic feeding systems, transplanting, wavelength specific LED lighting for horticulture crops. Full details and guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-farm-productivity-grant-round-2-applicant-guidance> Round 1 included grants for slurry acidification equipment. This is not available under Round 2 (slurry equipment is now funded under the Slurry Infrastructure Grant see above). However, this Round will include grants of between £15,000 and £100,000 towards solar-equipment. This will be at a grant rate of 25%. Funding will support roof-top solar and also solar equipment that can float on irrigation reservoirs. It will be possible to apply for both automated & robotic equipment and solar equipment but the total maximum grant cannot exceed £500,000.

Calf Housing for Health and Welfare - It offers 40% grants to build new or refurbish existing calf housing. It is available to both the beef and dairy sectors. The grant aims to improve the health and welfare of calves (up to 6 months old) by providing a good ambient environment and facilitating social contact through pair or group housing. The grant is competitive so only the best schemes will be funded. More information and access to the Online checker can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/calf-housing-for-health-and-welfare-2023/how-to-apply-for-a-calf-housing-for-health-and-welfare-grant>. In the future funding is expected to extend to adult cattle, pig and poultry housing.

Laying Hen Housing for Health & Welfare – will provide support to either;

- replace or upgrade hen or pullet housing - a 'Comprehensive' project;

or

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • add a veranda onto existing laying hen or pullet housing - a 'Veranda-only' project <p>Successful projects will need to show;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved laying hen and pullet health and welfare • increased environmental sustainability • innovation <p>The project must show a high level of biosecurity, an excellent ambient environment, and maximise the space available. Comprehensive projects for both pullets and laying hens should include mechanical ventilation and high welfare multi-tier systems (defined as aviaries for laying hens). Any laying hen housing should include a veranda, where outside space is permitted. There will be an online checker which is expected to be available from the end of June. Eligible applicants for Veranda-only projects will be invited to make a full application from July 2024. Eligible applicants for Comprehensive projects will be invited to make a full application from October 2024.</p> <p>More information is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/laying-hen-housing-for-health-and-welfare-grant-round-1</p> <p>General guidance on the Farming Transformation Fund (FTF) can be found via https://www.gov.uk/guidance/farming-investment-fund</p>
Duration	<p>Themes are open in Rounds. Applications are via a two/three-stage process with an Expression of Interest (EOI) (via an Online checker) and then successful applicants are invited to make a full application. The online checker is usually open for 12 weeks. If successful, applicants are invited to submit a full application, they are given about 18 months to prepare this. Defra usually releases grant details or any changes to the grant in advance of the Round opening so that applicants have a chance to prepare. These are large grants and therefore Agreements will be 'live' for a number of years.</p>
Update/Latest	<p>October 2024: Invited applicants have until 31st October 2024 to submit their full application for the Water Management grant (round 2)</p> <p>September: <i>Laying Hen Housing for Health & Welfare Grant</i> – Round 1 online checker closes on 18th September 2024. Guidance is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/laying-hen-housing-for-health-and-welfare-grant-round-1</p> <p>July: <i>Laying Hen Housing for Health & Welfare Grant</i> – Round 1 online checker is now open and closes on 18th September 2024. Guidance is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/laying-hen-housing-for-health-and-welfare-grant-round-1</p> <p>June: <i>Laying Hen Housing for Health & Welfare Grant</i> – New grant. Round 1 online checker is expected to be available from the end of June 2024. Guidance is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/laying-hen-housing-for-health-and-welfare-grant-round-1</p> <p>April: <i>Improving Farm Productivity</i> - Round 2 online checker closed on 21st March 2024. Successful applicants will be invited to submit 'full' applications. Guidance is available at</p>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-farm-productivity-grant-round-2-applicant-guidance>.

March: Name change. The previous name, *Farming Transformation Fund*, for the 'larger' capital/productivity grant schemes available under the Farming Investment Fund (FIF) has been dropped.

Improving Farm Productivity - Round 2 online checker will close on 21st March 2024. Guidance is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-farm-productivity-grant-round-2-applicant-guidance>. Applications include support for barn-top solar.

Feb 2024: Improving Farm Productivity - Round 2 online checker is now open until 21st March 2024. Guidance is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-farm-productivity-grant-round-2-applicant-guidance>. Applications include support for Barn-top Solar (See Section 5.1.2)

Jan 2024: Improving Farm Productivity - Round 2 guidance is now available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-farm-productivity-grant-round-2-applicant-guidance>. Applications will open early in 2024 and includes support for roof-top solar and other solar equipment.

Dec 2023: Calf Housing for Health & Welfare – The Online Checker is now closed.

Dec 2023: Slurry Infrastructure Grant - Round 2 now open. The online checker will be available until 17th January 2024. For further information go to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/slurry-infrastructure-grant-round-2-applicant-guidance>

Dec 2023: Improving Farm productivity - Guidance on Round 2 will be published in December. Applications will open early in 2024.

Nov 2023: Slurry Infrastructure Grant – Round 2 of the Slurry Infrastructure Grants will be opening in November. The full guidance has been released in advance this can be found at <https://defrafarming.blog.gov.uk/2023/10/12/slurry-infrastructure-grant-guidance-now-available-for-round-2/> .

Nov 2023: Water Management - Second Round window for Full Applications closed on 31st October 2023.

Sept 2023: Calf Housing Grant – Now open. The Online checker will be open until 30th November 2023.

Sept 2023: Water Management – Round 2 now open for Full Applications (until 31st October 2023). Only those who have been invited to apply after completing an online checker can submit a Full Application.

Aug 2023: Water Management – Round 2 of the Online checker ran from 19th April 2023 – 12th July 2023. The RPA is currently assessing Online checker applications received.

Slurry Infrastructure Grant – The most recent round of EOIs ran from 6th December 2022 to 31st January 2023. Successful Online checker applicants have been invited to submit full applications by 28th June 2024. A further Round is expected in 'autumn' 2023.

	<p>Adding Value - The most recent round of applications ran from 9th June 2022 to 21st July 2022. Successful online checker applicants have been invited to submit full applications by 31st January 2024.</p> <p>Improving Farm Productivity – Currently all applications have been submitted for both stages. The most recent round of EOIs ran from 19th January 2022 to 16th March 2022. Those that were successful had until 14th September 2022 to submit full applications. The next round is expected in summer/autumn 2023.</p> <p>Calf Housing – New scheme. Expected to open summer/autumn 2023. Guidance now released ahead of scheme opening, full details can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/calf-housing-for-health-and-welfare-2023</p>
Implications	<p><i>This scheme offers large grants for a wide range of capital items and infrastructure. It will be relevant to NZ businesses which supply capital items and infrastructure of a significant size that can improve farm productivity, profitability and environmental sustainability. The projects supported will be of scale and it is likely to take a number of months to prepare applications and to complete the work meaning any marketing targeted at this grant is likely to be relevant for an extended period of time. It is a wide-ranging scheme; businesses are encouraged to read the literature to fully understand what might be funded. These will be big projects – most 'equipment' will often be part of a wider project. E.g. pumps and pipes for a reservoir. As well as marketing direct to farmers it might be worthwhile making contacts with those who are likely to be doing the main project work. New for 2024, under the Improving Farm Productivity element, is support for solar equipment, this will be relevant for suppliers of rooftop solar photovoltaic (PV) systems and associated accessories. This is a new grant and is likely to attract interest from the agricultural industry looking to reduce energy costs.</i></p>

5.2 Equipment & Ancillary Items

5.2.1 Farming Equipment & Technology Fund (FETF)

Grant Name	Farming Equipment and Technology Fund (FETF)
Grant Purpose	<p>Provides small-scale grants towards the cost of a set list of items that have been identified to help in the following areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve agricultural productivity • contribute to improved animal health and welfare • encourage more sustainable pesticide and fertiliser usage • improve air and water quality • reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in line with Net Zero targets • reduce unsustainable use of abstracted water • encourage sustainable management of woodlands
Grant Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productivity – grants of between £1,000 and £50,000 • Slurry management – grants of between £1,000 and £50,000 • Animal health and welfare – grants of between £1,000 and £25,000 <p>Based on 50% to 60% of expected average cost of the item.</p>
Grant Detail	<p>The FETF provides grants for specific items of equipment and technology for farming, horticulture and forestry businesses. In 2024, there will be three themes: <i>Productivity, Slurry Management and Animal Health & Welfare.</i></p>

Applicants can choose from a set list of items from each theme; each has a minimum specification, an expected average cost, and a grant (based on the expected average cost) and a score. The grant is competitive and has been significantly oversubscribed in previous rounds. Only new items can be funded and they must be paid for and installed before the grant is claimed but items must not be purchased before a Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) has been received. Equipment must be retained in good working order for 5 years from the date of the claim.

Defra aims to have three rounds open in 2024 and it seems that each theme will be available in every application window. Applicants can, if they wish, apply under all three themes in a single application window, but will only be able to apply for a grant once under each theme in 2024 – i.e. if you apply for a productivity grant in the first window, and are successful, it will not be possible to apply for another productivity grant in 2024. The scheme is competitive and each application is scored, some applications may not receive all or any of the funding asked for.

The amount of grant and the way it is calculated has changed slightly for 2024. The RPA has calculated an expected average cost for each item, based on costs from a cross-section of suppliers. It will pay successful applicants a grant amount of either 50% or 60% (*an increase from 40% last year*), depending on the item, based on the *lower* of these two figures;

- the average cost of the item – if an item costs the same or more than the expected average cost in the item lists, or
- the actual cost paid for the item – if an item costs less than the expected average cost in the item lists (*this was not the case in previous years; if an item cost less than the average cost, successful applicants still received the set grant based on the average cost of an item*)

Applications in 2024 will be via a new online Farming Investment Fund application service. This is separate to the Rural Payments service and will require a new registration (for the farmer) when the service is launched. Applications to more than one theme will need to be submitted separately. The full guidance can be found

at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-2024/apply-for-the-farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-fetf-2024>.

Productivity – In 2024 farmers, foresters, contractors and horticulturalists can apply for 85 different items of productivity equipment this includes 24 new items such as:

- tractor powered electric desiccator for weed and plant control
- combine mounted weed seed reduction system
- drone for spraying whitewash on to glasshouses
- closed transfer system for sprayers for containers
- solar powered water pump
- mobile tractor powered livestock total feed ration mixer
- forestry harvesting head with bark stripping

Other popular equipment includes:

- Horticulture – e.g. - electronic tray filling machines and row seeders and inter row weeders and hoes.
- Forestry – e.g. – mounders, forwarders, harvesting heads, tree shears, grab or grapple, timber cranes, trailers, winches, automatic tree planter, mulcher etc
- Arable – e.g. – direct and companion drills, yield monitors, grain stirrers, stubble rake, liquid fertiliser applicators etc
- Livestock – e.g. – plate meters, robotic silage pusher, grassland sward lifters, hydraulic ram pumps (water), real time inline forage crop analyser, real time milk analysis etc
- Resource Management and General – e.g. – weed wiper, camera guided inter row sprayer, systems to measure, sensor, monitor and analyse agricultural operations and output
- Water & Irrigation Management – e.g. – rainwater harvesting for crop irrigation, remote soil moisture sensing, digital weather station, irrigation sensor, UV water treatment system, field drain cleaner and sand filter etc

The full list of items available under the Productivity theme, including specification and grant aid can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-2024/productivity-items-and-specifications-farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-fetf-2024>

Slurry Management – There are now 17 different items of slurry equipment to help improve the collection and spreading of slurry. Following feedback from farmers, Defra has widened the specification for slurry separators to allow screw press, screen press and mobile separators. Popular items of slurry equipment that continue to be eligible for a grant include robotic slurry pusher/collectors, flow rate monitoring equipment and low emission slurry spreaders, such as dribble bars. Other items include; real time inline nutrient analysis of slurry, nurse tank, shallow injection systems, trail shoe slurry system etc. The full list of items available under the Slurry Management theme can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-2024/slurry-items-and-specifications-farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-fetf-2024>.

Animal Health and Welfare - There are more than 130 animal health & welfare items available in 2024, including 29 new items. These are available to commercial farmers who keep pigs, sheep, dairy and beef cattle and layer and broiler chickens. Applications for animal health & welfare items are scored on their contribution towards the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway priorities. This year, it is possible for livestock keepers to increase their application score by 20% if they can show evidence that the items being applied for have been selected in conjunction with their vet. Keepers are reminded that they can get an Annual Health and Welfare review to have these types of discussions with their vets, for more information see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sfi-annual-health-and-welfare-review>.

	<p>Below is a sample of the equipment and technology available in the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cattle - e.g.- handling systems, crushes, scoops, calving and shedding gates, weighing systems, EID readers, parlour/dairy equipment, calf feeders/stations and housing, badger proofing equipment, flooring, fencing, sheeted gates, mobility/body condition scoring etc. • Sheep – e.g. – handling systems/race, turnover crates, weighing and drafting crates, EID readers, mobile sheep dip, snacker feeder, creep feeder, footbath, sheeted gates, water bowser etc. • Pigs – e.g. – handling systems, weighing and sorting equipment, piglet creeps, flooring, curtain system, sow feeder, farrowing ark, robotic pen cleaner, auto-monitoring system, portable loading ramp etc • Poultry – e.g. – automatic curtain system, automatic monitoring system, weighing equipment, perches, water/drinker systems, platforms and ramps, Loading bay tunnel, spin feeder, split feeding system, 3D weighing camera system etc • General Livestock – e.g. – weighing equipment (bars, platforms), EID readers, auto drench gun and vaccination gun, electric fencing, cameras, thermal image cameras, livestock building blinds, ventilation/temperature/humidity control equipment, medical grade fridge, digital brix refractometer, NH₃, CO₂ and dust sensors etc <p>The full list of items available under the Animal Health and Welfare theme, including specification and grant aid can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-2024/animal-health-and-welfare-items-and-specifications-farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-fetf-2024</p>
Duration	<p>In 2024, 3 Rounds are expected with all three themes available in each Round. Each Round is usually open for six weeks. Successful applicants are given a limited amount of time to purchase, pay and make their claim, usually around 6 months.</p>
Latest/ Update	<p>December 2024: No further rounds have been made available in 2024 under the new Government. An announcement on capital funding is expected early in 2025.</p> <p>May 2024: All 3 themes in the first round have now closed. Two more application windows for productivity, slurry and animal health and welfare items are expected to open throughout 2024.</p> <p>April 2024: All three themes now open. Productivity and Slurry Management close on 17th April. Applications to Animal Health and Welfare close on 1st May. Guidance is available via https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-2024.</p> <p>March 2024: A new Round is expected to open shortly with all themes available. Full guidance and a list of available items and equipment has been made available see https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-2024/apply-for-the-farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-fetf-2024.</p> <p>Jan 2024: New Round is expected to open in January. No detail yet on whether it will be split into two themes again this year.</p>

	<p>Aug 2023: Productivity and Slurry items – the latest Round closed on 4th April 2023. Successful applicants have been offered Grant Funding Agreements (GFAs)</p> <p>Animal Health and Welfare – the latest Round closed on 15th June 2023. GFAs are being sent out to those that have been successful.</p> <p>Further Rounds are expected although it could be 2024 before any re-open</p>
Implications	<p><i>There has been a lot of interest in this scheme. Defra received 30,000 applications under the Productivity and Slurry theme, and due to the high level of demand it increased funding from £17m to £31m. Each Round has a set list of equipment, with minimum specifications. Defra has been giving prior notification of when it expects to open the grants, suppliers would be well advised to take note of this and ensure marketing is targeted around these dates and show which items meet specifications and the grant that can be obtained. Suppliers should get to know the detailed specifications set out by Defra. Does your product fit? If not, can it be 'tweaked'? Defra can be contacted to amend the specifications too. If your product is not on the list, it is possible to 'lobby' for it to be included if it improves productivity. This process may need to involve organisations like the NFU to help with this.</i></p>

5.2.2 Environmental – Capital Payments

Grant Name	Environmental (previously Countryside Stewardship) Capital Grants
Grant Purpose	<p>Pays for capital items to achieve specific environmental benefits within four groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • boundaries, trees and orchards • water quality • air quality • natural flood management <p>It is a standalone capital grants scheme which can also be used to support and complement a Countryside Stewardship (CS) or Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) agreement. Capital payments are also available as part of a CS Mid or Higher Tier Agreement (see 'Land Management' section later)</p>
Grant Rate	<p>Amounts vary depending on the item. Ranging from £1.72 per tree for supplying and planting a tree to £3,544.71 per unit for relocation of sheep dip and pens. It is possible to select multiple items from the 4 different groups. There is no limit on the maximum grant available (previously £20,000 under each heading), however applications will be assessed to ensure value for money.</p>
Grant Detail	<p>Capital items are available as part of Higher-Tier CS applications, but it is also possible to have a stand-alone Capital Agreement. Over the last couple of years, the stand-alone capital grants offer has been greatly expanded and this has increased again there are now 105 capital items. As from August 2024 new capital items to support the planting of trees under the SFI agroforestry actions, there are also capital items to help protect trees while they are established such as tree guards. Funding is also available for an agroforestry plan and a moorland mapping plan which supports better planning to manage environmental features on moorland. New agreements cannot contain parcels that already have capital works which are incomplete or have not received their</p>

	<p>final payment. Capital items to help improve water and air quality and reduce flood risk may require approval from a Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer. More information and guidance can be found via https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-grants-2024</p> <p>A description and brief requirements for the capital items under the CS Capital Grants can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-grants-2024/3451c5f9-431c-4530-bb47-40ac2a0abe8f</p> <p>More detailed information on (and the specific requirements for) these items are available on the CS online grants finder at https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants?grant_type%5B%5D=capital-item .</p>
Duration	<p>All agreements starting on or after 5th January 2023 will have 3-years to complete agreed works. Agreements prior to the 5th January 2023 only have two years. In addition, from 5th January 2023, applications can now be made all year round, unless the available budget is used up. Defra will give 6 weeks' notice of this. Capital claim for payments can be made at any time of the year as long as it is within 3 months of the end of the agreement and after the works have been invoiced.</p>
Latest/ Update	<p>December 2024: The scheme has closed to new applications. An announcement regarding future funding is expected in early 2025.</p> <p>August 2024: New capital items have been added to support the planting of trees under the new SFI agroforestry actions, also capital items to help protect trees while they are established such as tree guards and funding for an agroforestry plan and a moorland mapping plan.</p> <p>August 2023: Revised higher payment rates introduced for all agreements starting on or after 1st January 2023.</p>
Implications	<p><i>There has been increased interest in this grant, particularly now that the number of eligible items has increased, payments have been revised higher with no maximum limit and it is open all year round for applications. Those businesses that supply items which fall under the above 4 headings are advised to take a look at the items and specification for funding and look to promote accordingly. Funding is available to prevent pollutants entering watercourses or to protect environmental features, meaning a variety of fencing, hard bases for livestock troughs and feeders, cross drains, yard concreting, sheep dip relocation, biofilters, sprayer washdown areas and roofing, slurry covers. Items for boundary restoration and creation, including hedgerow planting, gapping up and laying, stone wall and bank restoration. To improve air quality, funding is available for automatic slurry scrapers, low ammonia emission flooring and tree planting.</i></p>

5.2.3 Higher Tier Capital Grants

Grant Name	Higher Tier Capital Grants (previously Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier Capital Grants)
Grant Purpose	This scheme offers a selection of specialist Higher Tier capital items to help support the most environmentally significant sites and woodlands.
Grant Rate	Amounts vary depending on the item. There are 8 actual cost items with rates ranging from 50% to 100% and 17 items with a fixed payment, ranging from £3.98/m for Fencing Supplement to £5,500 per ha for Rhododendron control.

Grant Detail	<p>These grants are standalone capital grants available which can also be used to support and complement CS Mid-Tier, Higher Tier, Wildlife Offers, Environmental Stewardship (ES) Higher Level Stewardship and SFI agreements. They support specialist capital items. Applicants should email Natural England enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk to discuss their application before they submit it. This is except for woodland-only applications. Natural England advisors or, for woodland-only applications, the Forestry Commission work with applicants to help apply for capital items which best suit the needs of the environment. They will discuss the contribution towards the costs of the work with applicants and will confirm this in writing. They will tailor each capital item to the requirements of the feature. The specifications are likely to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • technical design drawings to illustrate the extent of the work or schedule of works to provide an itemised list of the component parts and process for implementation • a description of the standard to which each category of work is to be carried out <p>Further scheme guidance and the list of funded items can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-tier-capital-grants-2025/applicants-guide-higher-tier-capital-grants-2025#choosingcapital-items</p>
Duration	The scheme offers 3-year agreements. Applications can be made all year round and will remain open until the funding is allocated.
Latest/ Update	<p>January 2025: New updated guidance available for 2025</p> <p>August 2023: The scheme opened on 5th January 2023</p>
Implications	<i>This grant is aimed at land and woodland of significant environmental importance and therefore promotion could be more targeted specifically at these sites. It includes grants for woodlands, wetlands, livestock handling facilities, historic & archaeological features and access.</i>

5.2.4 Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF)

Grant Name	Rural England Prosperity Fund
Grant Purpose	Funds capital projects for small businesses and community infrastructure to help improve productivity and strengthen the rural economy and rural communities in England.
Grant Rate	Each eligible rural local authority has received an allocation based on a formula and grants vary between local authorities and depending on the project being funded.
Grant Detail	The REPF is a rural top-up to the UKSPF allocations (see UK grants earlier) to eligible rural local authorities. It supports activities that specifically address the particular challenges rural areas face. Funding is available to support new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy. This includes farm businesses looking to diversify income streams. Each eligible local authority will advertise 'calls for projects' based on their own local priorities.
Duration	Grants are available from 1 st April 2023 until March 2026 (extended by 12 months).

