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AGRI-BIP NEWSLETTER

Sheep Identification and Traceability

Defra have announced that the UK sheep flock will not have to be double tagged prior to the introduction of electronic ID in 2008. This is subject to further visits from the European Commission later this year.

This good news is tempered by some changes to existing rules; this **may** mean more paperwork for farmers. The most important change is a requirement to record individual ID numbers in some circumstances when moving to slaughter. Where animals are home reared and fattened on the holding birth identification by batch with UK flock number is sufficient. Where animals are moved to slaughter from another holding there is a choice of the use of an S tag or the individual number of each lamb. In the majority of cases most farmers will use an S tag.

Where an animal has lived on a number of holdings prior to reaching the slaughter, they may have the maximum of three tags applied and in this circumstance the only recourse is to use the individual ID number.

There is also a requirement to maintain a register or flock record that holds a running total of the sheep held on that holding. This supersedes the ewe flock records, which were required by the Sheep Annual Premium Scheme.

I have always held the view that the area where farmers would fall down on Cross Compliance is the record keeping requirements rather than some of the new regulations that have been introduced under the Single Payment Scheme. Previously if your records were found to be incorrect, it would either lead to a slap on the wrist from Trading Standards or a black mark from your Farm Assurance Inspector but you would have been given some time to put the problem right. With Cross Compliance, a financial penalty could be incurred at the first mistake, so it is important to make sure that your record keeping is up to date and is in the required format.

Work smart is often the best way to deal with record keeping. The sheep register if used in a flexible way can also be used as a good management tool. Agri-BIP have developed a template which can be used on a spreadsheet that will enable farmers to keep records of their ewe flock, lamb numbers, rams and replacements on separate pages which will meet the requirement of the flock record and at the same time can be used for management purposes. Attend a record keeping workshop and get the template FREE!

Stewart Horne
Manager

Events Page

Environmental Stewardship Scheme

If you are undecided about making an application, want to know more about the schemes and how they would fit your farm and business, we are running a number of workshops across the region during the evenings.

These meetings are scheduled for 7.30pm unless stated otherwise.

Tuesday 4th October – Wiveliscombe House, Wiveliscombe

Thursday 6th October – Penventon Far, East Taphouse, Liskeard – On-farm ELS Meeting (2.00pm start)

Wednesday 12th October – Dartmoor Lodge, Ashburton

Tuesday 18th October – Eagle House, Launceston

Wednesday 2nd November – The George Hotel, South Molton

We are also running a series of small workshops to assist people putting together applications. We will help with the completion of the forms, maps and points calculation. These workshops start at 11.00am.

Monday 3rd October – The George Hotel, South Molton

Thursday 6th October – Dartmoor Lodge, Ashburton

Tuesday 25th October – Eagle House, Launceston

Other workshops which are taking place during October and November: -

Soil Management Planning Workshops – practical sessions – 11.30am – 3.30pm

Wednesday 5th October – West Devon BIP, Okehampton

Friday 14th October – West Devon BIP, Okehampton

Tuesday 18th October – Launceston (venue to be confirmed)

Tuesday 1st November – Dartmoor Lodge, Ashburton

Marketing your own Meat Workshop – 10.30am – 3.30pm

Tuesday 11th October – The White Hart, Modbury

Animal Record Keeping for Cross Compliance Workshop – 11.00am – 3.30pm

Friday 21st October – West Devon BIP, Okehampton

Bookkeeping Workshop – 10.30am – 3.30pm

Monday 3rd October – Teignbridge Business Centre, Heathfield

NVZ Records for Cross Compliance – 10.30am – 3.30pm

Wednesday 19th October – West Devon BIP, Okehampton

All you need to know about Cross Compliance Workshop – 7.30pm

Thursday 27th October – West Devon BIP, Okehampton

Renewable Energy Production for Profit – 7.30pm

Thursday 17th November – Plume of Feathers, Okehampton – *To be confirmed*

Farm Record Keeping and Cash Flow Planning Workshop – 10.30am – 3.30pm

Friday 4th November – Teignbridge Business Centre, Heathfield

Beef Profitability Workshop – 11.00am – 3.30pm

Tuesday 8th November – West Devon BIP, Okehampton

The majority of workshops require a small charge of £10 including VAT to attend.

For more information or to book a place on one of these workshops, please call the office on

Freephone 0800 592872.

Beef prices continue to worry!

In the last newsletter, I referred to the unsustainable beef price of 170p per kilo; unfortunately this has dropped further to 166p per kilo at the time of writing.

