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# **AGRI-BIP NEWSLETTER**

## **When will we know?**

The debate on the basis of the Single Farm Payment calculation continues. It is expected that an announcement will be made by Defra within the next few weeks. There are hints from Defra ministers that the historic basis (i.e. a Single Farm Payment related to previous claims) is not likely to be sustainable. A number of options are emerging; these include 'Full Regionalisation' or a 'Hybrid' of historic or regional payments. All the options other than historic will lead to some redistribution of support, the winners being low output extensive units, with losers being intensive livestock producers and some arable units.

Agri-BIP is planning to repeat the seminars held last year, as soon as full details are available on what could turn out to be a very complex system, with a lot of disruption to many farm businesses.

It is interesting to note the differences in quota markets currently, beef and sheep, which are quietly reducing in value as their demise in 2005 looms, compared with the hectic trading in milk quota which has many years left to run.

**Do not forget that all arable and livestock subsidies end on the 30<sup>th</sup> December 2004.** It is ironic that livestock subsidies this year will be at an all time high due to currency fluctuations.

Finally, many thanks to everyone who returned their survey forms which were enclosed in last months newsletter, regarding changes of address, e-mail contact details and individual business/training needs. It is not too late if you still have the form on the mantelpiece to return them to us.

**Stewart Horne  
Agri-BIP Manager**

## **Broadband4devon**

Broadband provides "always on" internet connection, which is up to 40 times faster than a standard modem – all for a single fixed monthly fee. Connection can be via an existing phone line, cable, fixed wireless link or satellite. **Broadband4devon** is here to help you with subsidies, advice and support.

If you would more information then check out the website at [www.broadband4devon.net](http://www.broadband4devon.net) or phone 0845 2702727.

Alternatively speak to our office to see how broadband can help you. More information in next month's newsletter.

## Nitrogen Vulnerable Zones – NVZ's

*A reminder to all farmers who have land falling within the Nitrate Vulnerable Zone: -*

As you may be aware, farmers that have land within the NVZ should now have completed all field records for 2003, complete with manure and fertilizer applications. Records should be printed off and submitted to the Environment Agency at: Environment Agency (NVZ), Manley House, Kestrel Way, Exeter EX2 7LQ.

**For those of you who have not yet completed these records, this task should be given priority this month and submitted without delay!**

Agri-BIP have been involved in training and assisting many clients to complete these record requirements, by setting up the computerized programme on their computers at home and helping to enter all relevant field details, fertiliser and manure applications. Once set up on your computer correctly for the year 2003, the details can then be saved for 2004, making any relevant changes as they occur. This will save you a great deal of time and effort during the coming year.

If you would like Agri-BIP to assist you with your NVZ records, you will need to have the following information prepared: -

- IACS forms listing all field details; grid reference number and field size
- The field name you use corresponding to all fields on the IACS form
- Dates of all Nitrogen applications for each field i.e.: both manure and fertilizer
- Amount of Nitrogen applied as fertiliser, recorded either as kg/ha or units/acre
- Cropping details of each field and date sown
- An estimate of the amount of manure or slurry applied to which fields.

If you would like Agri-BIP to assist you with the above, please contact our office on **Freephone 0800 592 872**.

## Training in Business Administration

Following the substantial response that we had to the article below in the autumn, we are repeating the information.

Are you finding it difficult to keep up-to-date with your books and paperwork?



Is the completion of your VAT 100 a nightmare?

- Keep control of cash flow and budgets by accurately recording income and expenditure.
- Ensure that your records agree with the bank statements.
- Prepare the form VAT 100, without the need for 'back of an envelope' calculations!
- Make life easier for the person who prepares the end of year accounts. If this is your accountant, his fees should be less!
- Comply with legislation and requirements of the Inland Revenue and HM Customs and Excise.
- Enterprise analysis and benchmarking.
- Give your bank manager the assurance he needs that the business is well.

If you feel that you need help and training to cope with the ever increasing burden of these tasks, please telephone **David Hinshelwood on 0800 592872 to find out more.**

### Part 1

- Completing a Cash Analysis Book
- Filing, invoicing and credit control
- Bank Reconciliation Statements
- Preparation of the VAT form 100

### Part 2

- Cash Flows
- Budgets and Costings
- Preparation and interpretation of accounts
- Financial Indicators and Ratios

## **Training Activity Increasing**

The training department of Agri-BIP is rapidly increasing its activities and training events over the next coming weeks.

Last year we were able to offer training in a wide range of subjects including courses on Databases, Sage, Welding, Reed-Bed Management, Butchery and Risk Assessment. We also supported hundreds of IT and management courses through Learn Direct.