Latest/ Update	<p>November 2024: The Government has announced the REPF will be available for a further 12 months to March 2026, although there will be less funds available.</p> <p>Aug 2023: Refer to individual Councils, and Mayoral authorities to access calls for projects.</p>
Implications	<i>This scheme may be of interest to those who support rural diversification projects or community spaces.</i>

5.3 Land Management (Environmental Land Management – ELM)

5.3.1 ELM – Sustainable Farming Incentive

Grant Name	Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI)														
Grant Purpose	Pays for a range of environmental land management actions that will help farmers manage their land in a more sustainable way.														
Grant Rate	Amounts vary depending on the actions undertaken. They range from £6.00 per hectare for Soil Testing to £1,072 per hectare for an Unharvested Cereal Headland or £2,512 per Ha to Maintain designed or engineered waterbodies.														
Grant Detail	<p>The SFI is being phased-in from 2022 to 2025. It is the ‘entry-level’ component of ELM and is intended to be accessible to most farms. The scheme is designed to run alongside commercial farming operations. Initially, it was only open to those in receipt of the BPS, including those with an existing CS agreement. From summer 2024 it extended to all those managing land. SFI 2023 was rolled out from August 2023. This is now closed to new applications, but agreements will continue for their full 3-years. An expanded SFI 2024 offer is being offered from summer 2024. This offer includes the existing 23 actions available under the previous SFI 2023 (although there have been some rule changes), but also includes over 20 brand new actions, and more than 50 actions that were previously available under Countryside Stewardship (CS) Mid Tier. In total there are 102 actions for farmers to choose from under SFI 2024. All the actions are merged into one scheme and are available through a single application. The actions are grouped under the following themes:</p> <table style="margin-left: 40px; border: none;"> <tr> <td>Soils</td> <td>Moorland</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Boundary Features</td> <td>Integrated Pest Management (IPM)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nutrient Management</td> <td>Farmland Wildlife</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Buffer Strips</td> <td>Precision Farming</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Organic Farming</td> <td>Waterbodies</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Heritage</td> <td>Agroforestry</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Species Recovery & Management</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Applications were being offered via a ‘controlled rollout’ with applicants having to submit an Expression of Interest, this has now ended and the scheme is available to all.</p> <p>There is also an SFI Management Payment of £20 per hectare for up to 50 hectares of land entered into the scheme per annum i.e. agreement holders will receive up to a maximum of £1,000 per year via this payment. This payment is doubled in the first year (i.e. £2,000).</p>	Soils	Moorland	Boundary Features	Integrated Pest Management (IPM)	Nutrient Management	Farmland Wildlife	Buffer Strips	Precision Farming	Organic Farming	Waterbodies	Heritage	Agroforestry	Species Recovery & Management	
Soils	Moorland														
Boundary Features	Integrated Pest Management (IPM)														
Nutrient Management	Farmland Wildlife														
Buffer Strips	Precision Farming														
Organic Farming	Waterbodies														
Heritage	Agroforestry														
Species Recovery & Management															
Duration	Applications can be made all year round. Agreements are for 3-years or 5-years, with payments made quarterly in arrears. The first payment is made 4-months after the start date. A single business can have multiple agreements.														

<p>Latest/ Update</p>	<p>December 2024: The requirement to submit an initial Expression of Interest has been removed.</p> <p>August 2024: The expanded SFI 2024 is available via an Expression of Interest to the RPA.</p> <p>July 2024: The SFI 2023 closed for new applications at midnight on Monday 10th June. New applications for SFI 2024 will open later in the summer (end July/Aug), although for those who want to get in early, it is possible to submit an Expression of Interest and they will be invited to make an application over the next few weeks as the system is 'tested' on smaller numbers and different types of businesses, before the full rollout.</p> <p>June 2024: Defra has released details of the expanded SFI 2024 offer. In total there will be 102 actions available. This will include the 23 existing actions, over 20 brand new actions and more than 50 actions which were previously available under Countryside Stewardship Mid Tier (CS MT). The SFI 2024 will be offered by a controlled rollout with the expectation that it will be available to all by the end of July. Further information is available via https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sustainable-farming-incentive-scheme-expanded-offer-for-2024/sfi-scheme-information-expanded-offer-for-2024</p> <p>Jan 2024: Significant announcement, including payment increases and new options. This will become a combined SFI and CS offering, more details are expected towards the summer. For further information see https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-2021-to-2024/technical-annex-the-combined-environmental-land-management-offer</p> <p>Dec 2023: Announcement regarding additional standards for 2024 expected before Christmas.</p> <p>Nov 2023: Controlled Roll-out complete, EoI no longer required. Applications can be made via Rural Payments.</p> <p>29th Aug 2023: Applications available from 18th September via a controlled roll-out. Farmers being invited to pre-register from 30th August 2023.</p> <p>Aug 2023: From August 2023 there will be a 'controlled rollout' of SFI 2023. New actions for soils and moorland will replace the SFI standards launched in June 2022 which are now closed to new applications and will not be used going forward. Actions for Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Nutrient Management, Farmland Wildlife, Buffer Strips and Low Input Grassland have also been added.</p>
<p>Implications</p>	<p><i>As the Basic Payment phases out ELM will be the main form of direct support for English farmers and will therefore attract a lot of interest. The SFI is a broad offer and should be accessible to most farms. Although the payments do not directly fund capital items and are for a change in management practices, 'items' will still be required to perform these changes such as direct drills for companion cropping or stitching-in leys. The new offering, available from the summer of 2024 includes options for no-till crop establishment and precision farming, there could be opportunities for those involved in camera-based herbicide sprayers, variable rate nutrient applicators and robotic weed control. Seed merchants will be interested in formulating pollen and nectar flower mixes or winter bird food mixes. There could be opportunities to provide grassland management services</i></p>

	<i>to advise on incorporating herbal leys or legumes on improved grassland or for providing soil and organic matter testing.</i>
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5.3.2 ELM – Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier (CSHT)

Grant Name	Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier (CS)
Grant Purpose	Pays for a change in land management practices to increase biodiversity, improve habitats, expand woodland areas, improve water & air quality, and improve natural flood management.
Grant Rate	Amounts vary depending on practices undertaken
Grant Detail	<p>The Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier (CSHT) scheme will form the second component of Environmental Land Management (ELM). CS is the existing agri-environmental scheme for England and Defra has decided to ‘evolve’ CS over 2023 and 2024 instead of developing a new Local Nature Recovery (LNR) scheme which was previously announced. Compared with SFI, CS pays for more targeted actions relating to specific locations, features and habitats. It pays for actions to ‘make space for nature’ in the farmed landscape and the wider countryside, alongside food production. These could be done, for example, on parts of the farm that are not suitable for production, less productive or difficult to work. There will also be an extra incentive through CS Plus for land managers to join up across local areas to deliver bigger and better results (although it has gone quiet on this element).</p> <p>Countryside Stewardship is open to farmers, foresters and land managers mostly through competitive application. It is run jointly by Natural England, Forestry Commission England and the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). Previously CS provided two tiers of funding - Mid Tier and Higher Tier. The Mid Tier now forms part of a combined SFI and CS offering from summer 2024 (See SFI above 5.3.1). Existing agreements will continue, although agreement holders will be able to end early to go into an SFI agreement – more information is still awaiting on this. Higher Tier will continue to be offered separately and will open again for applications in summer 2025 (originally expected in 2024), after which applications are expected to be open all year round. Those with expiring HLS and Higher Tier Agreements will be invited from January 2025 to draw up applications with support from Natural England or the Forestry Commission.</p> <p>CS Higher Tier offers multi-year agreements on environmentally significant sites, commons and woodlands where complex management requires one-to-one support from Natural England or the Forestry Commission to help build an application. Applicants select from 132 actions and 145 capital items. Most agreements are by invitation. For scheme details refer to https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/countryside-stewardship-higher-tier-get-ready-to-apply</p> <p>Capital items (see above) can also be included in agreements.</p>
Duration	Agreements are usually for 5, 10 or 20 – years, depending on the actions. All capital works must be completed within the first 3 years of the agreement
Latest/ Update	<p>January 2025: New guidance available. Applicants will be invited by NE to draw up agreements from January 2025. Applications will not be open until summer 2025.</p> <p>December 2024: Opening delayed and could be as late as summer 2025.</p>

	<p>November 2024: Defra has said more information regarding the opening of Higher Tier will be available in December.</p> <p>July 2024: CS Higher Tier will continue to be offered separately and will open again for applications later in 2024, for an early 2025 start date, after which applications will be open all year round.</p> <p>June 2024: Defra has announced CS Mid Tier will merge with the SFI and a new expanded SFI 2024 offer will be available from the end of July 2024 (See SFI above 5.3.1).</p> <p>Jan 2024: Significant announcement including payment increases, premium payments for combined actions and one application portal for SFI and CS.</p> <p>Dec 2023: Announcement regarding new scheme details for 2024 expected before Christmas.</p> <p>Aug 2023: All payment rates were reviewed in January 2023. Applications to the Higher Tier are closed for 2023. Applications to the Mid-Tier, including the Wildlife offers have been extended until 15th September 2023 (previously 18th August 2023) for a 1st January 2024 start date. Over the remainder of 2023 and 2024 Defra plans to 'expand and refine' the scope of the scheme. This will include taking over the England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO) (see later) once the current scheme ends and a simpler application process alongside the SFI together with quarterly payments. Further details are expected in late 2023.</p>
Implications	<p><i>Countryside Stewardship has been the main agri-environment scheme in England for a number of years now. As the Basic Payment is declining there has been an increase in interest. The scheme offers grants for both capital items and changes in management practices. This scheme will provide opportunities for a wide 'audience'. It is a huge scheme providing both changes to land management and capital items. There are over 100 Management Options and these can include managing land for the benefit of local wildlife by providing sources of nectar and pollen for insect pollinators or providing winter food and nesting habitats for farmland birds, therefore appealing to businesses offering seed mixes. These businesses would be advised to understand what is required for each mix and promote accordingly. Similarly establishing and managing these options could require some machinery purchases such as direct or precision drills and many will require regular topping. CS also includes support for local priority habitats such as species rich grasslands, wetlands, rivers, streams, ponds and ditches, hedges orchards, wood pastures and parklands. In addition Organic Farming is also supported. Businesses with interest in any of these areas are advised to make themselves familiar with the relevant areas.</i></p> <p><i>There are also over 120 grants for capital items, these include Managing and maintaining the boundaries including: hedgerows, dry-stone walls; stock fencing, gates etc.. Reducing water and air pollution by using capital items to: provide hard bases for livestock drinking and feeding, provide livestock with alternative drinking sources away from watercourses and ponds, install storage tanks, lined bio-beds, and livestock troughs, improve yards, gates, culverts and tracks. To reduce soil erosion, and reduce sediment and pollution entering a watercourse, improve yards and infrastructure to reduce ammonia emissions and improve natural flood management by installing woody debris dams, structures and seepage barriers to address flood risk management issues.</i></p>

5.3.3 ELM – Landscape Recovery (LR)

Grant Name	Landscape Recovery (LR)
Grant Purpose	Offers farmers and land managers the opportunity to co-design a bespoke long-term agreement to produce environmental and climate goods across landscape scale projects.
Grant Rate	Bespoke schemes so vary. Schemes are expected to attract private investment as well as public funding. The latest round offered £15 million shared between up to 25 successful projects.
Grant Detail	<p>Landscape Recovery is the third element of ELM. It is for farmers and land managers, including groups, who want to take a more radical and large-scale (500-5,000 Ha) approach to producing environmental and climate goods on their land, such as establishing new nature reserves, restoring floodplains to help reduce the risks from flooding, or creating woodland and wetlands. The aim is to deliver a wide variety of environmental outcomes and support local environmental priorities while contributing to national targets.</p> <p>This component of ELM is competitive, all applications will be scored against assessment criteria. Selected projects will initially be awarded project development funding. Unlike for the Sustainable Farming Incentive or Countryside Stewardship there is not a list of activities that will be paid for with associated payment rates. Rather Defra will work with projects to negotiate bespoke agreements. Agreements will need to deliver good value for money by delivering significant outcomes and attracting private finance to support the project. 22 projects have been agreed under the first round with a total project development budget available of £12m. Over the course of the project development phase, which will last up to two years, there will be the opportunity to negotiate public and private funding for implementation. If a project meets Defra's requirements at the end of the development phase, it will be awarded long-term funding. More information is available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-landscape-recovery-funding</p>
Duration	The project development stage is up to two years. If successful Implementation agreements are expected to be long term, 20 years plus.
Latest/ Update	<p>November 2024: The previous Government had committed to annual rounds, but there has been no application available this year as yet. Following the budget the Government has said '<i>we will share more about future rounds of Landscape Recovery in due course</i>'.</p> <p>Jan 2024: 34 projects have been successful in round 2. This is 12 more than in the first Round. Between them they will receive £25m of funding, which will;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restore more than 35,000 hectares of peatland • sustainably manage more than 20,000 hectares of woodland • create over 7,000 hectares of woodland, including some temperate rainforest • benefit more than 160 sites, which include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). <p>Aug 2023: The first round closed in May 2022, it focussed on species recovery and river restoration. The second round launched in May 2023 and will run until 21st September 2023, focussing on net-zero, protected sites and</p>

	wildlife-rich habitats. A further round has been committed to in 2024 and the aim is to continue to launch at least annual rounds in future years as the scheme is scaled up.
Implications	<i>Landscape Recovery does not have a set list of items or actions with payment rates, these will be large, bespoke, schemes. Businesses will have to familiarize themselves with the 'focus' for each round. The current round will be of interest to those who are involved in measures that contribute towards net zero by reducing emissions or increasing storage of carbon (sequestering) in key habitats e.g. peatland or woodland restoration or regenerative agriculture. It will also be of interest to those who are involved in creating habitats for biodiversity and maintaining or restoring protected sites such as SSSIs. Landscape Recovery is different to the other schemes in that it requires a business model that incorporates both public and private investment over the life of these long-term projects. This scheme could be of interest to private buyers or investors wishing to buy 'environmental outcomes'.</i>

5.3.4 Woodland Grants

Grant Names	Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG) England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO) HS2 Woodland Fund (HS2WF) Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCF) Woodland Carbon Code (WCC) Local Authority Treescapes Fund (LATF) Woodland Management Plan (WMP) Woodland Creation and Maintenance (WCM) Woodland Tree Health (WTH) Woodland Improvement (WI)
Grant Purpose	A number of different grants which pay for the creation, maintenance, restoration, planning and health of English woodlands and associated infrastructure. Including woodland carbon units
Grant Rate	Varies on type of grant and area planted.
Grant Detail	There are several grants and other incentives available for woodland creation, maintenance, management and tree health, these include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland Creation Planning Grant (WCPG) - provides funding to prepare a Woodland Creation Design Plan which is UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) compliant. See https://www.gov.uk/guidance/woodland-creation-planning-grant • England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO) - flagship grant scheme for farmers and land managers to encourage investment in woodland creation. These woodlands will help to mitigate climate change, deliver nature recovery and provide wider environmental and social benefits. See https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-woodland-creation-offer • HS2 Woodland Fund (HS2WF) - provides funding for woodland creation and restoration of Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS). Land needs to be within a 25-mile zone of Phase One of the HS2 route from London to the West Midlands. See https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hs2-woodland-fund

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCf) - provides capital funding to plant and establish large 'standard' trees in urban and peri-urban areas. The fund will provide three years of establishment payments following planting of the trees. See https://www.gov.uk/guidance/urban-tree-challenge-fund • Woodland Carbon Code (WCC) - The WCC is the UK's voluntary carbon standard for woodland creation projects. If landowners can demonstrate that they meet this standard, they can sell the carbon sequestered in the woodland in the form of Woodland Carbon Units. See https://www.woodlandcarboncode.org.uk/ • Woodland Carbon Guarantee (WCaG) - an incentive scheme to help accelerate woodland planting rates across England. The WCaG provides the option to sell captured CO2 to the government for a guaranteed price every five or 10 years. See https://www.gov.uk/guidance/woodland-carbon-guarantee • Local Authority Treescapes Fund (LATF) - grant scheme for local authorities (LAs), to drive an increase in non-woodland tree planting across landscapes. Focused on replanting trees outside of woodlands including trees in hedgerows, parklands, riparian zones, urban areas, beside roads and footpaths as well as small linear woodlands, copses, and shelterbelts. See https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-authority-treescapes-fund • Woodland Management Plan (WMP) – part of Countryside Stewardship (CS), the WMP is a one-off payment to create a 10 year Woodland Management Plan which is UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) compliant. See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/woodland-management-plan-grants-2023-countryside-stewardship • Woodland Creation and Maintenance (WCM) – part of CS, the WCM provides a capital payment to create a woodland followed by, if eligible, an annual maintenance payment to maintain the new woodland for a period of 10 years. See https://www.gov.uk/guidance/woodland-creation-grant-countryside-stewardship • Woodland Tree Health (WTH) – part of CS, WTH provides support for restocking woodland after felling due to a tree health issue and funds for the removal of diseased trees and infected rhododendron. See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/woodland-tree-health-grants-2023-countryside-stewardship • Woodland Improvement (WI) – to improve the biodiversity of woodland and/or make it more resilient to climate change. Applications for WI are made under CS Higher Tier, using the Woodland Improvement option (WD2) and/or capital items, including Woodland Infrastructure (FY2). See https://www.gov.uk/countryside-stewardship-grants/woodland-improvement-wd2
Duration	The majority of the grants can be applied for all year round. Those that fall under the Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier follow the application dates for this scheme, more detail in December, but going forward are expected to be open all year round.
Latest/ Update	Jan 2024: There has been a number of bespoke measures announced to boost tree planting in addition to those offered above:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £750,000 of Research & Development funding to improve resilience, management and protection of unique temperate rainforests in England which can be found in Cornwall, Devon and Cumbria. • A competition to create a new National Forest. • The creation of two more Community Forests in Derbyshire and the Tees Valley which will create 175 hectares of new woodland planted by 2025 alongside new pipeline forests. <p>Nov 2023: England Woodland Creation Offer - Maintenance payments will now be paid for 15 years (increased from 10yrs). Capital works will have three years to be completed in (previously 2yrs).</p> <p>Aug 2023: From May 2023 the woodland creation element of HS2WF will be delivered via EWCO</p>
Implications	<p><i>Woodland is seen as a priority by the Government to help it achieve Net Zero by 2050 as well as supporting nature recovery and delivering other objectives of the 25-year Environment Plan. To this end there are substantial funds available to encourage the creation and improvement of woodland. The grants are not just for the costs of buying and planting a tree, there is funding for wraps, guards, shelters or mulch mats to protect the individual trees in the early years. There are also various grants for fencing woodland to exclude livestock, deer and rabbits. Woodland grants will also be of interest to those who supply field gates, badger gates or vehicle and pedestrian deer gates. There are a number of grant funded capital items which are associated with protecting woodland from deer and also for relocating livestock water troughs where woodland has been planted alongside rivers. Some of the schemes have funds for leaky woody dams (LWD).</i></p>

5.3.5 Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme (NCPGS)

Grant Name	Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme (NCPGS)
Grant Purpose	Provides funding to restore peatlands in the uplands and lowlands of England.
Grant Rate	Normally up to 75% of the total project costs. At least 25% of the total project costs must be covered by funding from not from the UK Government. In exceptional cases, it may be possible to apply for up to 85% of the cost.
Grant Detail	<p>Natural England is looking for landscape-scale applications that work to restore the whole hydrological unit of a peatland. This is likely to involve several landowners, so applications from partnerships or substantial land holdings are encouraged. Applications must show how the schemes objectives will be delivered; these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce emissions from peat by 5.7 megatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents cumulatively by 2050 • establish the process of restoring 35,000 hectares of degraded peat in England by March 2025 • provide wider benefits such as improved ecosystems and biodiversity, better water quality, natural flood management, protection of historic environment features, and connecting people with nature <p>The NCPGS also includes the Paludiculture Exploration Fund. This fund supports businesses, landowners and others with an interest in exploring</p>

	paludiculture (farming on peat). Farming on wetter peat has the potential to mitigate the further loss of greenhouse gases and carbon
Duration	Funding will open in Rounds; the grant will run until 2025
Latest/ Update	Aug 2023: The deadline for Round 3 of the Restoration Grant was 26 th May 2023. The Paludiculture Exploration Fund is currently closed.
Implications	<p><i>The scheme is open to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>environmental groups</i> • <i>local authorities</i> • <i>charities</i> • <i>public bodies</i> • <i>individual landowners, and</i> • <i>organisations</i> <p><i>Those businesses that are involved or have experience with Peatland restoration would be advised to contact these types of organisations to collaborate with them to design a scheme.</i></p>

5.3.6 Farming in Protected Landscapes (FIPL)

Grant Name	Farming In Protected Landscapes
Grant Purpose	Offers funding to farmers and land managers in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), National Parks and the Norfolk Broads. It is not an agri-environment scheme. It pays for projects under four themes: climate, nature, people or place.
Grant Rate	Up to 100% of the costs of a project if it will not make a commercial gain. If there will be a commercial benefit from a project, then the programme will fund a proportion of the costs. The amount will depend on how much the project will benefit the business.
Grant Detail	<p>The FIPL programme is open to all farmers and land managers within an AONB or National Park in England, or the Broads see https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx?&chosenLayers=aonbIndex,npkIndex</p> <p>This includes farmers and land managers from the public, private and charity sector. The programme is also open to farmers and land managers on land outside of protected landscapes but to be eligible the project must benefit the protected landscape, or the protected landscape body's objectives or partnership initiatives. The programme will fund projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support nature recovery • mitigate the impacts of climate change • provide opportunities for people to discover, enjoy and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage • protect or improve the quality and character of the landscape or place <p>Further information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/funding-for-farmers-in-protected-landscapes#contact</p>
Duration	<p>Applications can be made all year round, those over £10,000 will be judged by a Local Assessment Panel. They are expected to meet to make decisions every 6 to 8 weeks. Applications for less than £10,000 will be scored by a senior official who has not been involved with or given advice to the application.</p> <p>The programme will run until March 2025 and all projects need to be completed by this date.</p>

Latest/ Update	Aug 2023: The scheme has been extended for a further year and will run until March 2025
Implications	<i>Businesses would be advised to make contact with the different protected landscape bodies to ascertain their objectives, their contacts can be found via https://www.gov.uk/guidance/funding-for-farmers-in-protected-landscapes#contact The scheme will be of interest to those businesses that are involved in carbon storage or sequestering, reducing the risk of flood, providing a better understanding among farmers, land managers and the public as to what different habitats and land uses can deliver for carbon storage and reduced carbon emissions and developing a landscape that's more resilient to climate change. The scheme also funds projects to better manage habitats, increase the connectivity between habitats also leading to an increase in biodiversity. Those businesses who are able to improve access to the countryside, such as supplying gates to replace stiles on footpaths would be advised to understand this scheme as would those who are involved in conserving or enhancing the historic structures or character of the landscape e.g. lime kilns, or lead mining heritage or supporting locally branded food initiatives.</i>