I thought that it might be interesting to look at the price of store cattle and calves and how they have changed over the last couple of years. (Source Farmers Weekly)

September	2003	2004	2005
Stores	445	408	358
Continental calves	187	141	106
Friesian calves	31	20	11

Is £358 a fair price for the store animal and can you make a profit from fattening it to slaughter? What price can you afford to pay for suckled calves this autumn?

If you are selling stores or suckled calves will you have any profits at current cattle prices?

Can profits still be achieved from fattening or rearing beef cattle? Come along to a workshop where we will discuss the factors that make the difference between profit and loss. See the events page for dates or if you want a meeting in your area give us a call.

Wild Game Meat Handling

As from January 1st 2006 new legislation requires anyone shooting and supplying game meat to a game dealer needs to be a “trained person”. In order to comply with this legislation, appropriate training and certification in game meat handling will be required to become a “trained person”.

Lantra Awards have devised a training and certification package– **Level 2 Certificate in Wild Game Meat Handling** - a nationally recognised qualification.

The training and certification will:

- Enable the supply of game meat to continue
- minimise liability and protect against litigation
- demonstrate compliance with animal health and welfare strategies
- demonstrate achievement a national standard of competence

For experienced workers in this field the training and assessment can be completed in 1 day, for less experienced persons then the time would be 1 ½ days.

We can arrange free training and certification to land based businesses (farmers and others with holding numbers) in Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Gloucestershire, West of England and Wiltshire – but numbers are limited.

For more information, please contact us in the office on **Freephone 0800 592872**.

Newsletter Distribution

If you have already sent back your reply sheet to the office then **you do not need** to send it back to us again.

If you have not returned your reply sheet, please, please do as we still need more e-mail addresses and fax numbers.

To return the sheet to the office fax or e-mail to team@bipwestdevon.biz

Starting a New Enterprise?

To help to turn ideas into a profitable enterprise, whether it is creating workspace, tourism or making cheese, Agri- BIP is running a series of free workshops for farmers and land based industries in the Objective 2 areas of North and West Devon, Torridge, and the South Hams.

The workshops will be held from 10.00am until 3.00pm on the following days -

Tuesday 4th October at West Devon Business Information Point, Okehampton

Tuesday 11th October at The Crown and Sceptre, Holsworthy

Tuesday 18th October at the Seven Stars in Totnes

Specialised workshops for farmers interested in adding value to red meat are also being scheduled; please register your interest now.

Numbers will be limited, so please phone us in the office on **Freephone 0800 592872** to book a place and for more information.

Single Payment Update

Defra continue to fall behind the timetable for implementation of the SPS, the set aside rate for 2006 has not been announced at the time of writing, over a month late.

National Reserve applicants will receive a letter shortly asking for information, if you were amongst the many people who received support from Agri-BIP initially or would like some assistance, let us know if you need further help.

Various bodies are using cross compliance as a way of enforcing regulations that concern them, e.g. The Environment Agency is reminding farmers that **NVZ records** fall under Cross Compliance and failure to keep these could lead to SPS penalties. If you are concerned about NVZ records we are re-running our popular NVZ workshops which will ensure you are recording the necessary information.

If you are unsure if you are in a NVZ area we can check online by individual fields if required. See the events page for dates or call to request a meeting in your area.

Soil management plans – help to prepare your own farm plan

Would you like help with preparing a soil management plan for your farm? We are organising some practical workshops (involving welly boots and spades!) so that we can cover: -

- Identifying soil structure problems
- Identifying soil types
- Understanding what Defra want in a soil management plan
- Understanding of the factors that need to be included in your plan such as slope of the field, crop type, grazing strategies etc.

We will finish by looking at entering data into an example plan and you will have a template that you can use on a computer to prepare your own plan or a paper based template.

These ½ day workshops are very practical so that you can work on your own plan afterwards with confidence, with back up from us.

Soil management plans are an option under Environmental Stewardship and a requirement of Cross Compliance in the 2006/07 scheme years.

For further information, please contact us in the office on **Freephone 0800 592872**.

IT Training

Learn how to use and manage Windows and Office applications, with step-by-step guidance. Master the basics of word processing, e-mail and the Internet, spreadsheets, databases, desktop publishing and presentations.

Work at your own pace with support and guidance from our IT Trainer, Deborah Turner. All course material and assessments are in line with the OCR New Clait qualification. **These courses are FREE**, subject to meeting eligibility criteria and achieving a qualification.

Courses are available in Okehampton on the 12th October, 19th October, 26th October and 2nd November, at Heathfield, Newton Abbot on the 6th October, 20th October and 3rd November and in South Molton on Thursday 13th October and Thursday 27th October. Please contact us in the office on **Freephone 0800 592872** for more information.

Coming soon New CLAIT 2006, the revised CLAIT Qualification

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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