Now with Barry Butler and Jon Eggins joining Tim Drew in the training department, we plan to provide many more courses and training activities, over this coming year. Jon will be taking over most of the Learn Direct work, providing effective, flexible IT and Management Training courses. He is also available to deliver group-training events in a wide range of IT applications.

Barry continues to provide Financial, Administration and Management Training, either on a 1-2-1 basis or in groups. He will be working with clients who are wishing to improve their businesses profitability and effectiveness, by carrying out a Business Health Check, producing SWOT's, training and development plans, together with benchmarking results.

Tim will continue to manage and develop the training department, as well as delivering the Institute of Leadership & Management Courses. He will continue to look at new opportunities available and exciting ways to provide training and support to you.

We will be facilitating many more group training events in a wide range of topics, from Foot Trimming and ATVs to Marketing, Bookkeeping, Web Design and Databases.

### **Current Training Planned**

Sage Accounts Training	4 x 1 day per week	South Hams
Computer for the Novice	3 x 1 day per week	TBC
Foot Trimming	2 day course	South Hams
Safe use of a ATV	1 day course	Chagford
Marketing with a Database	1 day course	TBC
Strained Wire & Post and Rail Fencing	2 day course	North Devon
I L M 1 <sup>st</sup> Line Management course	35 hours course	At your home
A.I training	3 day course	TBC

If you are interested in any of the above, have questions or a specific training need please contact Tim Drew on 0800 592872.

## **Good News for Tourism Businesses**

Are you involved in tourism? Or thinking about diversifying into tourism, holiday lets, fishing lakes, caravan park, farm walks, bed and breakfast, or any other kind of attraction?

We are now able to support you in developing your business. Business support and advice, marketing, business planning, financial control, are all areas in which we can help you. As well as providing training in I.T., Health and Safety and Customer care to name but a few. Also any other skills you require, we may be able to help.

In our new Learning and Skills / European Social funded programme; we are here to help you.

A business adviser / trainer, will work with you to look at your business and to identify the strengths and weaknesses within your business. We can then help you to build on your strengths and also work with you to overcome your weaknesses. This work can be done at your business on a 1-2-1 basis.

However, if you require additional training in specific areas we are able to source this training and either fund it completely or partially. If you are looking for qualifications we can support you through your learning up to certification.

Interested, or have questions, then call Tim Drew, who will be only too pleased to help and advise you.

## Planning for the future after CAP Reform

Whilst we may not yet know the outcomes and the decisions with regards to how the Single Farm Payment will be calculated for individual farms, we do know that from next January 2005 there will be significant changes to the requirements that farmers will have to fulfil in order to qualify for payments.

There will therefore be significant opportunities for farmers to change the size, scope and type of enterprises on their farm in the future, whilst still being able to claim their payments through the Single Farm Payment entitlement.

In order to be prepared to make the decisions that will have to be made to move the farm business forward in a profitable direction, farmers will need the financial and technical management information with regards to the enterprises that are currently on the farm.

**Example: Why would you wish to continue with a beef enterprise, buying animals at 12 months old and selling them as finished animals, if without the subsidy payments you were losing money on each and every animal?**

Whilst we do know that there will be a requirement to continue farming in some form, the enterprise mix that you choose to have on your own individual farms, will be up to yourselves as business managers. The natural resources of the farm, coupled with the management expertise, buildings and machinery that are present, will all contribute to making the decisions, but equally the technical and financial information of the current farming business systems needs to be known.

We are here to help individual farmers (or groups of farmers if they so wish) to examine their own businesses and to develop the skills that are required to convert the large amounts of information, which come into the farm in terms of financial accounts, sales income etc into information that is useful to your business management. We can enable you to identify the enterprise financial and technical performance on your own business, which will enable you to plan for the future – whatever that may be!

## There's no business like Show Business!

Spring is just around the corner and some of you are looking forward to going to the agricultural shows for which this part of the country is so well known.

If you would like to take part in your local show by exhibiting livestock, but have no idea how to start, we can help. There are many producers of breeding livestock who use exhibiting their cattle and sheep at shows as both a “shop window” to advertise the quality of their animals, but also, when successful, use the results as a means to increasing the sales value of their stock.

We should like to know if any of you would be interested in attending a series of sessions to cover everything you need to enable you to participate this year and make your visit to the show much more fun. Depending on numbers there will be a small charge for these sessions.

Give Tim Drew a ring on 0800 592872 to have a chat.

## **DISCLAIMER**

Every effort has been taken to ensure the information contained in these notes is correct, however, West Devon Business Information Point will not be liable for any loss arising from the use of these notes or any omissions or errors contained within.

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