5.4 Services

5.4.1 Annual Health and Welfare Review

Grant Name	Annual Health and Welfare Review										
Grant Purpose	Pays for farmers who keep cattle, sheep and/or pigs to have a vet to visit their farm and carry out a health and welfare review of their livestock and a follow-up.										
Grant Rate	<table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Animal Health & Welfare</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Endemic Disease Follow-up</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>• £557 for a pig review</td> <td>£923</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• £436 for a sheep review</td> <td>£639</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• £522 for a beef cattle review</td> <td>£837 if +ve £215 if -ve</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• £372 for a dairy cattle review</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Animal Health & Welfare	Endemic Disease Follow-up	• £557 for a pig review	£923	• £436 for a sheep review	£639	• £522 for a beef cattle review	£837 if +ve £215 if -ve	• £372 for a dairy cattle review	N/A
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• £372 for a dairy cattle review	N/A										
Grant Detail	<p>The Annual Health and Welfare Review is the initial phase of the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway, there are two parts to the service;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Animal Health and Welfare Review • The Endemic Disease Follow-up <p>The Review involves a Defra-funded yearly visit from a farmer's chosen vet. The review will include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 to 3 hours of a vet and farmer's time, looking at health and welfare in a way that meets the farmer's and vet's priorities for the farm • a written report prepared by the vet with agreed recommendations and actions to improve the livestock's health and welfare • testing to industry standards for a priority endemic disease or condition, depending on species including BVD in cattle, PRRS in pigs or to find out how effective the anthelmintic being used is in sheep • the vet sharing some information relevant to the health and welfare of the farmer's livestock, including test results, with Defra <p>Optional areas may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a check of the biosecurity measures and advice on improving them 										

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recommendations about medicines used on the farm including antibiotics and vaccinations • advice on grants and sources of funding available <p>After the vet has completed the review, farmers can choose to have an Endemic Disease Follow-up. This involves more in-depth diagnostic testing of PRRS in pigs. For cattle it will help identify animals which are persistently infected with BVD and give advice on how to eliminate the disease on the farm. With regards to sheep, there will be a little more flexibility, allowing farmers, in consultation with their vet, to choose from a range of health packages. Eligible farmers will also receive funding towards a biosecurity assessment and bespoke advice on how to improve it. Currently the endemic disease follow-up is not available for dairy cattle.</p> <p>There must be at least 10 months between reviews, and follow-ups must be within 10 months of the review. The service will end on 19th June 2027 by which time all reviews and follow-ups must have taken place. Further information can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sfi-annual-health-and-welfare-review</p>
Duration	Opened for applications in 2023. Eligible livestock keepers need to register their interest via an online portal. It is available for three years and will end on 19 th June 2027.
Latest/ Update	<p>July 2024: Expanded to include Endemic Disease Follow-ups</p> <p>Aug 2023: The portal to register an interest is now open at https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/register-your-interest . Guidance for vets can be found at https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/guidance-for-vet</p>
Implications	<i>The Annual Health and Welfare will be of particular interest to those businesses that are involved in supplying veterinary supplies or services. This could be for those who supply equipment or those that are involved in the specific tests themselves. The difference in the funding is mainly down to the costs of the different tests depending on the species. Those that are involved in developing and processing these types of tests, and the systems involved in relaying the information would be advised to look into this grant and make contact with the veterinary profession.</i>

5.4.2 Advice

Grant Purpose	There are a number of initiatives offering free advice to farmers and land managers.
Grant Rate	Free to farmers and land managers.
Grant Detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Farming Advice Service (FAS):</i> funded by Defra to help farms understand and meet the requirements of Cross Compliance, the Basic Payments Scheme and legislation on both water protection and sustainable pesticide use. Information is disseminated via a helpline, on-farm events, newsletter, guidance and technical articles. This is provided by a national network of qualified, independent advisers from agricultural consultancies and research organisations throughout England under contract to Defra. See https://www.farmingadvice.org.uk/

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Future Farming Resilience Fund (FFRF)</i>: provides any farmer or land manager who is eligible for the Basic Payment Scheme in England free business advice during the early years of the agricultural transition. The FFRF awards grants to organisations. These organisations then provide free business advice. They work with farmers and land managers to understand how the changes to farm policy will affect their businesses and help them to plan for the future. Different advice providers offer different kinds of support, in different sectors. Some offer 1-to-1 consultations and farm visits, followed up by recommendations in a report. Others provide workshops, webinars, tours and networking opportunities to help farmers get support from other farmers. It has been scaled up, providing £32 million of funding to 17 organisations to provide support to up to 32,000 farmers and land managers. See https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-free-business-advice-for-your-farm • <i>Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF)</i>- works with farmers and partners across England to produce food in a way that protects water, air and soil. Advisors are locally based and provide informed, confidential, on-farm advice to help land managers make decisions on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ soil management ➤ nutrient, slurry, and manure management ➤ ammonia emission reduction ➤ farm infrastructure and machinery set-up ➤ pesticide handling ➤ water resources and natural flood management ➤ local environmental priorities ➤ land management ➤ agricultural transition, including grants See https://www.gov.uk/guidance/catchment-sensitive-farming-reduce-agricultural-water-pollution • <i>Bovine TB Advisory Service (TBAS)</i> - DEFRA funded project that offers free, bespoke, practical and cost-effective advice to all eligible farmers in England to help reduce the risks associated with TB. It includes a phone help-line, farm visits, Badger sett surveys and personalised recommendations. TBAS is entirely vet led, Farmcare Solutions, has been selected by Defra to deliver the service for the next three years. See https://www.tbas.org.uk/
Duration	Most of the services are available to farmers all year round. The final phase of FFRF support runs from October 2022 to March 2025. Contracts to deliver the support usually run for a number of years, these are conducted by a tender process. Defra is usually responsible for the funding and awarding the contracts.
Latest/ Update	Aug 2023: All services are currently available.
Implications	<i>These are Defra funded programmes. Those businesses that are involved in giving farm business advice including protection for soil, air and water are advised to read the scheme details and be prepared to tender for contracts. This also includes advice and measures to combat bovine TB. CSF also works with a range of partners including:</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>water companies</i> • <i>local authorities</i> • <i>trade bodies</i> • <i>environmental organisations</i> • <i>river trusts</i> <p><i>This work includes Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation programme with local authorities and the Environment Agency, part-funding farm advisers in partnership with rivers trusts and National Parks authorities, producing videos, tools and factsheets with Voluntary Initiative and Innovation for Agriculture</i></p>
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5.4.3 Farming Innovation Programme

Grant Name	Farming Innovation Programme
Grant Purpose	Funds innovation, research and development projects that benefit farmers, growers and foresters
Grant Rate	<p>Depends on the type of project (see Grant Detail below)</p> <p>Research Starter - £28-£56K</p> <p>Feasibility Studies - £200-£500K</p> <p>Small R & D - £1-£3 million</p> <p>Large R & D - £3-£5 million</p> <p>Farming Futures R & D £200K - £6 million</p>
Grant Detail	<p>Defra is partnering with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to fund projects that benefit farmers, growers and foresters in England. All funding is awarded through competitions. This means applications for each competition will be judged, and only the successful ones will be funded. The programme's aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help farmers, growers and foresters increase productivity, sustainability and resilience • reduce the environmental impact of agriculture and horticulture • apply agricultural research to provide real benefits for farmers, growers and foresters • use science to develop solutions for the practical challenges in agriculture and horticulture <p>Collaboration between farmers, researchers and businesses is encouraged. To get funding, you must collaborate with at least one other business. The lead business must be UK-based. Once the competition is open, Innovate UK KTN (see https://iuk.ktn-uk.org/people/?_sft_sector=agrifood) can help you find the right people to work with on your project.</p> <p>Projects are grouped into 4 Themes depending on what you want to do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Explore an idea and develop a team</i> – Research Starter Competition. Funding is available for farmers, growers and foresters (individuals or groups) to investigate a known problem in the industry and work out how best this can be overcome, bringing benefits to the whole farming community. These should be big ambitious ideas to integrate science and new technologies and approaches. • <i>Check if an idea works in practice</i> – Feasibility Studies. If you have already been working on an idea that can solve a real-world problem for farmers, growers and foresters you can apply for funding to check if it will work in practice.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop a new product or service</i> – Research & Development (R&D) Partnerships. If you have a new product or service that could improve farming methods and help the environment it is possible to apply to be funded as a Research & Development Partnership project. There are two different levels; Small R&D Partnerships and Large R&D Partnerships depending on funding (see above) and length of project (see below). • <i>Work on longer-term innovations</i> - Farming Futures R&D. Funding is available for projects where the ideas are further away than market readiness than typical R&D projects. Each competition has a different theme, previous ones have been; Climate smart farming; Sustainable farm-based proteins; and Environmental resilience <p>More information can be found at https://farminginnovation.ukri.org/</p>
Duration	<p>Depends on the type of project (see Grant Detail below)</p> <p>Research Starter – Up to 1 year</p> <p>Feasibility Studies – Up to 2 years</p> <p>Small R & D – Up to 3 years</p> <p>Large R & D – Up to 4 years</p> <p>Farming Futures – Up to 2-5 years</p>
Latest/ Update	<p>November 2024: The Government has put the following grant funding on hold pending the Spending Review process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farming Futures R & D – Nutrient management Phase 2 • Small R & D Partnerships (Round 4) • Feasibility Studies (Round 4) • Farming Futures R & D - Net Zero Farming <p>August 2024: Advanced warning that the following funding will be available in autumn 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farming Futures R & D – Nutrient management Phase 2 • Small R & D Partnerships (Round 4) • Feasibility Studies (Round 4) • Farming Futures R & D - Net Zero Farming <p>July 2024: Farming Futures R & D – Nutrient, Part 1 – Closes for applications 11am 24th July. For further information go to https://farminginnovation.ukri.org/long-term-solutions/</p> <p>June 2024: Farming Futures R & D – Nutrient, Part 1 – Now open, closes 11am 24th July. For further information go to https://farminginnovation.ukri.org/long-term-solutions/</p> <p>May: Farming Futures R & D -Nutrient, Part 1 – Due to open spring 2024</p> <p>April: Farming Futures R & D -Nutrient, Part 1 – Due to open spring 2024</p> <p>Jan 2024 - Research Starter Round 4 is now open, it runs from 18th Dec 2023 – 14th Feb 2024. For more information go to https://farminginnovation.ukri.org/explore/</p> <p>Dec 2023 - Research Starter (Round 4) opens 18th Dec 2023 closes 14th Feb 2024. See https://farminginnovation.ukri.org/explore/</p> <p>Large R & D Partnership (Round 3) opens 15th January 2024 closes March 2024. See https://farminginnovation.ukri.org/develop/</p> <p>Sept 2023 – Small R&D Partnerships (Round 3) opened 14th August 2023 closes 25th October 2023. See https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/1678/overview/3e005199-2540-434a-b4d7-a2b6639f46ad</p>

	<p>Feasibility Studies (Round 3) opens 18th September 2023, closes 15th November 2023. See https://apply-for-innovation-funding.service.gov.uk/competition/1674/overview/b620a29f-5240-4955-99c3-81ca57bec316</p>
Implications	<p><i>This grant will be of interest to those who want to research or develop an innovative solution to a known problem in the agricultural industry. It will be for those who have ambitious ideas, wish to collaborate and require funding to accelerate an idea or a solution to market. It will help fund new products, processes and services which can solve real environmental and industry challenges in the agricultural sector. The organisation applying must be a UK business, which could mean from a NZ perspective a UK-based business will be required to partner with.</i></p>

6 Scotland – Grant Opportunities

6.1 Infrastructure

6.1.1 Slurry Storage Grant

Grant Name	Agri-environment Climate Scheme (AECS) Slurry Storage Grant
Grant Purpose	Grants for slurry storage on farm to improve water quality and mitigate climate change.
Grant Rate	£20 per cubic metre capacity created, restricted to a maximum 2,000 cubic metres of storage plus associated equipment.
Grant Detail	This grant is part of the Agri-environment Climate Scheme and provides capital funding to ensure a minimum of six months slurry storage capacity is achieved across the holding. Businesses that currently house livestock on slurry based systems with less than 6 months storage capacity will be eligible to apply. Not available in areas that are designated as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones or for slatted tanks. More information is available via https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/agri-environment-climate-scheme/management-options-and-capital-items/slurry-storage/
Duration	In the current year applications ran from 30 th January 2023 – 24 th March 2023. Contracts were issued by the end of April 2023 with the anticipation that work will be carried out and claimed by 31 st March 2024.
Latest/ Update	April 2024: Applications close 19 th April 2024 March 2024: New round opened for applications on 15 th February and will close on 19 th April 2024. Feb 2024: A new round is expected in early 2024 but had not been announced at time of writing (2 nd Feb). Aug 2023: Contracts for 2023 have all been issued and the application window is now closed. Another window is expected in early 2024.
Implications	<i>Those businesses which are involved in designing, supplying and installing slurry storage are advised to ensure they know the scheme requirements, funding availability and application dates to target marketing appropriately. Associated equipment for above-ground storage tanks is also funded, such as base drainage sealed pipe assembly, including double lockable sluice valves, galvanised ladder and platform, fixed over-rim riser pipe with jetting nozzle and terminal connection, tractor-driven slurry pump and associated pipe, assemblies and connections with shaft and mountings and below-ground reception tank with cover lid.</i>

6.2 Equipment and Ancillary Items

6.2.1 Sustainable Agricultural Capital Grants Scheme (SACGS)

Grant Name	Sustainable Agricultural Capital Grants Scheme (SACGS)
Grant Purpose	Pays for equipment to reduce harmful ammonia emissions and reduce adverse impacts on water quality resulting from the storage and spreading of livestock slurry and digestate.

Grant Rate	Funding is 40% (50% in the Highlands and Islands) of the actual costs, up to a maximum 'standard cost' for each item (included in the guidance). The total amount of grant a farm business can receive per application is £20,000
Grant Detail	The SACGS funds farmers, crofters and contractors to invest in covers for slurry stores (including lagoons) and spreading equipment to reduce ammonia emissions. There is a set list of equipment eligible under the scheme. No second-hand or ex-demo items are eligible. Further information can be found at https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/sustainable-agriculture-capital-grant-scheme--sacgs-/
Duration	The scheme was open from 26 th April 2022 and closed on 1 st June in 2022.
Latest/ Update	Aug 2023: No application rounds have been announced in 2023
Implications	<i>Each Round has a set list of equipment, with minimum specifications, these include slurry store and lagoon covers, dribble bars and flow rate monitoring equipment. Shallow injection and trailing shoe spreading equipment is also funded. Suppliers and manufacturers would be well advised to get to know the detailed specifications to ensure your product fits. If not, can it be 'tweaked'? If your product is not on the list, it may be possible to 'lobby' for it if it reduces ammonia emissions from livestock slurry. The Standard Cost for each item is listed, make sure the cost of your equipment is aligned with this and market accordingly. The list of items can be found at https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/sustainable-agriculture-capital-grant-scheme--sacgs-/sustainable-agriculture-capital-grant-scheme--sacgs--full-guidance/</i>

6.2.2 Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme (CAGS)

Grant Name	Crofting Agricultural Grant Scheme
Grant Purpose	Provides grants for crofters to make improvements to their crofts and help to sustain their businesses.
Grant Rate	For individuals – 60% of approved costs in Less Favoured Areas and 40% of approved costs in non-Less Favoured Areas (80% and 60% for Young Farmers). Groups – 80% of approved costs in Less Favoured Areas and 60% of approved costs in non-Less Favoured Areas (90% and 80% for Young Farmers). The total grant in any two-year period is £25,000 for individual crofters and £125,000 for groups. The scheme is competitive and once the annual fund of £2m has been used, the scheme will close for the year.
Grant Detail	<p>The CAGS provides grants to tenant and owner-occupier crofters, living in the Highlands and Islands Enterprise Area, towards the costs of a range of agricultural operations and capital items. Funding can be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • capital projects, such as the construction or improvement of agricultural buildings • the establishment of Common Grazings Committees, which is responsible for managing and maintaining common grazing, and is elected by crofters who use it <p>Examples of projects include (but are not limited to) capital funding for construction and renovation of agricultural buildings improving stock control, protecting crops from damage by deer, wintering of livestock, storing winter</p>

	fodder and improving grassland management. Applications are competitive and are scored judged on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • does the proposal match with an agricultural need? • is the proposal proportionate to the size of the agricultural unit? • does the proposed investment provide business efficiency?
Duration	Applications can be made to this scheme at any time. Applicants will normally be expected to complete the work within 12 months of the date of the authority to proceed letter.
Latest/ Update	Aug 2023: Open for applications
Implications	<i>Crofting exists in areas of Scotland where agricultural production and investment costs are traditionally high. It is widely regarded as a socially, culturally and environmentally important activity, for the sense of identity it provides, the landscape it produces and the systems of communal working it supports. The scheme is wide ranging offering funding for the erection or improvement of agricultural buildings, and shelters for the temporary housing and sheltering of out-wintered livestock, including associated works such as yards, hard-standings, dungsteeds, and silos (excluding grain silos). Investment in land management, including the initial grassland improvement works for the restoration of degraded land and the control of bracken, slurry stores, field drainage and other general drainage. Provision or improvement of facilities for the organised feeding of out-wintered livestock, including permanently fixed troughs and feed barriers, and associated concrete bases. Livestock handling equipment and planting of shelter belts and the provision of fences, hedges, walls, gates or stock grids. Provision or improvement of amenities, including water supplies, mains electricity connections or electricity generators and other electrical equipment. Provision or improvement of access tracks to land improvement areas, roads, bridges, culverts or boat slips. There is also up to £500 towards the establishment of a properly constituted common grazing committee. Suppliers and manufacturers are advised to familiarise themselves with the scheme requirements and to make contact with the Crofting Commission.</i>

6.3 Land Management

6.3.1 Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS)

Grant Name	Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS)
Grant Purpose	Funding is available via annual payments for management options or one-off payments for capital items aimed at promoting low carbon farming and protecting the environment
Grant Rate	Amounts vary depending on practices undertaken
Grant Detail	This has been Scotland's main agri-environment scheme for a number of years. It is a competitive scheme which subsidises management and capital works for environmental purposes. It promotes land management practices which protect and enhance Scotland's natural heritage, improve water quality (including grants for slurry storage see 'Infrastructure' section earlier), manage flood risks, and mitigate and adapt to climate change. Previously there has been funding to improve public access, but this has been suspended in 2023,

	<p>support to preserve historic sites is also available. Support for organic conversion and maintenance is provided through the AECS. Most applications need a Farm Environment Assessment (FEA) which records key environmental features on farm and helps plan what to include in the application. Funding is available for the FEA. This grant is geographically targeted. More information can be found at https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/agri-environment-climate-scheme/</p>
Duration	<p>The Scottish Government has confirmed the AECS will open for full rounds up to and including 2024. Applications usually open in January, closing dates depend on the element being applied for.</p>
Latest/ Update	<p>July 2024: Applications to the stand-alone organic conversion and maintenance actions close 31st July 2024.</p> <p>June 2024: Applications to Agri-environment management close on 10th June. Stand-alone organic conversion and maintenance applications close 31st July 2024.</p> <p>Feb 2024: Stand-alone organic conversion and maintenance now open until 31st July 2024. Applications to other Agri-environment management are also now open and close on 10th June 2024. Note, applications for organic conversion and maintenance as part of a single application with Agri-environment management must be submitted by the 10th June deadline.</p> <p>Oct 2023: The AECS will be open again in 2024 with an expanded offer. There will be a focus on organic conversion. The following have been reintroduced for 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chemical & Mechanical Treatment of Bracken, • Heather Cutting • Restoring of Drystone or Flagstone Dykes. • Pond Creation & Restoration (limited to 2000m² per application) • Capital grants to improve slurry stores. <p>In addition, the Creation of Hedgerow option has had its limit raised from 500m to 1,000m.</p> <p>The application windows for the various elements are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slurry Stores – early 2024 (details to be announced) • Stand-alone organic conversion and maintenance – 1st February 2024 to 31st July 2024 • Other Agri-environment – 1st February 2024 to 10th June 2024 <p>Full details are available at – https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/agri-environment-climate-scheme/.</p> <p>Aug 2023: The following capital items were not available in 2023 due to budgetary pressures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoring Drystone or Flagstone Dykes • Pond Creation and Restoration for Wildlife • Muirburn and Heather Cutting • Primary Treatment of Bracken – Mechanised or Chemical • Follow up Treatment of Bracken - Mechanised or Chemical <p>In addition, the Creation of Hedgerows option was restricted to 500 linear metres per application for 2023 applications.</p>
Implications	<p><i>The scheme offers grants for both capital items and changes in management practices. This scheme will provide opportunities for a wide 'audience'. There</i></p>

	<p>are management options for arable, grassland, upland, peatland, moorland, heath, wetland and bogs. Supply businesses are advised to understand the requirements as these management options will require seed mixes e.g. wildbird seed for farmland birds, therefore appealing to businesses offering seed mixes. These businesses would be advised to understand what is required for each mix and promote accordingly. Similarly establishing and managing these options could require some machinery purchases such as direct or precision drills and many will require regular topping. This scheme also supports the management, restoration or creation of hedgerows. Support is also available for capital items; these include control of invasive non-native plant species and Rhododendron control. There is also funding to protect waterways through grants for hard standings for troughs, gateways, livestock crossings, tracks, drainage systems and pesticide handling facilities. Water quality is further protected through finding irrigation lagoons.</p>
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6.3.2 Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS)

Grant Name	Forestry Grant Scheme
Grant Purpose	Pays for the creation of new woodlands and the sustainable management of existing woodlands.
Grant Rate	Varies on the type of grant see below for guide. There are Planting Payments and Maintenance Payments for 5 years.
Grant Detail	<p>The Forestry Grant Scheme (FGS) supports the creation of new woodlands, contributing towards the Scottish Government’s target of 18,000 hectares of new woodlands per year from 2024/25 and the sustainable management of existing woodlands. Support is available under eight categories;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woodland creation that brings economic, environmental and social benefits. There are nine woodland creation categories. An initial planting payment is from £560 per Ha to £3,600 per Ha depending on the category planted. Annual maintenance payments are for five years (from £96 per Ha to £624 per Ha). Higher rates are available in target areas. There is a range of capital grants for example for fencing and tree protection. There is no Farm Woodland Premium payment, but land remains eligible for BPS. See https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/woodland-creation/ • Agroforestry for the creation of small-scale woodlands (0.25-5.0 Ha) on agricultural pasture or forage land which will allow for a mix of trees and sheep grazing. An initial planting grant; £2,790 per Ha at 200 trees per Ha or £5,400 per Ha for 400 trees per Ha and an annual maintenance grant for 5 years; £72/£126 per Ha per year at a stocking rate of 200/400 trees per Ha. See https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/agroforestry/ • Woodland Improvement Grant (WIG) provide capital grants to improve existing woodlands. These support forest management to enhance the environment and the public’s enjoyment of existing woodlands (Woodlands in and Around Towns (WIAT)). See https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/woodland-improvement-grant/

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Management of Forests options support the management of existing woodlands with a high environmental value. Includes control of grey squirrel & deer, predator control for Capercaillie and Black Grouse, public access, livestock exclusion, woodland grazing and low impact silvicultural systems. See https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/sustainable-management-of-forests/ • Tree Health prevents the spread of Phytophthora ramorum (P. ramorum) and restores affected woodlands. See https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/tree-health/ • Harvesting and Processing develops the small-scale premium softwood and hardwood processing sector. Funding for equipment in small, undermanaged woods. See https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/harvesting-and-processing/ • Forest Infrastructure – support for access into undermanaged or small woodlands. See https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/forest-infrastructure/ • Forestry Co-operation funds projects involving multiple landowners. See https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/forestry-co-operation/ <p>This scheme is being delivered by SRDP and Scottish Forestry. Further information can be found at https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/forestry-grant-scheme/</p>
Duration	Applications can be made throughout the year. Agreements can be for up to 20 years.
Latest/ Update	Aug 2023: The different elements are open for applications.
Implications	<i>This grant will be of particular interest to suppliers of conifers and broadleaf trees. Each grant has a different payment rate set to cover purchase of trees, appropriate protection (tree guards, wraps, mulch etc.) planning, site assessment, contribution to the cost of beating up and weeding. Not just tree suppliers, but those manufacturing and distributing tree guards, agrochemicals and other associated forestry and woodland equipment should familiarise themselves with the payments on offer and market accordingly. This grant will also be of interest to those who supply infrastructure, such as forest roads, lay-bys, turning areas or loading bays.</i>

6.4 Services

6.4.1 Preparing for Sustainable Farming

Grant Name	Preparing for Sustainable Farming
Grant Purpose	Pays for baseline sampling, including carbon auditing, soil sampling and animal health & welfare.
Grant Rate	Carbon Audit fixed rate of £500; Soil sampling payments will be the actual cost of having the testing done plus an allowance of £4 for gathering the sample, subject to an annual cap. Small farms (and crofts) will have a minimum annual allowance of £300. In the first year of the scheme there will also be a one-off

	<p>payment of £250 as a 'development' payment. The Animal Health and Welfare Intervention Payment is worth £250 per intervention and in the first year there is a further £250 for development (£750 in year one, £500 in year two).</p>
Grant Detail	<p>The Preparing for Sustainable Farming (PSF) programme has opened as part of the Scottish Government's National Test Programme (NTP). 'Track 1' of this will encourage farmers to start collecting information on their businesses. This baseline data will then be used to measure future improvements. There are three options currently being funded in the first phase of Preparing for Sustainable Farming (PSF) that Scottish farmers, crofters, and agricultural contractors can claim funding for;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Carbon Audit element will pay a fixed amount of £500 towards having an audit. The calculator to be used is not specified, but it must be compliant with the PAS 2050 standard. Funding is only available for businesses that don't already have a carbon audit, or if it is more than three years old. To be eligible for the grant, the Carbon Audit must have been reviewed by, and had recommendations from, a Farm Business Adviser Accreditation Scheme for Scotland (FBAASS) adviser. This will give pointers to how the farm can reduce its GHG emissions. • The Soil Sampling scheme covers only Region 1 land (land included on that year's SAF form). The soil analysis is to determine the current levels of pH, Phosphate (P), Potash (K), and Carbon in the soil. Before a claim for the Soil Analysis and Development Payment is made, the farm must have a current Carbon Audit (i.e. less than three years old). There is no requirement to register for the grants. A claim is made once the work has been done. This is via a new online portal which can be accessed from the Preparing for Sustainable Farming (PSF) guidance page on Rural Payments and Services website. • The Animal Health and Welfare Intervention is a "starter package" to prompt a review of the flock or herd, and to help livestock keepers consider health and welfare interventions that improve performance. It runs for two years and producers can claim for two interventions per annum, from a list of well-established protocols to prevent or control disease and improve productivity including bull fertility, liver fluke, roundworms, sheep scab, sheep iceberg diseases, calf respiratory, sheep lameness. Payment will be made on evidence of investigation plus advised action. The action must be defined by an Expert Adviser, e.g. a vet or agricultural consultant. <p>For more information see https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/preparing-for-sustainable-farming--psf-/preparing-for-sustainable-farming--psf--full-guidance/</p>
Duration	<p>The elements of this programme are available now. It is expected that these will become part of the requirements under future farm policy being introduced in 2026.</p>
Latest/ Update	<p>April 2024: Carbon auditing and Soil Analysis will be part of the Whole Farm Plan being introduced as part of 'conditionality' that Scottish farmers will have to undertake in 2025 to receive their Basic payment. This could mean an 'uptick' in interest for these services.</p> <p>Aug 2023: The elements of this grant are available</p>

Implications	<i>This programme will be of interest to all businesses that are involved in lowering agricultural emissions, increasing on farm efficiencies and improving animal health and welfare. These businesses would be advised to make themselves known to the Scottish Government. The scheme would be of particular interest to those who have or are designing carbon calculators or are involved in supplying soil sampling services or equipment. The Animal Health and Welfare Intervention element is the newest and will be of interest to those who provide diagnostic testing for priority diseases in Scotland's flocks or herds or are involved in such activities or equipment as faecal egg count for gut worms or in the manufacturing/distribution of anthelmintics for sheep or flukicides for cattle. The scheme also targets sheep scab and sheep iceberg diseases such as MaediVisna, Johnes, Border Disease, Contagious Lymphadenitis, lung scanning for OPA (Ovine Pulmonary Adenomatosis). In addition, there is a development payment and keepers are signposted to some online resources, there may be collaboration opportunities for some businesses.</i>
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6.4.2 Farm Advisory Service (FAS)

Grant Name	Farm Advisory Service
Grant Purpose	Provides grants, information and resources for increasing the profitability and sustainability of farms and crofts.
Grant Rate	Depends on the service(s) taken-up – see below.
Grant Detail	<p>The service offers workshops, network farm meetings, conferences and training courses together with information, tools and apps to assist farmers and crofters, all available from the website.</p> <p>Farmers and crofters can also access up to £1,200 towards an Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP). Further funding (up to £1,000 per topic) is available for a number of topics including Farm Business Efficiency, Climate Change Adaptations and Mitigation, Soil & Nutrient Management, Organic, Animal Welfare, Woodland Management etc.</p> <p>The Business Resilience Planning specialist advice grant has also been extended indefinitely. The scheme allows farmers and crofters to apply for up to £1,000 through the FAS to appoint an expert advisor to undertake a thorough review of the business and develop a 'Resilience Action Plan' to address the challenges.</p> <p>There is also £500 available towards a Carbon Audit.</p> <p>The Crofter and Small Farm Advisory Service is also available under the FAS umbrella. This provides a discounted subscription for consultancy services for crofters and small businesses with less than 30 hectares. In addition, New Farmers and Crofters who are setting up a new business or who have set up a business in the last 5-years are entitled to free support through the FAS mentoring programme.</p> <p>Further information can be found at https://www.fas.scot/</p>
Duration	These services are open all year round. The Scottish Government has not given an end date, saying FAS will be open 'indefinitely'. It may be that the services available could alter.
Latest/ Update	For details of the latest events and news go to https://www.fas.scot/

Implications	<i>This will be of interest to those businesses who offer information and resources aimed at increasing the profitability and sustainability of farms and crofts. Currently there are 130 organisations delivering advice to farmers and crofters. Those interested should look to become accredited advisors via the Farm Business Advisor Accreditation Scotland Scheme (FBAASS).</i>
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6.4.3 Knowledge Transfer Innovation Fund (KTIF)

Grant Name	Knowledge Transfer Innovation Fund
Grant Purpose	Provides funding to cover the running costs of 'operational groups' to provide training, workshops, farm visits etc. which deliver improvements in competitiveness, resource efficiency, environmental and sustainability in the farming and forestry sector.
Grant Rate	Funding is now capped at £200,000 per project.
Grant Detail	<p>The aim of this programme is to provide funding to organisations to deliver vocational training, workshops, coaching and farm visits. It also builds on the previous Skills Development Scheme (SDS) by continuing support for Monitor Farms, benchmarking, and demonstration activities. It has two components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote skills development and knowledge transfer in the primary agricultural sector through providing funding to organisations to deliver vocational training, coaching, workshops, courses and farm visits designed to develop skills and transfer knowledge. • Funding the running costs of groups looking to implement innovative projects to deliver improvements in the competitiveness of agriculture, resource efficiency, environmental performance and sustainability. <p>Further information can be found at https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/knowledge-transfer-and-innovation-fund/</p>
Duration	Applications are usually available throughout the year. A new funding window opened in summer 2024. A Project Assessment Committee meets to assess and score applications. Funding is now capped at £200,000 per project. All projects must be completed by 31 st March 2025
Latest/ Update	<p>Under the latest round projects must focus on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing competitiveness and enhancing viability in agriculture • Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystems • Improving water and/or soil management • Pollution prevention and control • Promoting resource efficiency and supporting a shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture. <p>Proposals should be discussed with the Rural Innovation Support Service (RISS) first.</p>
Implications	<i>This grant will be of interest to those businesses that are training providers aimed at improving skills and transferring knowledge in the agricultural sector. These activities can include workshops, training programmes, coaching, demonstration activities, information activities and other group</i>

	<i>events. Those which have projects that aim to pilot new and innovative ideas to improve agricultural performance could also benefit from this scheme.</i>
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7 Wales – Grant Opportunities

7.1 Infrastructure

7.1.1 Nutrient Management Investment Scheme (NMIS) – Slurry and Silage Storage

Grant Name	Nutrient Management Investment Scheme (NMIS) - Slurry and Silage Storage
Grant Purpose	Supports infrastructure and capital investments in equipment and machinery that addresses the impact of on-farm pollution.
Grant Rate	The grant will be a maximum 40% - 50% contribution against actual invoiced costs up to a maximum grant award of £50,000 and a minimum of £12,000.
Grant Detail	Slurry and silage storage is funded under the NMIS via grants to purchase from a list of predefined capital items which enhance on-farm nutrient management, protect, and enhance water, soil and air quality, improve on-farm resource efficiencies, technical performance, and the use of technology to improve management decisions. The investment must meet or exceed the minimum specification described. One application per window is allowed. More information can be found via https://www.gov.wales/nutrient-management-investment-scheme-guidance-html Further equipment to address on farm pollution is also available see 'Equipment and Ancillary' items below). Specification for the eligible items can be found at https://www.gov.wales/nutrient-management-investment-scheme-list-eligible-capital-items
Duration	The first application window was open from 4 th July 2022 to 12 th August 2022. Claims for all Capital Works items must be made by 31 st March 2025.
Latest/ Update	August 2024: Applications close on 23 rd August 2024. July 2024: Opens for Expressions of Interest from 15 th July 2024 May 2024: Prior notification that a new window will open from 15 th July – 23 rd August. Further detail will be available shortly see https://www.gov.wales/rural-grants-payments Aug 2023: No application dates have yet been announced for 2023.
Implications	<i>Those manufacturing slurry lagoons, concrete or steel storage structures or silage clamps are advised to read the specifications. The projects supported under this element of the scheme will be of scale and it is likely to take a number of months to prepare applications and to complete the work meaning any marketing targeted at this grant is likely to be relevant for an extended period of time. It is a wide-ranging scheme, businesses are encouraged to read the literature to fully understand what might be funded. Projects for storage of slurry and silage will likely require other 'equipment' as part of a wider project. E.g. pumps, filters concreting. As well as marketing direct to</i>

	<i>farmers it might be worthwhile making contacts with those who are likely to be doing the main project work.</i>
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7.2 Equipment and Ancillary Items

7.2.1 Small Grants : Environment; Efficiency; Yard Coverings

Grant Name	Small Grants – Environment; Small Grants – Efficiency; Small Grants - Yard Coverings
Grant Purpose	A set of Small Grants to contribute towards the cost of capital items to improve the efficiency and environmental performance of farm businesses.
Grant Rate	The grant rate is based on a 40% contribution towards the Standard Cost. Maximum grant is £12,000, minimum is £1,000 although varies between the different elements – see below.
Grant Detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Grants - Environment - This is a standalone scheme providing a maximum of £7,500 funding per window for Capital Works Projects. Set lists of Capital Works are available to support the delivery of beneficial environmental outcomes under the following four themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ carbon ➤ water ➤ landscape and pollinators ➤ hedgerow creation <p>For example, under the water theme a list of capital items is available to help Welsh farmers to carry out projects to help improve water quality and reduce the risk of flooding. The Capital Works items will be identified as 'Main' and 'Supportive' Work(s), which, together, form a 'Project'. Main items include rain water goods, cross drains, pond restoration, hedge planting and laying with Supportive works including items such as a range of different gates, fencing, tree guards and also funding for water troughs and bracken control. The scheme is competitive and each Expression of Interest will be scored. Every land parcel in Wales has been assigned a score for each available activity, these can be viewed via applicant's RPW online accounts. The highest scoring capital works projects will be selected. For further scheme details go to https://www.gov.wales/small-grants-environment</p> • Small Grants - Efficiency – This supports capital investments in equipment and technology, there is a pre-defined list of items available. Each item has a full specification together with the standard value and the grant value. The maximum grant is £12,000 and the minimum is £1,000. The grant provides a 40% contribution against the actual invoiced costs up to the maximum stated in the scheme rules. Applications and claims are all online. The scheme is competitive and applications are scored, each item has a weighting. If successful, contracts must be accepted within 30 days and all items must be purchased and claimed for within 180 days. The list of capital items can be found at https://www.gov.wales/small-grant-efficiency-list-eligible-capital-items-html

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Grants - Yard Coverings - Support is provided to separate rainwater and slurry from areas such as livestock feeding and gathering areas, manure storage areas and slurry/silage stores. It provides capital investments in equipment that has been pre-identified as offering clear and quantifiable benefits to Welsh farm enterprises. The capital items have been specified, along with a standard cost for each item. The grant provides a 40% - 50% contribution towards standard costs. The maximum grant is £12,000 and the minimum is £3,000. Further information including a list of items can be found via https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-06/small-grants-yard-coverings-rules-booklet_0.pdf
Duration	Applications are open in Rounds
Latest/ Update	<p>January: Small Grants – Environment opens for applications on 13th January and closes on 21st February.</p> <p>November: Prior notification of the opening of the following grants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Small Grants – Environment (no themed announced) -13th January to 21st February 2025 ➤ Small Grants – Efficiency – 3rd March to 11th April 2025 <p>September: Small Grants – Environment (Water) closes on 20th September 2024.</p> <p>August: Small Grants – Environment (Water) opens on 12th August and closes on 20th September 2024.</p> <p>June 2024: Small Grants - Environment (Carbon) and Small Grants – Yard Coverings both close 28th June 2024</p> <p>May 2024: Small Grants - Environment (Carbon) and Small Grants – Yard Coverings both open 20th May – 28th June 2024</p> <p>April 2024: Small Grants: Efficiency closes 16th April 2024. Advance warning of opening dates: Small Grants: Environment – 20th May - 28th June & 12th Aug – 20th Sept</p> <p>March 2024: Small Grants: Efficiency opens 6th March – 16th April 2024</p> <p>Feb 2024: Small Grants: Environment current round closes 16th February 2024</p> <p>Nov 2023: Advanced warning of opening dates: Small Grants: Yard Coverings – 6th November 2023 – 15th December 2023 Small Grants: Environment – 8th January 2024 – 16th February 2024 Small Grants: Efficiency – 6th March 2024 – 16th April 2024 Small Grants: Environment – 20th May 2024 – 28th June 2024 Small Grants: Environment – 12th August 2024 – 20th September 2024</p> <p>Aug 2023: Small Grants – Environment – Water, open from 21st August – 29th Sept 2023 Small Grants – Efficiency, closed March 2023 Small Grants – Yard Coverings, opens from 1st Nov – 15th Dec 2023</p>
Implications	<p><i>These schemes cover a wide variety of different equipment including livestock handling (cattle, sheep and pigs), arable subsoilers, cultivators, drills, slurry equipment, fencing, hedging etc. Each has a set list of capital items with a grant rate. Efficiency and Yard coverings also have set specifications for each piece of equipment. If an item of equipment is not on the lists, it may be possible to lobby to get it included. Manufacturers or suppliers of equipment which improves the efficiency and environmental performance of farm</i></p>

	<i>businesses are advised to familiarise themselves with items that are available together with the specifications and grant available. If products do not meet the specification, is it possible to tweak them? Products could then be targeted at the specific grant showing the funding available.</i>
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7.2.2 Nutrient Management Investment Scheme (NMIS)

Grant Name	Nutrient Management Investment Scheme
Grant Purpose	Pays for capital investments in equipment and machinery that addresses the impact of on-farm pollution. It also supports investment in slurry and silage storage (see 'Infrastructure' above)
Grant Rate	The grant is a maximum 40% contribution against actual invoiced costs. The maximum grant award is £50,000 and the minimum is £12,000.
Grant Detail	Grants are available towards infrastructure and capital investments in equipment and machinery that have been identified to address the impact of on-farm pollution. A set list of equipment has been identified this can be found at https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-06/nutrient-management-investment-scheme-list-of-eligible-capital-items.pdf Full scheme guidance is available via https://www.gov.wales/nutrient-management-investment-scheme-guidance
Duration	The first application window was open from 4 th July 2022 to 12 th August 2022. Claims for all Capital Works items must be made by 31 st March 2025.
Latest/ Update	August 2024: Applications close on 23 rd August 2024. July 2024: Opens for Expressions of Interest from 15 th July 2024 May 2024: Prior notification that a new window will open from 15 th July – 23 rd August. Further detail will be available shortly see https://www.gov.wales/rural-grants-payments Aug 2023: No application dates have yet been announced for 2023.
Implications	<i>This scheme will be of interest to manufacturers and suppliers of roofs and covers for slurry stores or lagoons, tanks and spreading equipment, chemical/pesticide/fuel oil storage and other general equipment to enhance on-farm nutrient management, protect, and enhance water, soil and air quality. Businesses with an interest in these types of products should familiarise themselves with the scheme and product specifications. Each piece of equipment has a code, this could be used to target marketing appropriately.</i>

7.3 Land Management

7.3.1 Small Grants – Growing for the Environment and Woodland Creation

Grant Name	Small Grants – Growing for the Environment; Small Grants – Woodland Creation
Grant Purpose	Small grants to improve the environmental performance of the farm business by supporting the planting of cover crops and shelterbelts.
Grant Rate	Small Grants – Growing for the Environment, the payment for Window 3 is £124 per Ha with a maximum grant of £5,000. The minimum area which can be entered into the scheme is 1ha. For Window 2, payments ranged

	<p>from £85 to £329 per Ha. Maximum grant of £5,000. Window 4 is expected to be increased slightly from this.</p> <p>Small Grants – Woodland Creation, Payments range from £3,302 - £6,170 per Ha. There is also a 12 year Annual Maintenance Payment (see Woodland Creation later for rates) and a £350 per Ha Annual Area Payment also made for 12 years.</p>
Grant Detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Grants – Growing for the Environment – This is separated into support for spring/summer sown crops and winter cover crops. Window 3 supports the establishment of an unsprayed cover crop following autumn harvesting of cereals or maize where soil, after harvesting, is ordinarily left bare or stubble retained. Crops and activity supported through the Growing for the Environment scheme have been pre-identified as offering clear and quantifiable benefits to the environment and farm business. The minimum area which can be entered into the scheme is 1ha. Window 4 supports the establishment of a range of spring and summer sown crops such as mixed leys, protein crops and unsprayed cereals. • Small Grants – Woodland Creation - This is aimed at farmers and other land managers to encourage planting of small areas of trees on land which is agriculturally improved or of low environmental value in Wales. Funding is available for tree planting to create shelterwoods, alongside watercourses, and in field corners or small fields for stock shelter, biodiversity and wood fuel. There are additional capital payments including fencing (£5.56 per m), timber gates (£151.44 each) and kissing gates (£181.00 each). Funding is available for planting areas between 0.1ha and 1.99 Ha. Trees planted under the Small Grants- Woodland Creation can count towards the future Sustainable Farming Scheme Universal Action for tree cover on farms (see earlier).
Duration	The schemes are expected to be available at least until the new Sustainable Farming Scheme commences.
Latest/ Update	<p>January 2025: Small Grant – Woodland Creation currently closed. Expected to open in 2025 for the following rounds:</p> <p>3rd March – 11th April 2025</p> <p>19th May – 27th June 2025</p> <p>21st July – 29th August 2025</p> <p>November 2024: Growing for the Environment: Spring & Summer Crops – Open from 4th November 2024 – 13th December 2024</p> <p>September 2024: Small Grant – Woodland Creation currently closed. Expected to reopen 3rd February 2025 to 14th March 2025.</p> <p>August 2024 Small Grant – Woodland Creation now open, closes 30th August 2024.</p> <p>July 2024: Small Grant - Growing for the Environment (Autumn Sowing) closes 12th July 2024.</p> <p>June 2024: Small Grant – Woodland Creation now open, closes 28th June 2024. Small Grant - Growing for the Environment (Autumn Sowing) now open, closes 12th July 2024.</p> <p>May 2024: Small Grant – Woodland Creation will open from 20th May – 28th June 2024. Small Grant - Growing for the Environment (Autumn Sowing) will open from 3rd June 2024 – 12th July 2024.</p>

	<p>Feb 2024: Advance warning of opening dates for Small Grant – Woodland Creation scheme. It will continue to have several windows throughout the year, three in 2024, and one planned in 2025 if the budget is agreed for 2025/26 financial year;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4th March – 19th April 2024 • 20th May – 20th June 2024 • 22nd July – 30th August 2024 • 3rd February – 14th March 2025 <p>Nov 2023: Advanced warning of opening dates: Growing for the Environment: Spring & Summer Crops – 6th November 2023 – 15th December 2023 Growing for the Environment: Autumn Sowing – 3rd June 2024 – 12th July 2024</p> <p>Aug 2023: Small Grants – Growing for the Environment - The application period for Window 3 will run from 5th June 2023 to 14th July 2023. The application period for Window 4 will commence on 2nd October 2023 and close on 10th November 2023. Small Grants – Woodland Creation - plan is for application windows to open every 3 months to cover planting in the 2023/24 seasons & beyond</p>
Implications	<p><i>Growing for the Environment will be of interest to businesses offering seed mixes. Such businesses should familiarise themselves with the scheme requirements and could market specific mixes e.g. that are suitable for late season germination and will cover the ground quickly. In addition establishment of these mixes will require a direct drill or to be broadcast on. Small Woodland Creation grants cover the costs of tree planting, including the establishment of trees and maintenance such as guards, stakes, shelters, weeding and also capital payments for fencing, including deer fencing and gates.</i></p>

7.3.2 Organic Conversion Scheme (OCS) & Organic Support Payment (OSP)

Grant Name	Organic Conversion Scheme & Organic Support Payment
Grant Purpose	Pays for the conversion of eligible land to organic production and towards the cost of certification in the first two years of the contract.
Grant Rate	<p>Payment rates for OCS are based on the land use as submitted on the SAF 2022. Although contracts are for 5 years, payments will only be made during the first two years to support the conversion to organic production.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rotational Land - £202 per Ha ➤ Permanent crops/grassland £101 per Ha ➤ Permanent & temporary grassland with a dairy enterprise £345 per Ha ➤ Unenclosed land £12.60 per Ha <p>£500 per annum is also available for the first two years of conversion towards certification costs.</p> <p>The OSP provides support to all fully certified organic farmers during the transition to the Sustainable Farming Scheme. The payment rates are based on the land use as submitted on the Single Application Form (SAF) in 2024 and are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horticulture - £300 per hectare

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosed land - £45 per hectare • Enclosed land with a dairy enterprise - £115 per hectare • Un-enclosed land - £9 per hectare <p>There is no upper limit on area, but the maximum payment will be tapered as follows;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 to 200 hectares - 100% of payment • 200 to 400 hectares - 50% of payment • 400 Ha + - 10% of payment
Grant Detail	<p>The OCS is a 5-year contract, which provides support for conversion of eligible land to organic production and towards the cost of certification in the first two years of the contract only. As a condition of these payments, claimants must maintain continuous organic certification for the remaining three years of the contract once full conversion has been achieved after the first two years.</p> <p>The scheme is competitive and Expressions of Interest (Eols) delivering the most positive environmental land management practices that contribute to the overarching aims of the scheme will score more highly. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing Carbon and Green House Gas emissions • Building greater resilience into farm businesses by adapting to climate change • Managing water resources to improve water quality and reduce flood risks • Contributing to economic sustainability of farms and the rural community • Protecting and improving the natural landscape and the historic environment • Developing and improving Wales's native biodiversity <p>Geographical Information System (GIS) (digital maps) layers will inform where specific objectives of the OCS can best be delivered.</p> <p>Further information is available at https://www.gov.wales/organic-conversion-scheme-guidance-html</p> <p>The OSP is an annual contract, applications for the payment in 2024 had to be made by 15th May 2024 via the annual SAF. All land under contract must be continuously certified with a recognised Organic Control Body (OCB) for the entire duration of the contract. Full guidance can be found within the SAF 2024 rules booklet. <i>The Welsh Government has confirmed that the Organic Support Payment will be available again in 2025. Full details are expected to be available within the SAF 2025 rules booklet.</i></p>
Duration	OCS Agreements run for 5 years. OSPs are a one year contract available until the new Sustainable Farming Scheme commences in 2026.
Latest/ Update	<p>November 2024: The Welsh Government has confirmed that the Organic Support Payment will be available again in 2025.</p> <p>Aug 2023: Agreements from the initial round of applications which ran from 18th July to 26th August 2022, and commenced on 1st January 2023.</p>
Implications	<i>The OCS and OSP will be of particular interest to those businesses who are involved in supplying organic farming products such as seeds, organic grass</i>

	<i>mixes, feed or purchasing of organic crops and livestock. Those who offer services to organic farmers including advice or organic inspection bodies may wish to familiarise themselves with the scheme.</i>
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7.3.3 Woodland Grants

Grant Name	Woodland Creation Planning Grant Woodland Creation Grant Woodland Restoration Grant
Grant Purpose	Different grants which pay for the creation, maintenance, restoration, planning and health of Welsh woodlands and associated infrastructure
Grant Rate	Varies depending on the type of grant and area planted see below
Grant Detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Woodland Creation Planning scheme offers grants of between £1,000 and £5,000 to develop plans for new woodland creation. Plans must be verified by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to make sure they meet the UK Forestry Standard (UKFS). After a plan is successfully verified, it will be eligible for Welsh Government funding for tree planting. Applications can be made all year round (provided budget is available). If an application is selected, a registered woodland creation planner will be required to create a plan on the applicant's behalf. Discussing the application with a registered planner before applying is recommended. After a plan is verified, it will be eligible to apply for future Welsh Government funding for five years from the date of verification. The minimum area is 2ha. (a simplified process for areas of woodland which are less than 2 hectares may be available). There is a minimum grant of £1,000 per plan. For areas of woodland over 20 hectares, £50 per whole hectare will be paid, up to a maximum of £5,000 per plan, to include any specialist surveys. • The Woodland Creation scheme provides financial support for creating larger areas of woodland or small areas not suitable for the 'Small Grants - Woodland Creation Scheme' (see earlier). It replaces the Glastir Woodland Creation Scheme. It is available for farmers, land managers and other landowners. Applicants must have a verified Woodland Creation Plan before applying. Funding is available to create a plan through the Woodland Creation Planning Scheme (see previous). Capital payments are also available for fencing and gates around tree planting areas. The minimum area of land for an application is 0.25ha. There is no maximum area. The scheme provides funding for the planting of trees and the installation of fencing and gates. It also offers 12 years of maintenance and premium payments (compensation for loss of agricultural income). Planting trees under the scheme will not affect Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) payments or land eligibility. Planting of trees under Woodland Creation can count towards the new Sustainable Farming Scheme Universal Action for tree cover on farms (see earlier). • The Woodland Restoration Grant offers funding to replant areas of Larch felled to control the spread of Phytophthora Ramorum disease. Payments are available for restocking and also for a range of other

	capital works including fencing and Rhododendrum/Laurel control. The area eligible for funding is equivalent to twice the area of Larch identified on the Statutory Plant Health Notice or felling licence. Support is also available for the production of a Forest Management Plan where Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) are being restocked. Applicants are able to claim for a one-off grant of £1,500 towards the cost.
Duration	Woodland Creation Planning Grant – after a plan is verified, it will be eligible for future Welsh Government funding for tree planting for five years Woodland Creation Grant – one off Establishment cost and then a maintenance payment for 12 years Woodland Restoration Grant – one off establishment cost
Latest/ Update	January 2025: The window for applications to the Woodland Creation Grant in 2025 will run from 3 rd March – 21 st November 2025. December 2024: The window for applications to the Woodland Restoration Grant runs from 11 th November 2024 to 28 th February 2025. October 2024: The window for applications to the Woodland Creation Grant will close on 22 nd November 2024. Feb 2024: In 2024, there is a new approach to the Woodland Creation Grant. There will only be one window open from 4 th March 2024 until 22 nd November 2024, or until the budget has been allocated. Aug 2023: Woodland Creation Planning Grant – Open all year round. Woodland Creation Grant – The most recent application window closes on 15 th September 2023. The aim is for application windows to open every 3 months. All payments have been updated for the latest opening to reflect full costs Woodland Restoration Grant - There is usually only one window per year for Expressions of Interest. The window for submitting an Eol ran from 14 th March until 22 nd April in 2022. No application date has been announced for 2023.
Implications	<i>Tree planting is planned to be part of the Universal Actions under the new Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS). Under the SFS farmers are required to have 10% tree cover on their holding, the Welsh Government has confirmed woodland created under this scheme now can contribute to this when it becomes available. There is expected to be an increase in tree planting because of this and those supplying trees and associated equipment, tree guards, shelters etc could market their products accordingly. There is also a strong emphasis on planning, the Woodland Creation Planning Grant could be of interest to those offering a woodland planning service. There is also capital funding for woodland fencing and gates.</i>

7.3.4 Habitat Wales Scheme

Grant Name	Habitat Wales Scheme (HWS)
Grant Purpose	Payment made for the management of habitat land
Grant rate	£29 - £69/Ha depending on habitat. Payments will be capped as follows; 0-200Ha – 100% of payment rate 200-400Ha – 50% of payment rate

	400Ha + - 10% of payment rate
Grant Detail	<p>A new interim agri-environmental scheme. The scheme will be available to all eligible farmers and grazing associations, including those who have a Glastir Advanced, Commons or Organic contract which ends on 31st December 2023. Eligible land for the scheme falls into three categories;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land currently under a habitat option within a Glastir Advanced contract (including Glastir Commons). • Habitat land (excluding designated sites), as identified by published maps on DataMapWales which is not currently under management in 2023. • Land managed as habitat which has potential to become habitat land following management. <p>All identified habitat land must be included in an application and additional land to be managed as habitat land can be included. Payment will be made for following management requirements. Examples of actions that will be prohibited include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plough/cultivate, reseed or improve habitat • Apply any inorganic or organic fertilisers such as farmyard manure, slurry, sewage sludge, chicken manure or fish meal • Apply any herbicides, insecticides, molluscicides or any other pesticides (except for spot treatment of invasive species or notifiable weeds) • Allow the area to be poached (existing gateways, feeding and watering areas are acceptable, providing poached and bare areas are less than 5% cover) • Apply lime • Supplementary feed any livestock, except for existing feeding and watering areas • Cut or top more than 30% of rush or weed species in any one year <p>The scheme will be competitive and only those applications which achieve the greatest environmental benefits will be selected. There will be no payments for capital works, but applicants can apply for these via the Small Grants - Environmental scheme. Full guidance can be found via https://www.gov.wales/habitat-wales-scheme</p>
Duration	The scheme was only supposed to have been available for 12 months from 1 st January 2024, as an interim between Glastir and the new SFS. The SFS will not now be available until 2026 and the Cabinet Secretary has said the Habitat Wales Scheme will be open again in 2025.
Latest / Update	<p>September 2024: The Habitat Wales Scheme is expected to be open again in 2025.</p> <p>Oct 2023: Scheme opened for EOIs on 29th September and will close on 10th November 2023</p> <p>Sept 2023: Outline guidance now available. Detailed rules and payment rates due later this year.</p>
Implications	<i>Although the payments do not directly fund capital items and are for a change in management practices, equipment may still be required to perform these changes. There could also be opportunities to advise on and works associated with the management of the nine habitat classifications identified as being important to the grant including: Arable plants; Coastal & lowland heath;</i>

	<i>Coastal vegetated shingle & sand dune; Enclosed wetland habitats; Existing tress, scrub & woodland; Saltmarsh; Grazing management of open country; Permanent dry grassland with no inputs; Inland rocks and scree.</i>
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7.4 Services

7.4.1 Farming Connect

Grant Name	Farming Connect
Grant Purpose	Provides funding for an integrated programme of knowledge transfer activities and support for innovation.
Grant Rate	Many services are fully funded, others are subsidised by up to 80%
Grant Detail	<p>Services and events centre around the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Your Business – advisory service offering up to 90% funding is available with a limit of £3000 per eligible business to access business and technical advice. One-to-one advice, up to 80% funded to a maximum of £1400 per instance. Group advice, up to 90% funded up to a maximum of £1000 per group member. Between three and eight people can apply for group advice. Joint venture, 100% funded up to £1750 per group member. Also, business planning, discussion groups, benchmarking, demonstration network and one-to-one surgeries are available. • Skills and Mentoring – Young Leaders and Business Innovators (Agri-Academy), Action Learning (Agrisgôp), E-learning, mentoring, personal development plans. Subsidised training for business partners, family members and employees, is available for up to 3 courses per annum. • Discover Innovation – Agri-Lab, demonstration network, European Innovation Partnership, knowledge exchange hub. <p>Users must be registered and the eligibility criteria has been widened under the current scheme. Services are available to farming (>3 Ha) and forestry (>0.5 Ha) businesses, contractors, new entrants, niche farming and forestry businesses, students and food businesses. The programme is delivered by Menter a Busnes and Lantra, working closely with Aberystwyth University's Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Services (IBERS) and also Hybu Cig Cymru and AHDB Dairy. More information can be found at https://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/.</p>
Duration	The Government has announced funding for the programme will continue into 2026.
Latest/ Update	Aug 2023: All the latest events and workshops can be found via https://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/
Implications	<i>This scheme is all about knowledge transfer in the agricultural sector. Those who are training providers or can offer business advice will be interested in this. These activities can include workshops, training programmes, coaching, demonstration activities, information activities and other group events demonstrating best practice and providing Continued Professional Development (CPD) in the agricultural industry. Accredited advisors give on-to-one advice, those interested should contact Menter a Busnes to go through the accreditation process.</i>

8 Northern Ireland

Please note that as an announcement is expected from DAERA in the near future on its future plans for support, the majority of our efforts to date have been focused on other parts of the UK. That said, a summary of the key grants' schemes that have been announced in Northern Ireland is provided below but it is anticipated that this Chapter will be updated once the DAERA announcement has been made.

8.1 Infrastructure

8.1.1 The Farm Business Improvement Scheme – Capital Tier 2

Grant Name	Farm Business Improvement Scheme – Capital (FBIS – C) Tier 2
Grant Purpose	Pays for larger-scale investment to encourage a 'step change' in the agriculture and horticulture sectors
Grant Rate	40% of eligible project costs over £30,000 up to a maximum of £250,000 across both Tiers (see below) and over the lifetime of the scheme.
Grant Detail	<p>The focus of Tier 2 of FBIS-C is primarily for the construction of modern infrastructure projects and the purchase of higher value equipment linked to the needs in the farmer's business plan. Grant support is for purpose built, future-proofed, new buildings and new items of equipment that are integral to the Tier 2 project as described in the applicant's business plan. Grant is also available for new equipment that is retrofitted into existing buildings e.g. a new milking parlour in an existing shed.</p> <p>There is opportunity to seek funding for a range of items which individually may cost under £30K but the combination of the items requested must all contribute to an improvement in the overall operation of the farm business. These items would be considered essential or at least beneficial to achieve an improvement within a specific enterprise on the farm. However, it is important that the individual item or combination of two or more items can fit into one or more of the five key FBIS – Capital themes as listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1 – Contribution to sustainable growth • Theme 2 – Environment, Weather Resistance and Climate Change; • Theme 3 – Animal and Plant Health; • Theme 4 – Occupational Health and Safety; and • Theme 5 - Production and Resource Efficiency. <p>DAERA will provide successful applicants with a Letter of Offer (LoO) that will include a project budget. Applicants will be required to implement the project in line with the Conditions of Grant within the LoO and for the purchase of goods and services the applicant must adhere to the following procurement requirements;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For expenditure up to £5,000 applicants must seek 2 price checks or quotations from potential suppliers. • For expenditure of £5,000 and up to £30,000 applicants must seek 2 detailed written quotations from potential suppliers. • For expenditure over £30,000 applicants must place a public advertisement for open tender.

Duration	Payment is made on completion of the project and an eligible claim for payment has been made. The scheme is expected to continue into 2024 for claims and payment. It will be replaced by a new Capital Scheme in 2025.
Latest/ Update	Aug 2023: - Currently closed to new applications
Implications	<i>This scheme offers large grants for a wide range of capital items and infrastructure. The projects supported will be of scale and it is likely to take a number of months to prepare applications and to complete the work meaning any marketing targeted at this grant is likely to be relevant for an extended period of time. It is a wide-ranging scheme, funding not only buildings and infrastructure but also items of equipment such as low emissions slurry spreading equipment, covers for slurry stores, precision technology i.e. GPS equipment, proposals for grazing platform improvements and extending the grazing period, proposals to improve farmyard water management. Businesses are encouraged to read the literature to fully understand what might be funded, there is no set list of items, rather projects will be designed to fulfil a business plan. These will be big projects – any 'equipment' will often be part of a wider project. As well as marketing direct to farmers it might be worthwhile making contacts with those who are likely to be doing the main project work. Many may be subject to a tendering process – see above.</i>

8.2 Equipment and Ancillary Items

8.2.1 The Farm Business Improvement Scheme – Capital Tier 1

Grant Name	Farm Business Improvement Scheme (FBIS) – Capital Tier 1
Grant Purpose	Contributes towards the cost of equipment and machinery that will improve efficiency, environmental practice, animal health & welfare.
Grant Rate	Up to 40% of costs. Minimum grant £2,000 maximum grant £12,000
Grant Detail	The Farm Business Improvement Scheme is a set of measures for improving the competitiveness and sustainability of farming in Northern Ireland. It contributes to the cost of equipment and machinery that will improve efficiency, environmental practice, animal health & welfare and health & safety. Tier 1 is designed to support farm sustainability and provides grant to purchase equipment and machinery from a pre-defined list of eligible items see https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/fbis-capital-scheme-tier-1-eligible-items
Duration	Payment is made following purchase of the eligible item and a claim for payment has been made. The scheme is expected to continue into 2024. But will be replaced by a new Capital Scheme in 2025.
Latest/ Update	Aug 2023: Currently closed to new applications
Implications	<i>Each Round has a set list of equipment which come under four themes; Environment, Weather Resistance & Climate Change; Animal & Plant Health; Occupational Health & Safety; and Production and Resource Efficiency. Each piece of equipment has a reference price and a maximum grants. Suppliers would be well advised to get to know these prices set out by DAERA and market their equipment accordingly. If your product is not on the list, it may be possible to 'lobby' for it to be included if it falls under one of the 4 themes..</i>

8.2.2 Rural Business Development Grant Scheme

Grant Name	Rural Business Development Scheme
Grant Purpose	Offers small capital grants to micro enterprises based in a rural area to support the sustainability and growth of rural micro-businesses across Northern Ireland.
Grant Rate	The Scheme can provide funding of up to 50% of costs for capital items up to a maximum of £4,999. The minimum grant awarded will be £500.
Grant Detail	<p>This is a capital grant scheme to support the purchase of new capital items of equipment or machinery or to set up an e-commerce website for businesses located in rural areas and who employ less than 10 employees. Farmers are not allowed to apply, but trading diversified businesses can. The maximum number of items, or grouping of items that can be purchased under this scheme is six.</p> <p>Examples of eligible expenditure includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer equipment, e.g. computer, laptop, printer. • Computer software (outright purchase; ongoing license fees are not eligible). • E-commerce websites to allow online purchase capabilities. • New equipment/ machinery. • Mobile machinery, such as scissor lifts, forklifts, ride-on lawn mowers. <p>Applications can be made via the application form link which will be available online and through local Councils. The scheme is competitive and applications will be assessed against 5 criteria.</p> <p>Projects cannot commence until a Letter of Offer is released (anticipated by 10 January 2025). Projects which have already commenced are ineligible for funding. Applicants will have to confirm if they can complete the project by 14 March 2025.</p>
Duration	This is a short-term grant scheme.
Latest/ Update	November 2024: Applications are open from 16th October 2024 to midday on 8 th November 2024
Implications	<i>This scheme offers small grants for a wide range of capital items. It is a wide-ranging scheme, not aimed directly at agriculture but will be of use where there is an on farm diversified enterprise. It will be of interest to those who supply equipment for rural diversification projects.</i>

8.2.3 Rural Micro Capital Grant Scheme

Grant Name	Rural Micro Capital Grant Scheme (RMCGS)
Grant Purpose	Support for projects tackling local issues of poverty and/or social isolation in rural communities.
Grant Rate	Capital grants of between £500 and £2,000 are available.
Grant Detail	<p>Grants are awarded to rural community and voluntary organisations and Social Economy Enterprises for projects which focus on one of the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernisation (of premises / assets). • Information Communication Technology. • Health and Wellbeing.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy Efficiency / Environmental Improvements.
Duration	The project must be completed and the claim for grant submitted by 25 th March 2025.
Latest/ Update	December 2024: This Scheme is open for applications from 11th November 2024 until Midday on 5 th December 2024.
Implications	<i>This scheme offers small grants for a wide range of capital items. It is a wide-ranging scheme, not aimed directly at agriculture. It will be of interest to those who supply equipment for rural diversification projects.</i>

8.3 Land Management

8.3.1 Environmental Farming Scheme

Grant Name	Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS)
Grant Purpose	Pays for changes to land management to protect habitats on agricultural land
Grant Rate	Varies depending on the practices undertaken
Grant Detail	<p>The aims of the EFS are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> restore, preserve and enhance biodiversity; improve water management and water quality; reduce soil erosion and improve soil management; foster carbon conservation and sequestration in agriculture; and reduce greenhouse gas and ammonia emissions from agriculture. <p>The Scheme has three levels,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Higher Level Scheme primarily aimed at site specific environmental improvements at designated sites and for priority habitats and species. Funding is available for Higher Remedial Management Options for Moorland, Grassland, Woodland, Coastal, Wetland and Priority Species and also Higher Non Productive Investments (capital works) see https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/environmental-farming-scheme-efs-higher-level Wider Level Scheme aimed at delivering benefits across the wider countryside outside of environmentally designated areas. Funding for both land management options see https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/environmental-farming-scheme-wider-options and also capital works - Non Productive Investments (NPIs) see https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/environmental-farming-scheme-wider-non-productive-investments-npis. There are also 3 'stand-alone Wider Level options; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establishing Native Woodlands <5ha ➤ Organic Farming (Conservation and Management) ➤ Traditional Native Breed (Irish Moiled Cattle) ➤ For more information go to https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/environmental-farming-scheme-wider-stand-alone-options A Group Level Scheme to support co-operative work by farmers in specific areas, such as river catchments, or commonages.

Duration	Agreements are usually for 5 year agreements
Latest/ Update	May 2024: The eighth tranche of the Environmental Farming Scheme (EFS), Higher Level, is open for applications from 1 st May until 17 th May 2024. Aug 2023: Applications for new agreements are currently closed, it is unclear if there will be an any further application windows before the new Farming with Nature Package opens under future farming policy
Implications	<i>The EFS is a broad offer and most land managers should be able to access some funding at one of the levels. Support is for a mixture of Management Options and Non Productive Investments (NPIs) (capital works). Funding is available for field boundaries such as hedge laying, fencing and dry-stone walling. Seed merchants will be interested in formulating pollen and nectar flower mixes. There could be opportunities to provide grassland management and organic services. Funding for NPIs to increase water quality is available for such items as drinking troughs, associated pipework and bases, stock-proof fencing and gates along watercourses. Those supplying native woodland are also advised to familiarise themselves with the scheme.</i>

8.3.2 Farming with Nature Scheme

Grant Name	Farming with Nature Scheme (FNS)
Grant Purpose	Support for farmers and land managers to make substantial contributions to environmental improvements and sustainability. The initial focus will be on habitats on farmed land across Northern Ireland.
Grant Rate	Detail not available yet.
Grant Detail	The Farming with Nature Transition Package is expected to launch in Spring 2025. A number of options are planned to increase biodiversity and improve habitat connectivity including planting of new hedgerows, creating riparian buffer strips and establishing farmland trees. Future expansion and roll out of the full Farming with Nature Scheme Package will occur in early 2026. The information on this scheme will be developed as and when scheme detail is available.
Duration	Detail not available yet.
Latest/ Update	January 2025: Advanced notice that the new Farming with Nature Transition Package will be available from Spring 2025
Implications	<i>The FNS is expected to become the main environmental land management scheme in Northern Ireland. Support is likely to be for a mix of Management Options and Capital Payments. Funding is likely to be available for field boundaries such as hedge planting and laying. There could be opportunities for seed merchants in formulating pollen and nectar flower mixes. Those supplying farmland trees are also advised to familiarise themselves with the scheme. There could be opportunities to provide grassland management and organic services.</i>

8.3.3 Woodland Schemes

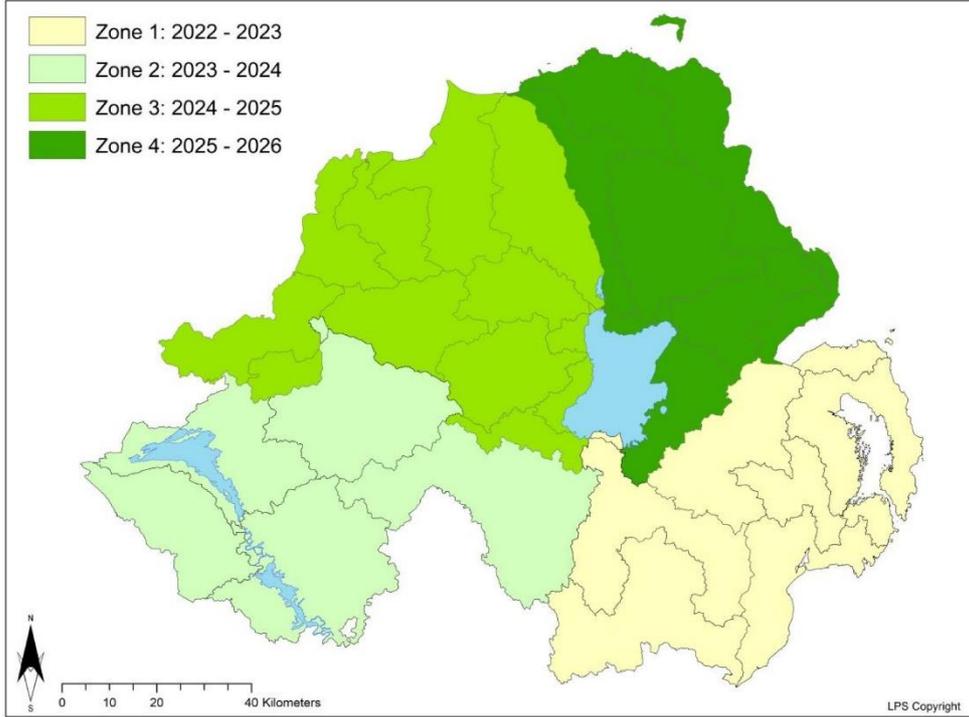
Grant Names	Forest Expansion Scheme (FES) Small Woodland Grant Scheme (SWGS) Forest Protection Scheme (FPS) Woodland Investment Scheme (WIS)
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Grant Purpose	Different schemes offering funding for creation, protection and restocking of woodland.
Grant Rate	Varies on the type of grant and area – see below
Grant Detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Forest Expansion Scheme</i> - new woodland planting of 3 hectares and larger on land that is not already wooded. All woodlands that comply with the UK Forestry Standard are eligible for support. Successful applicants will receive up to 100% of eligible establishment costs including the costs of plants and planting and other costs such as ground preparation, protection and maintenance (between years 1-5) of the newly planted woodland. Payments for income foregone to cover loss of income compared to agricultural production for a maximum period of ten years will also be made. The scheme is competitive and only those projects offering best value for money will be prioritized and selected for funding. • <i>Small Woodland Grant Scheme</i> - specifically for new native woodland planting of 0.20 hectares and larger. The scheme provides a fixed area-based payment for woodland establishment, a fencing grant and where eligible annual premia for a 10-year period. Support is available for both woodland creation on agricultural land and non-agricultural land. A standard area-based payment of £2,925 per Ha covering initial preparation, trees (from a defined list), labour, weeding, maintenance, monitoring and protection. 80% (£2,340 per Ha) paid in Year 1 and the remaining 20% (£585 per Ha) in Year 5. A further £350 per Ha is paid annually for 10 years and a capital payment of £6/m for fencing. • <i>Forest Protection Scheme</i> - provides support for restoration of forests following an Ash dieback outbreak. Pays for costs of felling affected immature trees, the supply of seedlings of alternative species, their establishment and protection up to a maximum of £10,000 per application. • <i>Woodland Investment Scheme</i> - supports sustainable forest management including the improvement of the environmental value of woodlands and building resilience to climate change through restocking. Funding will be for the direct costs associated with the implementation of the investments, this will include materials, services and labour and also for the costs of labour and materials (where relevant) for a range of forestry operations such as costs for plants and planting/regeneration. Support will be provided at a rate of £600 per hectare, the minimum application area to be replanted is 1 hectare and the minimum block area must be 0.2 hectares.
Duration	In NI the Forests for Our Future programme aims to plant 18 million trees or 9,000 hectares of new woodland over the next 10 years. Individual agreements under the FES and the SWGS comprise of an Establishment payment and annual payments for up to 10 years. Agreements under the FPS and WIS are just one-off payments paid shortly after a claim has been made. FPS and WIS have rolling application dates. The FES and SWGS open in rounds
Latest/ Update	January 2025 – The Small Woodland Grant scheme opened in December 2024 and closes on 20 th January 2025.

	<p>1st Sept 2023 – The current application round to the FES and SWGS has closed</p> <p>Aug 2023: FES and SWGS currently open. Both close to applications on 31st August.</p>
Implications	<p><i>Increasing woodland is a priority for all the UK nations and Northern Ireland is no exception. With the aim of planting 18 million trees over the next 10 years those involved in supplying woodland trees/saplings/seedlings or providing forestry operations these grants will be of interest to them. Funding is provided for such things as management (implementation and monitoring), site preparation, fencing & gates, plant supply, tree guard/protection supply, planting/establishment costs and vegetation management. Those involved in the felling of trees will also be eligible for funding under the Forest Protection Scheme as pre commercial felling of affected stands of immature trees is grant aided to make replanting possible (felling of mature trees and trees with a market value will not be supported).</i></p>

8.4 Services

8.4.1 Soil Nutrient Health Scheme (SNHS)

Grant Name	Soil Nutrient Health Scheme
Grant Purpose	To test all, or the vast majority, of the 650,000 fields used for farming in Northern Ireland, to help farmers manage their nutrient applications.
Grant Rate	There is no specific grant but participation in the SNHS is a condition for the receipt of the new Farm Sustainability Payment being introduced in 2025 and Farming with Nature Payments.
Grant Detail	<p>The SNHS is being rolled out on a zonal basis. Farmers receive a letter from the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) inviting them to register. Over 6,000 farmers in Zone 1 and over 6,000 in Zone 2 have received soil analysis results for their fields. Results will include soil pH, phosphorus (P), potassium (K), magnesium (Mg), Calcium (Ca) and sulphur (S), together with organic matter estimation and crop specific lime and fertiliser recommendations. Following receipt of their soil analysis results, farm businesses will be offered training by CAFRE to help them understand the results and to develop a nutrient management plan. This plan will enable farm businesses to provide additional nutrients, such as nitrogen and phosphorus to meet crop requirements.</p> <p>Figure 8-1: NI Soil Nutrient Health Scheme (SNHS) – Zonal Map & Completion Dates</p>  <p>Source: AFBI</p>
Duration	This service is being rolled out over four years from 2022-2026 in zones.
Latest/Update	September 2024: Applications to Zone 3 close on 6 th September 2024. Zone 4 (Northeast) will open in 2025/26.
Implications	<i>This will be of interest to those businesses who are involved in supplying soil sampling services or equipment and analysis. These businesses would be advised to make themselves known to DAERA as this is a nationwide scheme covering 650,000 land parcels. It may also be of interest to those who can offering training in nutrient management and drawing up nutrient management plans.</i>

9 Ireland Policy Overview

9.1 General

Irish agricultural policy is framed within the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The EU CAP has been subject to reform recently and the latest CAP consists of National Strategic Plans in each Member State which are framed in the context of the EU's Green Deal and Farm to Fork strategies – which the EU claims will tackle environmental challenges both at an EU level and globally.

Despite these latest reform, the CAP is still structured under a Pillar system. Pillar I continues to support mainstream agriculture whilst Pillar II is more focused on rural development issues. Nowadays, Pillar I chiefly focuses on direct payments to farmers (chiefly area-based payments that are made to farmers irrespective of their production levels). Pillar II seeks to promote sustainable development in rural areas, improve the quality of life of rural citizens, and protect the environment. As such, some agri-environment schemes which are available to farmers are financed under Pillar II.

9.2 CAP Funding and Policy Framework

The CAP National Strategic Plan for Ireland is the main policy influence on the development of Irish farming. Figure 9-1 sets out the projected spending under the forthcoming CAP National Strategic Plan for the 2023 to 2027 period across Pillars I and II. Total spend is estimated at over €9.8 billion for the period, averaging at just under €1.97 billion per annum.

Figure 9-1: Ireland CAP Projected Spending 2023-27

Item	€M
Pillar I	
Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS)	3,643
Complementary Redistributive Support for Income Sustainability (CRISS)	593
Eco Scheme	1,483
Young Farmers	178
Other Pillar I	80
Pillar I Sub-Total	5,977
Pillar II	
Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES)	1,500
Areas of Natural Constraint	1,250
Suckler Carbon Efficiency	260
Organic Farming Scheme	256
Leader	180
Sheep Improvement Scheme	100
On-Farm Capital Investment	100
Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme	25
Other Pillar II	141
Pillar II Sub-Total	3,862
Total Spending Pillars I and II	9,839

Source: DAFM¹

Pillar I spending accounts for nearly 61% of total CAP funding. Within this, **Basic Income Support for Sustainability (BISS)** is the flagship programme which replaces the BPS. BISS funding equates to €728 million in support annually with the average entitlement across Ireland estimated at €159 per Ha. Payments of over €60,000 will be reduced and there will be a new maximum payment of €66,000

per farm. It is also planned for all payment rates to converge to within 85% of the national average. In Ireland, unlike some other EU countries, direct payments (via the BPS) have been based on historic entitlements and stocking rates. Due to this, the payments that farmers receive have varied significantly. Previous CAP reforms have gone some way to converging payment rates. The upcoming CAP seeks further convergence.

The purpose of the **Complementary Redistributive Support for Income Sustainability (CRISS)** is to redistribute CAP funds from larger farms to medium and smaller sized farms.

The **Eco-Scheme** is also significant with spending over the 2023-27 period estimated at nearly €1.5 billion. This equates to nearly 25% of Pillar I support. It essentially rewards farmers for delivering public goods. The payment rate depends on uptake. It is anticipated to be between €60-€70 per Ha. To receive a payment, two out of eight specified actions must be undertaken (see Figure 9-2). The payment rates will vary depending on annual uptake.

In comparison with other public goods schemes (e.g. the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) in England, this scheme is straightforward. This should help to bolster uptake, particularly in grazing livestock.

Figure 9-2: Ireland Eco Scheme 2023-27 – Eligible Actions

Agricultural Practices (Actions)	Comment
Space for Nature	7% of farm devoted to biodiversity, habitats, or landscape features (4% required for conditionality (GAEC8)). If a farm achieves 10%, it counts double (i.e. equates to two actions)
Extensive Livestock Production	New min & max stocking rate 0.1-1.4 LU/Ha; having a max of 1.2 LU/Ha counts as two actions. 2023 payment based on 2022 stocking rate.
Limit Chemical Nitrogen Usage	Grassland limits are based on series of 'Bands' contingent on organic nitrogen applications (kg) per Ha in 2022; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Band 1: ≤90kg organic N/ha – 73kg chemical N/ha limit • Band 2: >90-130kg organic N – 86kg chemical N/ha • Band 3: >130-170kg organic N – 165kg chemical N/ha • Band 4: >170-220 kg organic N – 240kg chemical N/ha • Band 5: >210kg organic N – 214kg chemical N/ha
Native trees and hedges	Plant 3 native trees or 1m hedge per eligible hectare, can do double or both for two actions
GPS fertiliser and CP spreading	100% of chemical fertiliser or plant protection products (PPPs) to be applied using GPS controlled spreader or sprayer
Soil Sampling & Appropriate Liming	Can only do this action once every three years in terms of sampling
Break Crops	At least 20% arable area to OSR, Oats, Peas or Beans
Multi-Species Sward	Grown on ≥7% of farm area in the year this action is selected. If this action is selected for another year, a further 7% is required.

Sources: DAFM, Andersons

Note: GAEC denotes Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition.

The other Pillar I schemes are comparatively small. Where there are grants available under these schemes they will be summarised in Chapter 9.1.

Under Pillar II, the **Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme ('ACRES')**, Ireland's new agri-environment climate scheme, is the most notable. With €1.5 billion allocated over 5 years, it targets

supporting up to 50,000 farmers to address a range of climate, environmental and biodiversity issues. Again, this is summarised in section 10.2.1.

The **Areas Facing Natural Constraints (ANC)** Scheme is also of significance at a general level. It provides support to farmers situated in areas of natural and other specific constraints, where without such support, farming would be unviable and could lead to agricultural land abandonment. It is recognised that grazing in these areas can be important in maintaining certain habitats. Support is based on 3 categories of land and an offshore island land category. Proposed support rates are;

- **Category 1 Land:** €148/ha on first 12ha; €112/ha on remaining ha up to a 34ha limit.
- **Category 2 Land:** €111/ha on first 10ha; €104/ha on remaining ha up to a 30ha limit.
- **Category 3 Land:** €93/ha on first 8 ha; €104/ha on remaining ha up to a 30ha limit.
- **Offshore Island Land:** €250/ha on first 20 ha; €170/ha on hectares 20 to 34, and €70/ha for eligible hectares 34-40.

Whilst other Pillar II schemes are smaller, some of them may be relevant in terms of grants to farmers. Where this is the case, these grants are outlined in Chapter 10 below.

9.3 Other Policies

9.3.1 Food Vision Strategy

The Food Vision (2030) Strategy² is the latest ten-year strategy developed for the Irish agri-food sector and aims for Ireland to become a world leader in Sustainable Food Systems by 2030. Given the relative success of its predecessor strategies (Food Harvest 2020 and Food Wise), the Food Vision Strategy is of importance as it is likely to provide a 'unifying logic and direction' for the development of the Irish agri-food sector, encompassing farming, during this decade. Therefore, it is also likely to influence the types of grant schemes available to farmers in the coming years.

The Food Vision strategy is framed within the context of the Climate Action Act 2021³ (also referred to as the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act). It aims to reduce GHG emissions across grazing livestock and dairying whilst maintaining cattle numbers. The Food Vision Strategy's key targets are summarised within four broad 'Missions'. These targets include:

1. **A climate smart, environmentally-sustainable agri-food sector:** goal is to attain a climate-neutral food system by 2050 with verifiable progress by 2030, encompassing;
 - Biogenic methane - $\geq 10\%$ reduction in 2030 versus 2018.
 - Nitrous oxide – $\geq 50\%$ reduction in emissions associated with chemical fertiliser use.
 - Water quality – 50% reduction in nutrient losses from agriculture to water
 - Biodiversity – 10% of farmed area prioritised for biodiversity, spread across all farms
 - Air quality – ammonia emissions to reduce to 5% below 2005 levels by 2030
 - Forestry – increase afforestation to 8,000 Ha per year and double the sustainable production of biomass from forests to 2 Mt by 2035
 - Organic farming – 7.5% of utilisable agricultural area farmed as organic by 2030.
 - Food waste – halve the level generated per person by 2030
2. **Viable and resilient primary producers with enhanced wellbeing:** focused on fostering competitive, productive primary producers with improved economic and social sustainability. Here the targets are less defined but are focused on areas such as improving family farm income, the age profile of farmers (i.e., more younger farmers) and greater market transparency.
3. **Food which is safe, nutritious and appealing, trusted and valued at home and abroad:** again, the targets are less defined but focused on greater coherence of policies for food,

health and nutrition; enhancement of consumer trust through providing evidence of safe and ethical food production; and the creation of greater value added for Irish food consumed at home and abroad.

4. **An innovative, competitive and resilient agri-food sector, driven by technology and talent:** focus is on the attraction and nurturing of diverse talent across the sector; a target of 1% of private turnover being spent on R&D; and, greater advocacy for Sustainable Food Systems internationally.

Although not all of the goals and targets outlined above are directly relevant to companies seeking to supply agricultural equipment and services into Irish farming, they provide a useful overview of the direction of travel and insights on areas where future opportunities could emerge for NZ companies. Whether these targets are eventually achieved is another matter, although Ireland has scored some successes in achieving key targets of previous strategic initiatives.

9.3.2 Climate Action Plan

In December 2022, the Irish Government launched its Climate Action Plan to set-out the road-map to achieve its emissions reduction commitments for 2030, thereby implementing the provisions of Ireland's Climate Act 2021. For farming, a 25% reduction in emissions is targeted via several initiatives including:

- Significantly reducing chemical nitrogen fertiliser to a maximum of 300Kt, while maintaining the same level of grass growth through multi-species swards.
- Improving herd genetics with a focus on low methane traits to both reduce emissions and improve productivity.
- Increasing the uptake of protected urea on grassland farms to 90-100%.
- Increasing organic farming to up to 450,000 ha (from 75,000 ha), the area of tillage to up to 400,000 ha.
- Expanding the indigenous biomethane sector through anaerobic digestion, reaching up to 5.7TWh of biomethane
- Contributing to the delivery of the land use targets for afforestation and reduced management intensity of organic soils. These include increasing annual afforestation rates to 8,000 Ha from 2023; improving carbon sequestration of 450,000 Ha of grasslands on mineral soil; reducing management intensity of grassland on 80,000 ha of drained organic soils; and, rehabilitating 77,600 ha of peatlands.

Within agriculture, other measures are focused on extending the grazing season, rolling out a methane-reducing slurry additive, earlier finishing of beef cattle (by 3-3.5 months with average finishing ages of 22-23 months by 2030) and reduced age at first calving for suckler cows.

It is also planned for the National Agricultural Soil Carbon Observatory to be fully operational, a Food Waste Prevention Roadmap, and a range of other monitoring and funding initiatives across the economy.

The 2023 plan is much more detailed than previous announcements but it remains to be seen how several of its targets could be achieved. That said, given the ambitious nature of some targets and the innovation that will be required from farmers both in terms of equipment used and practices deployed, it is highly likely that additional incentives (grants) will be developed in future. Andersons will provide further details as and when new schemes are announced.

9.3.3 Nitrates Policy

Over the past year or so, concern has grown within Irish farming that proposals from the EU Commission to reduce Ireland's derogation limit of applications of organic nitrogen per hectare from

250kg down to 220kg will have an adverse impact on its livestock sectors, particularly dairying as it is more intensive. This derogation was originally granted to Irish agriculture when the EU enacted its Nitrates Directive to protect water quality by limiting the amount of nitrogen from agricultural sources entering waterways. Across the EU, the standard limit for nitrogen application is 170kg per hectare per year.⁴ Ireland obtained the derogation based on its grass-based production systems.

Based on a scientific review undertaken in 2021⁵, it was claimed that the current derogation is not sustainable and contributes to water quality issues. Subsequently, the EU Commission introduced regulations to make the reduction effective from January 2024.⁶ That said, latest reports suggest that whilst the new limit may become effective from January, farmers will not be required to be at the new (220kg) figure immediately.⁷

The Irish Government has raised concerns about this pending reduction as it will adversely affect many farmers, particularly in dairying, and will also negatively impact the Irish economy. As things stand, the EU's Agriculture Commissioner is due to visit Ireland in late November 2023 and the Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister) is to raise this issue to see if a means can be found to address the EU's concerns whilst also limiting any damage to Irish farming.⁸

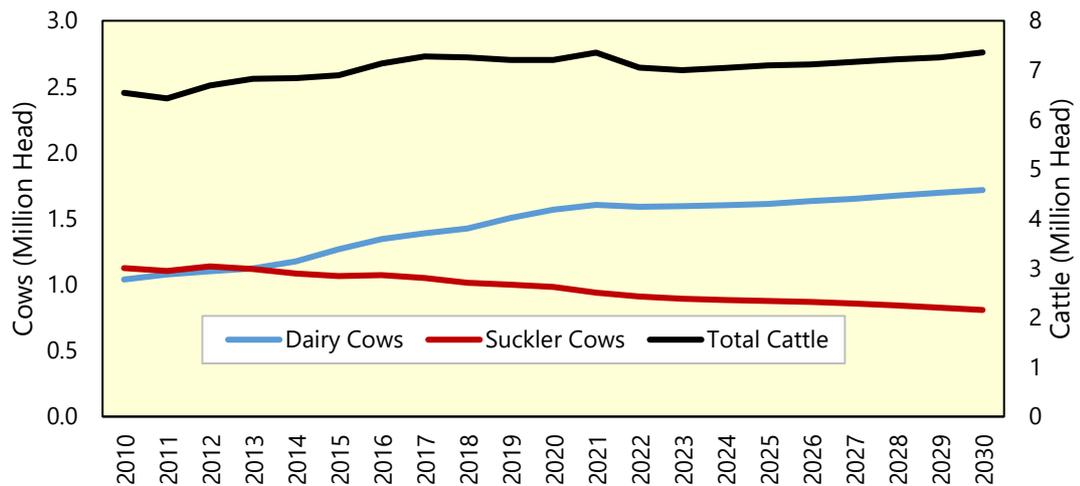
Many within the industry see the outcome of these discussions as being highly important because if the derogation is enacted as currently proposed, it is feared that Irish cow and cattle populations will be forced to decline. Whilst the dairy sector will be the most directly affected, it could also have indirect effects on the Irish beef farming sector. This is because beef farming is less profitable than dairy farming and dairy farmers arguably have more scope (capital) to rent or acquire more land, thereby lowering average organic nitrogen emissions per hectare. This would further erode beef cattle numbers, specifically sucklers.

For NZTE clients looking to supply products and services to the Irish grazing livestock sector, developments in the nitrates policy sphere should be closely monitored. Whilst the threats are obvious to products and services that are based on livestock numbers, opportunities could also arise. This is especially so for products that could help to minimise the scope for nitrogen run-off (e.g. low-emission slurry spreaders) or for products that can be used to verify that the water quality on Irish farms are meeting regulatory requirements.

9.4 Implications

1. **Cattle numbers to remain broadly stagnant, but any increases in dairy cow numbers will come at the expense of sucklers:** despite the nitrates limits, organisations such as Teagasc project that Irish dairy cow numbers could still increase by up to 7% by 2030, given its comparative advantage in dairy production from grass (see Figure 9-3). That said, these forecasts are slightly less bullish than previous estimates as the nitrates limits will have an impact. Growth in the dairy herd will be at the expense of suckler cows whose population is forecast to decline by over 14%. Again, poor profitability and climate-change targets will be key drivers. Therefore, the dominant position of dairy beef in Ireland will become more pronounced towards 2030. Overall, cattle numbers are likely to remain relatively stagnant at just under 7.4 million when comparing 2030 against 2021.

Figure 9-3: Ireland Cattle Population Projections



Sources: Teagasc and Andersons

2. **Greater focus leguminous-based diets and multi-species swards:** it is evident there will need to be a greater focus on grass and leguminous-based diets for cattle in Ireland with the targeted reductions in both chemical and organic nitrogen as well as increased usage of multi-species swards. The pending introduction of a grass-fed beef PGI for Ireland should help in bolstering the brand image of Irish beef. However, other countries are also making strides in terms of evidencing quality credentials.
3. **UK trade policy could exert some headwinds on Irish livestock agriculture:** given the importance of the British market for Irish beef exports, UK trade policy will also exert some influence on how Irish cattle populations evolve. The studies that Andersons has undertaken on the impact of the Australian and New Zealand trade deals suggests that by the time these countries have fully liberalised access to the UK market (2038), the value of UK beef output could be reduced by 3.5% to 8%, depending on the extent to which non-tariff barriers on imports into the UK are reduced. This signifies further competition for Irish beef.
4. **Organic farming will grow albeit from a low base:** given the direction of travel with Irish agricultural policy and the targets in the Food Vision 2030, there will be an increase in organic farming in Ireland, albeit from a small base. This will create opportunities for those supplying organically-certified products into Ireland (although these must be approved for use in the EU). That said, caution is needed. A significant increase in organic production that is driven by policy will also require a corresponding increase in consumer demand for organic products over the longer-term, otherwise prices may come under pressure. The growth of organic farming will also require long-term commitment from policy-makers. This could, of course, change in the future with a change in Government and would require ongoing vigilance.

Overall, whilst Irish agriculture is also confronting similar challenges to UK farming, the headwinds posed by changing agricultural and trade policy are much less pronounced given Ireland's continued EU membership.

10 Ireland Grants

This Chapter outlines the grant schemes which are available in Ireland (Republic of Ireland) and are of relevance to NZTE clients. All schemes listed fall under the auspices of the Department for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).

10.1 Infrastructure, Equipment and Ancillary Items

10.1.1 Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme 3 (On Farm Capital Investment Scheme)

Grant Name	Targeted Agricultural Modernisation Scheme 3 (TAMS 3) in partnership with the new On Farm Capital Investments Scheme
Grant Purpose	Provides financial support for technologies, equipment and buildings that boost efficiencies on farm while also improving the environmental impact of farming.
Grant Rate	Grant aid rates are either at 60% or 40% (see below) with a €90,000 (unless stated otherwise) ceiling for individuals, joint ventures and companies, while a higher ceiling is available for DAFM-registered farm partnerships. Every farmer who benefitted under TAMS 2 can reapply in full under TAMS 3.
Grant Detail	<p>TAMS 3 will continue under the Rural Development Plan in partnership with the new On Farm Capital Investments Scheme under the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Strategic Plan, with tranches opening regularly for the duration of this programme. TAMS 3 consists of 10 different schemes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Welfare, Nutrient Storage Scheme (AWNSS) - facilitates farm modernisation including the provision of animal welfare, improves the working and production conditions on farms, improves competitiveness, assists with slurry storage, soiled water and other farmyard manures and related facilities – grant aided at 40%. Minimum grant is €2,000 per application. More information can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/service/321fc-animal-welfare-and-nutrient-storage-scheme/ • Young Farmer Capital Investment Scheme (YFCIS) - provides financial help to young farmers (18-41 years) to upgrade their agricultural buildings and equipment, helping them to meet the capital costs associated with the establishment of their enterprises - grant aided at 60%. Minimum grant is €2,000 per application. More information can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/service/9b5da-young-farmer-capital-investment-scheme/ • Organic Farming Capital Investment Scheme (OFCIS) - provides an incentive to organic farmers who are current participants of the Organic Farming Scheme (OFS) to upgrade their agricultural buildings and equipment – grant aided at 40% for licenced organic operators or 60% for those in the OFS. Further information can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/service/d7556-organic-capital-investment-scheme/ • Dairy Equipment Investment Scheme (DES) – grants for dairy farmers to meet the considerable capital costs associated with establishment of their enterprise and ensuring that they have the most up-to-date technology available to compete in the modern dairy sector – grant

aided at 40%. Minimum grant is €2,000 per application. More information can be found at <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/a050b-dairy-equipment-scheme/>

- **Low-Emissions Slurry Spreader Scheme (LESS)** – grants towards the purchase of new low emissions slurry spreading equipment - grant aided at the enhanced rate of 60%. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/7342f-low-emission-slurry-spreading-scheme/>
- **Tillage Capital Investment Scheme (TCIS)** - provides financial support to the tillage (arable) sector to help them achieve improved competitiveness, increased efficiency, growth and environmental benefits – grant aided at 40%. Minimum grant is €2,000 per application. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/2ca8b-tillage-capital-investment-scheme/>
- **Pig and Poultry Capital Investment Scheme (PPIS)** - to assist farmers to purchase new equipment for the upgrading of pig and poultry units on their farms thereby supporting farmers' compliance with animal welfare legislative and to facilitate energy efficient measures to improve competitiveness – grant aided at 40% to maximum of €500,000. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/989d0-pig-and-poultry-investment-scheme/>
- **Women Farmer Capital Investment Scheme (WFCIS)** – new under TAMS 3 - provides financial support to women farmers, who are more than 18 years and under 67 years of age at the date of submitting the application form, to upgrade their agricultural buildings and equipment – grant aided at 60%. Minimum grant is €2,000 per application. More information can be found at <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/14a7b-women-farmer-capital-investment-scheme/>
- **Farm Safety Capital Investment Scheme (FSCIS)** – new under TAMS 3 - provides an incentive to farmers to purchase equipment to improve their own safety and that of their farm sector – grant aided at 40%. Minimum grant is €2,000 per application. More information can be found at <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/4f3ae-farm-safety-capital-investment-scheme/>
- **Solar Capital Investment Scheme (SCIS)** - new under to TAMS 3. It encourages the purchase of solar investments thereby reducing dependence on fossil energy - grant aided at the enhanced rate of 60%. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.ie/en/service/6ab0f-solar-capital-investment-scheme/>
- **Nutrient Importation Storage Scheme** – New in September 2024, 70% grant rate for additional storage facilities on farm for managing the importation of organic fertilisers. Investment items are limited to circular slurry stores, geo membrane lined stores and manure pits. There is a requirement that the importing farm has a whole farm stocking rate of less than 150 kg.N/Ha, to ensure capacity to spread imported slurry/manure. An investment ceiling of €90,000 per holding. Further

	<p>information can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/service/d3cf8-nutrient-importation-storage-scheme/</p> <p>Information on the scheme can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/0e509-tams-3/</p> <p>A full list of eligible items for TAM 3 can be downloaded via https://www.gov.ie/en/service/4255c-targeted-agricultural-modernisation-scheme-3-tams-3/</p>
Latest/Update	<p>September 2024: The Nutrient Importation Storage Scheme has been added to the 10 other individual schemes which are currently available.</p> <p>March 2024: Tranche 3 will open on 12th April. The priority approval mechanism (intended for farmers who need to commence works urgently) for Tranche 2 of TAMS 3 is now open for Tranche 2. Applicants need to contact DAFM.</p> <p>Jan 2024: Tranche 2 closed on 19th January 2024</p> <p>Nov 2023: Tranche 2 is currently open (no closing date disclosed as yet). Tranche 1 of the scheme closed to applications in June 2023.</p>
Duration	<p>TAMS 3 in collaboration with the On Farm Capital Investment scheme will run for five years (2023-2027) with a budget of €370 million. Tranche 1 of the new TAMS III opened in February 2023 with solar panels on farms the first available investment. The other investments become available on a phased basis during Tranche 1. The first Tranche for all schemes closed in summer 2023, but as one Tranche closes, further tranches will open regularly until 2027.</p>
Implications	<p><i>TAMS 3 is a wide-ranging grant which will be of interest to most businesses who supply infrastructure or equipment to the agricultural industry, including both beef, sheep, dairy, pigs, poultry and arable (including potato) sectors. The structures and equipment funded are often available in more than one element of the scheme. Those who construct agricultural buildings including all livestock buildings, slurry stores and silage pits including associated works are encouraged to make themselves familiar with the various elements of the scheme. As are those who construct grain and potato stores, plus ancillary infrastructure. For many of the items there is a list of 'accepted' contractors. Those not on these lists are advised to contact the appropriate unit for their line of work with detailed specifications of their unit. Full farm building and structures specifications complete with details of how to apply to be an 'accepted' contractor can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/65f5b-tams-farm-building-and-structures-specifications/</i></p> <p><i>There is a vast amount of equipment which will be of relevance to many businesses. For dairy this includes parlour equipment such as cluster units, robotic milking machines, milk storage and recording equipment. To reduce farm emissions the scheme will be of interest to those supplying mobile slurry tankers plus attachments and umbilical systems. To help with animal welfare and on-farm safety there is funding for all types of fixed and mobile livestock handling systems, bull and calving pens, head scoops, calving gates, monitoring and light systems and much more. Therefore, businesses are advised to make themselves familiar with the items that funding is available for.</i></p>

	<p>For those involved in Solar PV panels, there is funding for the panels as well for inverters and controllers in addition to Solar PV rechargeable batteries. For those who supply the arable sector, the TCIS funds equipment for arable farms to increase production and reduce emissions including (buildings see above) but also for precision farming techniques, reducing pesticide and fertiliser usage, grain handling and storage, minimum tillage, potato planting & storage, GPS, rainwater harvesting and much more. A full list of eligible items can be found via https://www.gov.ie/en/service/4255c-targeted-agricultural-modernisation-scheme-3-tams-3/</p> <p>Minimum specifications for equipment and accepted contractors (where appropriate) can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/65f5b-tams-farm-building-and-structures-specifications/</p> <p>Contractors can register their eTC and access code by emailing TAMscontractors@agriculture.gov.ie</p>
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10.1.2 Biomethane Capital Grant Scheme

Grant Name	Biomethane Capital Grant Scheme
Grant Purpose	Provides capital grants to stimulate the sustainable biomethane industry in Ireland.
Grant Rate	Detail not available. €40m in total available for the scheme.
Grant Detail	<p>A new scheme, being administered by the Department of Agriculture together with the Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland (SEAI) and funded by the European Union Recovery and Resilience Facility.</p> <p>Developers whose anaerobic digestion plant will be in operation by 2025 are being invited to submit an expression of interest for funding.</p> <p>The grant is being offered to help Ireland meet its target of up to 5.7 Tera Watt Hour (TWh) of indigenously produced biomethane by 2030; the primary objective of the National Biomethane Strategy published on 29th May and as set by the Government as part of its Climate Action Plan. Further information is available at including link to Eol https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/1c7db-minister-mcconalogue-and-minister-ryan-welcome-publication-of-the-national-biomethane-strategy/</p>
Latest/Update	<p>August 2024: Closes on 30th August 2024</p> <p>June 2024: Open for Expressions of Interest</p>
Duration	Plants will need to be in operation by 2025.
Implications	<i>This will be of interest to those who are involved in the biomethane industry. As these are capital grants there could be opportunities for those in the building industry and associated infrastructure.</i>

10.1.3 Innovative Forest Technology Scheme (IFTS)

Grant Name	Innovative Forest Technology Scheme: Module 3 Sustainable Forest Harvesting Machinery Grant
Grant Purpose	The Sustainable Forest Harvesting Machinery grant will provide support for the purchase of new forest machinery that optimises fuel consumption and environmental performance. This module will assist operators to purchase new updated low ground impact harvesting and extraction equipment, in

	particular Overhead Cable Extraction 7 Systems (High Lead and Skyline) that are not commonly used under Irish conditions.
Grant Rate	Grant aid will be paid at the maximum rate of 65% on the net cost of capital investments. The minimum grant aid is €5,000 and the maximum is set at €50,000. A total of four projects, at a maximum of €50,000 per project, will be funded per annum. (More than four projects may be considered for grant aid each year where the total available annual budget is not exceeded).
Grant Detail	<p>The IFTS supports specialised forest harvesting and extraction equipment capable of operating on sensitive sites with difficult terrain, particularly those characterised by soft soils and steep slopes. This module will assist operators to purchase new updated low ground impact harvesting and extraction equipment, in particular Overhead Cable Extraction 7 Systems (High Lead and Skyline) that are not commonly used under Irish conditions. Applications are invited from professional forestry harvesting and transport contractors with a minimum of two years' experience.</p> <p>Examples of eligible sustainable forest harvesting machinery includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative forest machinery solutions for the clearance and extraction of trees on reconstitution sites, such as those impacted by ash dieback. Other innovative forest machinery that optimises safety, fuel consumption and environmental performance may apply on a case-by-case bases. • High lead cable systems with an operating range of 150-200m. • Skyline Cable Systems with an operating range >300m. • Gravity Cable systems for use on steep slopes with an operating range <300m • Low ground pressure tracked mobile equipment optimised for use on peat soils and steep slopes. • Winch systems designed to support conventional equipment on steep slopes. Auto load tensioning systems on timber trucks to improve operator safety, road safety and sustainability of timber transport <p>More information can be found via https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/innovative-forest-technology-scheme-2023-2027/?referrer=https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/2d474-innovative-forest-technology-scheme-module-2-investment-aid-for-the-development-of-the-forest-tree-nursery-sector-2023-2027/</p>
Latest/Update	January 2025: The application window for Module 3 is now open and closes on 4 th February 2025
Duration	Contacts are for 5 Years.
Implications	<i>This will be of interest to those who are involved in specialist forest harvesting and extracting equipment, with particular interest in innovative and sustainable equipment capable of working on difficult sites.</i>

10.2 Land Management

10.2.1 Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme

Grant Name	Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES)
Grant Purpose	To deliver improved biodiversity, climate, air and water quality outcomes.
Grant Rate	<p>Rates vary depending on the Measures and Actions entered into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACRES General offers a maximum of €7,311 a year. The level of payment a farmer may achieve will be determined by the payment rates for the actions selected and undertaken satisfactorily. • Co-operation offers a maximum of €10,500 a year with a maximum results-based payment of €7,000 with an extra non-productive investment and landscape maximum of €3,500. The level of payment will be determined by results-based scorecards, non-productive investments, and landscape actions, which will be designed for land-types and region.
Grant Detail	<p>ACRES is Ireland's new agri-environment scheme. It offers a range of measures that are designed to improve habitats for a wide range of species while also targeting water quality and climate mitigation and adaptation, in a manner that goes beyond Conditionality and Eco-Scheme requirements. These will be achieved through two approaches under the scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an ACRES General approach, available nationally (outside of the high priority area) offering a range of measures for individual farmers (both targeted and general); and has three priority tiers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Tier 1 farmers – highest priority and include farmers with Natura areas, commonage land, geese and swan areas, breeding wader hotspots, high-status water areas, rare breed farmers and organic farmers ➢ Tier 2 farmers – second-highest priority and include farmers with land in water vulnerable areas ➢ Tier 3 farmers – lowest priority, includes all other farmers • an ACRES Co-operation approach, available to farmers in defined high-priority geographical areas, who opt to undertake measures, as well as bespoke farm, and landscape actions. It involves groups of farmers working together to deliver environmental benefits at a landscape level. Farmers participating in this approach will have the assistance of a Local Co-operation Project (CP) Team. The ACRES Co-operation approach will be assessed using results-based scorecards. Land included in the ACRES Co-operation approach falls within eight identified zones, which comprise of high nature value farmlands. <p>All participants must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage an approved ACRES advisor to prepare and submit the application. A list of approved ACRES advisors can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/service/f5a48-agri-climate-rural-environment-scheme-acres/#acres-advisors • Prepare a Farm Sustainability Plan • Attend a training course (ACRES Training) • ACRES Co-operation participants must work with an ACRES Co-operation Project (CP) and attend additional training from time-to-time.

	Further information can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/service/f5a48-agri-climate-rural-environment-scheme-acres/
Latest/Update	<p>October 2024: The Co-operation approach of the Agri-Climate Rural Environment Scheme (ACRES) for Non-Productive Investments (NPIs) is now open and will close on 31st October 2024.</p> <p>October 2024: The ACRES Training Scheme (ATS) is now available for the provision of ACRES training courses to farmers approved into the Scheme under Tranche 2. A full list of approved ACRES Training Advisors can be found on the Department's website at gov - ACRES Training Scheme (ATS) (www.gov.ie)</p> <p>Nov 2023: Applications to Tranche 2 opened on 22nd November and will close at 5.30pm on 13th December. Contracts will commence 1st January 2024.</p> <p>All valid applications submitted for Tranche 1 were accepted into the scheme, with 1st January 2023 being the start date of the contracts.</p>
Duration	All contracts run for 5 years
Implications	<p><i>ACRES is the new agri-environment climate scheme in Ireland. It is part of the CAP Strategic Plan for 2023-2027 and has a budget of €1.5 billion. The scheme offers grants for both capital items and changes in management practices. This scheme will provide opportunities for a wide 'audience'. These include businesses offering seed mixes such as winter bird food and catch crops. These types of businesses would be advised to understand what is required for each mix and promote accordingly. Similarly establishing and managing these options could require some machinery purchases such as direct or precision drills and many will require regular topping.</i></p> <p><i>ACRES also supports organic farming, low emissions slurry spreading, minimum tillage and riparian buffer zones, including tree planting. The conservation of rare breeds is also funded under the scheme. Businesses with an interest in any of these areas are advised to make themselves familiar with the relevant measures.</i></p> <p><i>There is also support for capital items. These include managing and maintaining the boundaries including planting, coppicing or laying hedgerows, the maintenance of dry-stone walls and planting traditional orchards.</i></p>

10.2.2 Eco-Scheme

Grant Name	Eco-Scheme
Grant Purpose	To reward farmers, for undertaking actions that are beneficial to the climate, environment, water quality and biodiversity.
Grant Rate	The payment rate depends on uptake but is likely to be in the region of €60 - €70 per hectare with a total financial allocation of €297 million per annum. It is an annual payment for all eligible hectares entered into the scheme.
Grant Detail	The Eco-Scheme has been introduced for the first time in 2023 as part of the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027. It is a voluntary annual scheme, open to all active farmers to participate in. To qualify for payment, farmers will have to undertake specific agricultural practices on their farms.

	<p>Each farmer can opt in or out on an annual basis. Agricultural practices chosen can also be changed on a yearly basis at the farmers discretion. Farmers apply for the Eco-Scheme at the same time as their application for the Business Income Support Scheme for Sustainability (BISS) from 2023 onwards.</p> <p>All active farmers are eligible to apply. The Eco-Scheme has 8 agricultural practices to choose from, with 3 of these practices having an enhanced option. A farmer must deliver two practices (or one enhanced option) to qualify for an Eco-Scheme payment.</p> <p>Farmers must deliver at least two of the following agricultural practices:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Space for Nature (Non-productive areas and landscape features). 2. Extensive livestock production 3. Limiting chemical nitrogen usage 4. Planting of native trees/hedgerows 5. Use of GPS controlled spreader and/or sprayer 6. Soil sampling and appropriate liming 7. Planting a break crop 8. Sowing a multi-species sward. <p>Some more detail on these actions is provided in Figure 9-2 in Section 9.2 above. More information can also be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/service/e5ed0-eco-scheme/</p>
Latest/Update	Nov 2023: Farmers apply for the Eco-Scheme at the same time as their application for the Basic Income Support Scheme for Sustainability (BISS) (29 th May in 2023) from 2023 onwards.
Duration	The Eco-Scheme is an annual scheme; agricultural practices chosen can be changed on a yearly basis
Implications	<i>This is a new scheme that is available alongside the BISS. Therefore, uptake is expected to be high. Payments are made for both capital items and for a change in management practices; equipment may also be required to perform these changes. There could also be opportunities to advise on the 8 agricultural practices and the works associated with them.</i>

10.2.3 Red Clover Silage Measure & Multi Species Sward Measure (2024)

Grant Name	2024 Red Clover Silage Measure (RCS Measure) & Multi Species Sward Measure (MSS Measure)
Grant Purpose	Incentivises farmers to sow red clover silage swards or a multi species sward to reduce the reliance on nitrogen fertilisers and promote a more sustainable method of farming.
Grant Rate	Payment of up to €300/ha up to a maximum of 20 hectares (for each measure) will be provided to approved applicants to offset part of the cost that farmers will incur in the establishment of these swards. A reduced payment rate per hectare will apply as appropriate if eligible applications exceed the available budget for the Measure.
Grant Detail	For 2024, a financial contribution will be provided to participating applicants to offset part of the cost that farmers will incur in the establishment of these swards. This measure will build on the areas established under the 2022 pilot programme and in the 2023 scheme.

	<p>To be eligible under these measures the swards must be sown between 16th July 2023 and 15th July 2024 and established by 30th September 2024.</p> <p>This year the application is made under the BISS online application system, deadline 15th May 2024. After application, the applicant will receive notification through the BISS online system to upload on to the BISS system copies of receipts and seed labels and if requested Geo-tagged photos of the established crop.</p> <p>Lands that are excluded from the scheme are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonage land • Natura 2000 sites • NHA designated land • Environmentally Sensitive Permanent Grassland • Land within archaeological monument buffer zones <p>Further information including the detailed terms and conditions is available via: https://www.gov.ie/en/service/ae169-red-clover-silage-measure/ and https://www.gov.ie/en/service/4ccda-multi-species-sward-measure/</p>
Latest/Update	<p>October 2024: The scheme will be available again in 2025 following the announcement that an additional funding of €2.75m has been secured.</p> <p>April 2024: Opening of the 2024 schemes. Applications are now made via the BISS with a deadline of May 15th 2024.</p> <p>2023 payments will now be made directly to the approved farmer on a per hectare basis</p> <p>Payment rate has been increased significantly up to a potential €300 per hectare where eligible swards are established. A reduced payment rate per hectare will apply as appropriate if eligible applications exceed the available budget for the Measure</p> <p>To receive payment under this Measure, an applicant must indicate the correct crop type on their 2023 BISS application</p>
Duration	Annual scheme. Applicants must have purchased and sown seed by 15 th July 2024 and documentation supplied by 29 th September 2024.
Implications	<p><i>Key opportunity is for suppliers of Red Clover seed mixes and Multi Species Sward mixes but also for ancillary equipment involved in the sowing of seed.</i></p> <p><i>In the scheme guidance, research from Teagasc (Ireland's Agriculture and Food Development Authority which provides research, advice and training to farmers) is heavily referenced (e.g. potential of Red Clover to fix 200kg of N/ha and yield 14t DM/ha). Ensuring that an NZ company's products are on Teagasc's radar and helps to achieve the targets that Teagasc has cited would be useful means to gain traction in the Irish market, particularly as Teagasc advises numerous Irish farmers.</i></p>

10.2.4 Organic Farming Scheme

Grant Name	Organic Farming Scheme (OFS)
Grant Purpose	Financial support for farmers converting or maintaining their farmland under organic production
Grant Rate	<p>In Conversion Payments (Years 1-2) up to a maximum of 70 Ha:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drystock - €300/Ha • Tillage - €320/Ha

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dairy - €350/Ha • Horticulture - €800/Ha <p>Maintenance Payments (Years 3-5) up to 70 Ha:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drystock - €250/Ha • Tillage - €270/Ha • Dairy - €300/Ha • Horticulture - €600/Ha <p>Land over 70 Ha receives €60/Ha in Conversion and €30/Ha Maintenance for all categories.</p> <p>There is also a participation payment of €2,000 in the first year and then €1,400 per annum thereafter.</p>
Grant Detail	<p>The OFS provides financial support to farmers to encourage production of organic foods. Land parcels that are undergoing conversion to organic status and fully converted land parcels are eligible for a contract of up to five years. Livestock and crop products must be produced in accordance with EU Organic Standards. Applications are all online. To apply, participants must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be an active farmer • Be registered with the Organic Unit of the DAFM • Be registered with and be approved as an organic operator by one of the OCBs and hold a licence on or before date of submission of OFS application or at the latest hold a licence from the commencement date of their OFS contract. <p>More information can be found via https://www.gov.ie/en/service/d46aec-organic-farming-scheme/</p>
Latest/Update	<p>November 2024: The OFS is open for applications from 16th October to 29th November 2024</p> <p>October 2024: €10m has been secured in additional funding and the scheme is to re-open to new applicants 'very shortly'.</p> <p>Dec 2023: Closing date extended (by a week) to 15th December 2023.</p> <p>Nov 2023: OFS is open for applications from 3rd November to Friday 8th December 2023</p>
Duration	<p>The OFS is a 5-year scheme. The DAFM intends to run the scheme annually over the duration of the CAP Strategic Plan 2023-2027.</p>
Implications	<p><i>The OCS will be of particular interest to those businesses who are involved in supplying organic farming products such as seeds, organic grass mixes, feed or purchasing of organic crops and livestock. Those who offer services to organic farmers including advice or organic inspection bodies may wish to familiarise themselves with the scheme.</i></p>

10.2.5 Woodland Creation Grants

Grant Name	Afforestation Scheme Native Tree Area Scheme (NTA)
Grant Purpose	To increase the area of afforested land in Ireland by providing financial support for the establishment and maintenance of new woodland.

Grant Rate	Grants vary depending on the particular scheme entered (see below). Payments are made up of an establishment grant, ranging from €2,500 per Ha to €10,500 per Ha, and an annual premium, ranging from €350 per Ha to €1,142 per Ha, paid annually for either 10, 15 or 20 years depending on the scheme entered. Additional support is also available via the Woodland Environmental Fund of €1,000 per Ha for the establishment of Native Forests and through the Environmental Report and Grant up to €450 per Ha could be available to help with applying for Afforestation Licences. A range of different fencing is also grant funded up to a maximum of €50,000 per forest.
Grant Detail	<p>There are two grants supporting the establishment of woodland in Ireland. The Afforestation Scheme is for areas of more than 1 hectare and is further divided into 12 options or 'Forest Type':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FT1 - Native forests - Plant a forest with a mix of native tree species • FT2 - Forests for water - Protect water bodies by planting a native tree forest • FT3 - Forest creation on public lands - Scheme for public bodies to plant new native forests • FT4 – Neighbour Woods - Create a forest that's open to the public • FT5 - Emergent forest - Enhance rewilding and emergent native forests • FT6 - Pure Broadleaves (oak or beech) - Plant pure oak or beech forests for timber • FT7 - Other Broadleaves - Plant a mix of faster growing broadleaf species • FT8 - Agroforestry – Silvopastoral, Silvoarable and Small-scale food forests • FT9 - Seed orchards - Plant seed orchards and seed production areas • FT10 - Continuous cover forestry - Create a continuous cover forest system with conifer and broadleaf trees • FT11 - Mixed high forests: conifer, 20% broadleaves - Plant a diverse conifer forest for timber production with 20% broadleaf species • FT12 - Mixed high forests with mainly spruce, 20% broadleaves - Plant a mainly spruce forest for timber production with 20% broadleaf species. <p>The Native Tree Area (NTA) Scheme is available for establishing smaller areas of woodland, up to 1 hectare. It has two options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTA 1 - Creation of small native forests • NTA 2 - Creation of native forests for water protection <p>To plant a new forest land managers must engage a Registered Forester to make their afforestation application. All paperwork at pre-planting, post-planting and at the second grant instalment stage must be submitted by a registered forester. A list of Registered Foresters can be found at gov.ie - List of registered foresters (www.gov.ie) For both schemes, approval from DAFM is required. For the Afforestation Scheme an Afforestation Licence is also required. Further information can be found at gov.ie - Forestry Grants and Schemes (www.gov.ie)</p>
Latest/Update	The schemes are currently open for applications

Duration	The Afforestation Scheme and the Native Tree Area Scheme are both new under Ireland's Forestry Programme 2023-2027. Agreements entered into under the schemes will run for 10, 15 or 20 years depending on the Option – Farm Type entered into.
Implications	<i>Key opportunity is for growers and suppliers of both broadleaf and conifer trees/saplings. In addition, manufacturers and suppliers of stock fencing, including sheep, rabbit and deer fencing are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the grant rates. As all applications have to be made by a Registered Forester all businesses with an interest in forestry supplies, infrastructure, chemicals, providing forestry operations would be advised to make contact with the Registered Foresters to ensure they are on their radar. A list of Registered Foresters can be found at gov.ie - List of registered foresters (www.gov.ie)</i>

10.2.6 Existing Woodland Grants

Grant Name	Forest Roads Scheme 2023 – 2027 Deer Tree Shelter, Hare & Deer Fencing Reconstruction Ash Dieback Scheme Native Woodland Conservation
Grant Purpose	Financial support to improve the viability and sustainability of existing woodland.
Grant Rate	Forest Roads Scheme 2023 – 2027 – Grants of up to 100% of eligible costs are available in one single payment subject to the following maximums: Harvesting Road up to €55/linear metre; Harvesting Upgrade/Extension up to €40/linear metre. Special construction works up to €10,000. Deer Tree Shelter, Hare & Deer Fencing – Shelters range from €625/Ha - €1,600/Ha for a max. of 3 Ha. Deer & Hare Fencing – Ranges from €8.00/m - €18.00/m up to maximum's ranging from €540/Ha - €2,880/Ha. A contribution of €4/m up to a maximum of €640/ha is available where there is evidence of hare damage greater than 30% prior to second instalment payment. Reconstruction Ash Dieback Scheme – Support for site clearance, €2,000/Ha cleared. Reconstruction grant is paid according to the Forest Type (see 10.2.1) – ranges from €3,858/Ha for FT12 to €8,555/Ha for FT8 plus Annual Premium payments. Native Woodland Conservation - Grant: €6,000 per/ha for Private High Forest Grant: €3,000 per/ha for Public Forest. Payment for Ecosystems Services (PES) premium payment Native Woodland Conservation €500/ha
Grant Detail	Forest Roads Scheme 2023 – 2027 - funding for the construction of forest roads and associated infrastructure such as bellmouths, turntables, drains, culverts and bridges. For further information see https://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/crops/forestry/grants/Forest-Road-Scheme-2023-2027.pdf Deer Tree Shelter, Hare & Deer Fencing Scheme – funding for a range of shelters and fencing to protect trees from deer and hare damage. Levels must be greater than 40% to be eligible. For further information see

	<p>https://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/crops/forestry/grants/Deer-Tree-Shelter,-Hare-and-Deer-Fencing-Scheme.pdf</p> <p>Reconstruction Ash Dieback Scheme – Financial support for the clearance of ash trees and associated operations to present the site for reconstitution. The replacement of ash trees with alternative species following ash clearance. The following Forest Types are available for replanting (see 10.2.1 for overview of Forest Types): FT1, FT6, FT7, FT8, FT10, FT11 and FT12. For further information see https://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/crops/forestry/grants/Reconstitution-Ash-Dieback-Scheme-2023-2027.pdf</p> <p>Native Woodland Conservation - provides support to woodland owners to tackle under-management, and to promote the sustainability of forest and woodland habitats through appropriate restoration measures, which will be identified following a careful assessment of the woodland and its needs by an ecologist and a registered forester.</p>
Latest/Update	<p>March 2024: Native Woodland Conservation Scheme – New scheme, open.</p> <p>Forest Roads Scheme 2023 – 2027 – Available now but subject to revised terms and conditions</p> <p>Deer Tree Shelter, Hare & Deer Fencing Scheme – Available</p> <p>Reconstruction Ash Dieback Scheme - Available now but subject to revised terms and conditions</p>
Duration	<p>The Forest Roads Scheme, Deer Tree Shelter, Hare & Deer Fencing Scheme and Reconstruction Ash Dieback Scheme are available under Ireland’s Forestry Programme 2023-2027. Agreements are one-off and payable on completion except for Reconstruction Ash Dieback Scheme annual premiums. The Native Woodland Conservation scheme is available through the new Forestry Programme 2023-2027.</p>
Implications	<p><i>Key opportunities are for those businesses which supply forest roads/surfacing and associated infrastructure such drains, culverts etc. and similar to the creation of new woodland (see section 10.2.1). There will also be opportunities for growers and suppliers of both broadleaf and conifer trees/saplings. In addition, manufacturers and suppliers of tree guards, deer and hare fencing are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the grant rates.</i></p>

10.2.7 Woodland Improvement Scheme

Grant Name	Woodland Improvement Scheme (WIS)
Grant Purpose	Financial support for sustainable forest management to deliver environmental and climate benefits along with expanding the value-added potential of timber.
Grant Rate	A fixed rate grant of €1,200 per hectare. There is also a Premium Payment for Element 3 (see below) ranging from €150 - €500 per hectare.
Grant Detail	<p>There are 5 different WIS elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Element 1: Thinning and Tending • Element 2: Agroforestry Maintenance • Element 3: Continuous Cover Forestry • Element 4: Coppice and Coppice with Standards • Element 5: Seed Stand Management

	Further information can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/service/56cc6-woodland-improvement-scheme-2023-2027/
Latest/Update	Jan 2024: New scheme, now open for applications
Duration	The Woodland Improvement Scheme commenced on 20 th December 2023. It is a new scheme under Ireland's Forestry Programme and will run from 2023-2027.
Implications	<i>Key opportunities are for those businesses which are involved in the maintenance of forestry and woodland and undertake silvicultural operations. It may be interest to those involved in associated harvesting and forwarding machines.</i>

10.3 Services

10.3.1 National Beef Welfare Scheme

Grant Name	National Beef Welfare Scheme (NBWS)
Grant Purpose	Incentivises farmers to test for Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR) and to introduce meal feeding pre and post weaning.
Grant Rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBR Testing – 2-6 animals - €120/herd 7-10 animals - €180/herd 11-15 animals - €250/herd 16-20 animals - €300/herd • Meal Feeding - €35 per calf for a maximum of 40 calves
Grant Detail	<p>The objective of the NBWS is to further increase the economic efficiency of, and enhance animal health and husbandry, on suckler farms, it is available to all suckler beef farmers. Participants must undertake two mandatory actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test bovines in the herd for IBR gE antibodies. All blood samples should be submitted by a PVP to an ISO 17025 accredited laboratory within 3 days of the samples being taken. Where a herd has twenty or more bovines, a minimum of twenty must be tested. Where a herd has less than twenty bovines, all must be tested. • Participants must introduce meal feeding for a period of 4 weeks pre-weaning and 2 weeks post-weaning to reduce the stress on calves at weaning time. Calves must be supplemented with compound feeding stuffs containing appropriate minerals and vitamins. <p>Further information can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/service/73f93-national-beef-welfare-scheme/</p>
Latest/Update	<p>September 2024: This scheme is open from 8th August until 24th September 2024.</p> <p>November 2023: The scheme is currently closed to applications. The scheme was open for applications from 2nd August to 26th September 2023.</p>
Duration	This scheme runs for a year. Application windows are expected to open annually depending on the budget.
Implications	<i>The NBWS will be of interest to those businesses that are involved in supplying veterinary supplies or services. This could be for those who supply equipment or those that are involved in the specific IBR test themselves. Tests have to be submitted to an accredited laboratory. Those interested should contact DAFM</i>

	<p>via gov.ie to find out how to become approved. Businesses that are involved in developing and processing these types of tests, and the systems involved in relaying the information would be advised to investigate this grant and make contact with the veterinary profession. The scheme will also be of interest to those in the cattle feed and mineral industry. Marketing could be targeted at specific compounds for pre- and post-weaning of suckler calves.</p>
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10.3.2 Sheep Improvement Scheme

Grant Name	Sheep Improvement Scheme (SIS)
Grant Purpose	It provides support to sheep farmers for carrying out actions that improve animal health and welfare in the sheep sector. It builds on the progress made by the Sheep Welfare Scheme (SWS), which has now come to an end.
Grant Rate	€12 per breeding ewe up to the reference number of animals, which is determined at application stage based on previous year census returns.
Grant Detail	<p>The SIS is available to sheep farmers with breeding ewes. The scheme actions are applicable to flocks of breeding ewes and are separated into Lowland and Hill flock actions. The Actions are further split into Category A Actions and Category B Actions. Applicants must choose one action from Category A and one action from Category B as appropriate to their Flock Type (Lowland or Hill):</p> <p>Lowland Flock- Category A Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lameness Control • Mineral Supplementation Ewes Post Mating • Parasite Control (Faecal Egg Count) <p>Lowland Flock – Category B Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genotyped Ram • Scanning and Recording of Results • Flystrike Control <p>Hill Flock- Category A Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mineral Supplementation Ewes Post Mating • Meal Feeding Lambs Post Weaning • Parasite Control (Faecal Egg Count) <p>Hill Flock – Category B Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genotyped Ram • Scanning and Recording of Results • Mineral Supplementation Lambs Pre Weaning
Latest/Update	<p>Feb 2024: Opened for new applicants from 2nd February to 29th February 2024.</p> <p>Nov 2023: Closed to existing sheep farmers. Scheme deadline for existing sheep farmers was 9th January 2023. There will be provision for new entrants to sheep farming to join annually, but existing sheep farmers will not be able to join in subsequent years.</p>
Duration	This a 1-year contract with automatic renewal unless the opt-out is triggered by the farmer or the Department. It is proposed that the scheme will run for a five-year period.
Implications	<i>The SIS will be of interest to businesses who manufacture, supply and distribute Faecal Egg Count kits and the associated laboratories, equipment</i>

	<p><i>and systems which carry out the tests and transfer the data. It will also have opportunities for suppliers of sheep/lamb feed and mineral/supplements.</i></p> <p><i>Manufacturers and distributors of fly and parasite control in sheep and treatments to prevent or treat lameness in lowland ewes should make themselves aware of the scheme details and market products accordingly.</i></p> <p><i>Within the scheme, every participant is required to purchase a new ram that has been genomically tested via Sheep Ireland. For Lowland breeds the ram must also be 4 or 5 Star, and for hill breeds the ram must be sire verified. Only flocks that are members of LambPlus can provide rams into this scheme, there will be 1000's of rams required each year. This offers a key opportunity for those who or could manufacture the DNA sampling tag or are involved in the genotyping process in the laboratory and the processing of results.</i></p> <p><i>Sheep Ireland is subsidising this cost for LambPlus flocks, likewise some breed societies are also helping with the costs. Those interested would be advised to make contact with these organisations.</i></p>
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10.3.3 Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme (DBWS)

Grant Name	Dairy Beef Welfare Scheme (DBWS)
Grant Purpose	Provides support to dairy farmers to improve the animal health and welfare of the national dairy herd by using genotyped and genetically superior beef sires for breeding dairy beef calves.
Grant Rate	€40 per eligible calf up to a maximum of 50 calves per holding.
Grant Detail	<p>Applicants will be required to have calves born, from a dairy breed or sired by a dairy breed, on the holding in the scheme year which must be sired from a 3, 4 or 5 star stock bull or from 3, 4 or 5 star AI straws or a mixture of both.</p> <p>Sires must be genotyped (have a genomic evaluation)</p> <p>And</p> <p>A minimum of 3-star rating on the Dairy Beef Index (DBI) within and/or across breed</p> <p>And</p> <p>A minimum of 3-star rating on the Beef Sub Index of the DBI on a within and/or across breed</p> <p>Full details can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/service/a4409-csp-dairy-beef/</p>
Latest/Update	<p>October 2024: Payment per calf increased to €40</p> <p>April 2024: New scheme, now open. Claimed with the BISS by 15th May 2024</p>
Duration	The scheme will run for 4 years, with claims being made annually.
Implications	<i>The DBWS will be of interest to those businesses which are involved in genomics. This could either be in the DNA testing in the laboratory, the processing of results and transferring data or in suppliers and manufacturers of associated equipment including double tissue tags and hair cards for DNA collection.</i>

10.3.4 National Sheep Welfare Scheme (NSWS)

Grant Name	National Sheep Welfare Scheme (NSWS)
Grant Purpose	Provides support to further enhance animal health and welfare on sheep farms.
Grant Rate	€13 per eligible ewe.
Grant Detail	<p>The scheme consists of four possible measures, applicable to both upland and lowland flocks, and grouped into two categories as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category A – shearing or body condition scoring of ewes; • Category B – clostridial vaccination of ewes (or lambs if ewes are already vaccinated) or plunge dipping of ewes. <p>Farmers joining the NSWS must indicate at application stage which options they intend to carry out by selecting one from each category. The maximum number of breeding ewes eligible for payment under the scheme will be determined by reference to the numbers declared for each participating flock in the sheep census returns from 2020 to 2023.</p> <p>Full details can be found at https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/289674/aabba3b5-11ae-4746-8c6e-7a01301e5642.pdf#page=null</p>
Latest/Update	<p>October 2024: Payment per ewe increased to €13</p> <p>May 2024: New scheme, now open. Applications must be made by 21st May 2024</p>
Duration	The scheme will run for 4 years, with claims being made annually.
Implications	<i>The NSWS will be of interest to those businesses which are involved in the manufacturing or supply of clostridial vaccinations for sheep or the associated equipment. Including equipment for shearing and dipping of ewes.</i>

10.3.5 European Innovation Partnership (EIP) Projects

Grant Name	European Innovation Partnership Projects
Grant Purpose	Funds innovation, research and development projects to address some of the main environmental challenges currently being faced on Irish farms.
Grant Rate	Depends on the project, the maximum budget allocation for each project will be in the region of €1.75 million
Grant Detail	<p>This is the sixth competitive call and will seek proposals to address the following topics, while also encouraging other innovation areas that are applicable to environmental sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative approaches in farming to address (but not limited to): • Climate mitigation and climate adaptation at farm level; • Farming in Coastal areas; • Farming in the organic and horticulture sectors. • Food sustainability, security and the role of short supply chains; • Regenerative agriculture; • Protecting and restoring our soils and their sustainable use; • Sustainable farming systems for intensive agriculture at local and landscape levels; • Innovative approaches within the bio/circular economy at a locally-led level <p>The application process includes;</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 – An initial call for the submission of proposals, which are then evaluated by an evaluation committee. • Phase 2 – Successful Phase 1 applicants will then be invited to develop their initial proposals. • Phase 3 -Successful Phase 2 applicants will move forward to full implementation of their project. <p>More information can be found at https://www.gov.ie/en/service/18a855-european-innovation-partnership-scheme/#environmental-sustainability-eip-call-6-under-csp</p>
Duration	Each project will run for between 3-5 years.
Latest/ Update	<p>December 2024: Phase 1 of Round 6 closes 5pm on 10th December 2024.</p> <p>November 2024: Phase 1 of Round 6 - The initial call for the submission of proposals is open for applications and closes 5pm on 10th December 2024.</p>
Implications	<i>This grant will be of interest to those who want to research or develop an innovative solution to a known problem in the agricultural industry. It will be for those who have ambitious ideas, wish to collaborate and require funding to accelerate an idea or a solution to market. It will help fund new products, processes and services which can solve real environmental and industry challenges in the agricultural sector.</i>

10.3. Regional Grant Opportunities

At this juncture, it does not appear that there are significant grants available to the agricultural industry at a regional level. All Irish-based sources that we have consulted thus far suggest that grants for farming fall under the auspices of Ireland's Department for Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM).

Appendix – Background Information

The Andersons Centre

The Andersons Centre is a consultancy. It has been trading for approaching 50 years. As a firm, we are inextricably involved with the agricultural industry, working both for farmers, the supply chain (upstream and downstream), public and private sector organisations alike. The firm has two main areas of business; firstly, providing business advice to farmers, helping them to achieve their economic objectives (primarily profit). Secondly, we provide analysis and interpretation to the ancillary sectors that support, supply, buy from, finance, or regulate agriculture. The two sides of the firm provide us with a unique double-edged understanding of agriculture at farm and industry levels.

About the Authors



Caroline Ingamells is a Senior Research Consultant at The Andersons Centre. She is a specialist adviser on agricultural policy and its implications for farmers and landowners. She helps to compile both the John Nix Farm Management Pocketbook and the Agricultural Budgeting & Costing Book. In addition, she is also a key contributor to Andersons' monthly bulletins. Caroline is involved in the family farm which encompasses both livestock and cropping operations.



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Additional References

¹ See: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/76026-common-agricultural-policy-cap-post-2020/?referrer=http://www.gov.ie/CAP/>

² <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c73a3-food-vision-2030-a-world-leader-in-sustainable-food-systems/>

³ <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2021/act/32/section/15/enacted/en/html>

⁴ <https://www.teagasc.ie/environment/schemes--regulations/nitrates-derogation/>

⁵ <https://www.teagasc.ie/news--events/daily/environment/6-key-changes-to-nitrates-regulations-for-2023.php>

⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32022D0696>

⁷ <https://www.agriland.ie/farming-news/farmers-wont-be-mandated-to-reach-220kg-n-immediately-kelly/>

⁸ <https://www.farmersjournal.ie/dairy/news/taoiseach-very-keen-to-explore-derogation-flexibility-with-commissioner-793277>