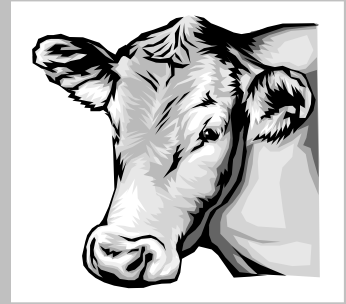




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AGRI-BIP NEWSLETTER

Environmental Stewardship

You may have heard in the news lately that the European Parliament has rejected the proposal put forward by the UK to increase voluntary modulation of the Single Payment scheme up to a possible 20%. Whilst not binding on the EU Commission this has delayed agreement of the European Rural Development Programme.

What does this mean for farmers? Well there is good news and bad! The prospects for the UK Government increasing modulation of the SP are reduced, although no final decision has been made. That's the good news. The bad news is that any funding to aid diversification under the new ERDP will be delayed, possibly until well into 2008. The other area that will affect land managers is Environmental Stewardship - new applications are unlikely to be approved until the budgets for the ERDP are agreed.

If you have applications in for ELS make sure you supply any extra information required by Natural England ASAP, in order to avoid your application being put on hold.

We are hearing of delays in scheduled payments for both ELS and OELS, we understand this is due to reorganisation within Natural England.

Single Payment Update.

As predicted in last months newsletter 2006 SPS payments will be delayed. The Minister, David Miliband, has announced that if full payments are not possible before February (highly unlikely) then 50% will be paid sometime towards the end of February. The intention is to achieve the majority of payments before the end of June 2007 deadline.

Our advice therefore is to budget for 50% in February and 50% in June; anything earlier will be a bonus.

Inheritance Tax Headache.

Although farm incomes continue to struggle and bank borrowings reach record levels, values of property and land continue to rise.

The effect of getting Inheritance Tax planning can be very costly, a recent case won by the revenue has cast doubt on agricultural relief being available on farmhouses where the land is managed by a contract farmer. If this applies to you take professional advice.

Redundant Building Grant (RBG) shortly available throughout Devon.

The RBG has been on offer in the west of Devon for some time now and is expected to cover the county in the New Year. This is a time limited grant and with the inevitable delays in achieving planning for projects, finding builders and completing the project it is important that if you have a potential project you contact Devon Renaissance or Agri-BIP ASAP.

Vocational Training in Cornwall (VTS)

Duchy College has re launched its VTS training fund in Cornwall. This time it is offering a subsidy of 55% on all training. Training is offered in a wide range of subjects from foot trimming to records and computers. Agri-BIP can offer training under the programme and we estimate that a days training will carry a cost to the attendee of approximately £20.

One area of training that would be worthwhile to almost every farmer attending would be our new workshop covering the records that are required under both farm assurance and cross compliance.

Have you set up your visitor record, your complaints log, feed records, etc. etc.

We can help you with simple computer or paper based templates that will ensure you won't get tripped up in this area if you have an inspection. Give us a call if you would like to set up a workshop in your area.

NFU Dairy Invoicing Campaign – Fighting for a Fair Deal for Dairy Farmers

The NFU has launched a major campaign to increase milk prices to more sustainable levels. The yawning gulf between milk prices and costs is fast becoming a black hole, which will swallow up large parts of the UK dairy industry if something isn't done to reverse the downward price trend in the supply chain.

A major part of the campaign is to encourage every dairy farmer to send an invoice for the additional costs of production they have incurred. The aim of this is to demonstrate clearly the gap that exists between production costs and prices and to send a clear message to the entire supply chain of the need for more sustainable milk prices that will give dairy farmers to confidence to invest for the long-term.

YOU WILL ONLY NEED TO FIND 4 FIGURES FROM YOUR MILK STATEMENTS:

Your milk production (litres) between October 2005 - March 2006

Your milk production (litres) between April 2006 - September 2006.

The total actual payment received for your milk for the period October 2005 - March 2006

The total actual payment received for the period April 2006 - September 2006

(NB Total payments are the figure before MDC levy and any capital deduction)

At the moment support for this campaign has been poor in England. It is likely that the idea will fail if more dairy farmers do not contribute.

Land + Wanted

Jacqueline Bourne is looking to buy, lease or rent between two and five acres of land, preferably in the Okehampton area, for development as a market garden.

Anyone with land available please contact Jacqueline on 01837 55832.

EVENTS PAGE

On Farm Demonstration Event - Carruan Farm Centre, Polzeath

Tuesday 12th December 10.30am-2.30pm

A practical demonstration of the Electronic Identification (EID) of sheep from farm to abattoir.

The host farmers Clare and Mike Parnell are participants in the South West Livestock Pilot

- See the equipment working on a farm environment
- Assess the information the system generates
- Discover how EID can improve farm profits

Speakers include;

- Clare and Mike Parnell- host farmers
 - Shearwell Data- Equipment
- Tim Bebbington- Castle Vet Group
 - HR Jasper & Sons- Abattoir
 - Stewart Horne- Agri-BIP

The system and benefits are readily transferable to cattle

Lunch provided- Booking essential- **0800 592872**

This free event is part of Natural England's South West Farm Demonstration Programme



Computer Training

These workshops are ideal for beginners through to intermediate, and offer you a choice of topics such as Internet & Email, Managing Files, Spreadsheets, Web Page Creation, Database and Publisher with individual support from our in-house tutor.

Wednesday 29th November – Room 8 West Devon BIP, Okehampton

Thursday 30th November – Teignbridge Business Centre, Heathfield, Newton Abbot

Tuesday 5th December- The George Hotel, South Molton

Thursday 7th December-Tavy Business Centre, Pitts Cleave Industrial Estate, Tavistock

Tuesday 12th December-Room 8 West Devon BIP, Okehampton

Thursday 14th December-Teignbridge Business Centre, Heathfield, Newton Abbot



England Catchment Sensitive Farming Delivery Initiative

This new advice programme has recently been launched in England. In the South West the following catchments have been selected to take part, the initiative is being run jointly by Natural England and the Environment Agency.

The catchments have dedicated officers as detailed below.

<u>RIVERS AXE AND OTTER</u>	James Grischeff, NE Taunton, Tel: 01823 285514,
<u>SOMERSET LEVELS AND MOORS</u>	Louise Webb, EA Somerset, Tel: 01278 484540,
<u>SLAPTON LEY, SALCOMBE TO KINGSBRIDGE</u>	Lizbe Pilbeam , NE, Exeter, Tel: 01392 822924,
<u>WEST CORNWALL CATCHMENTS</u>	Kate Allingham , NE, Exeter, Tel: 01392 352073,
<u>EXE ESTUARY</u>	Rob Lamboll, NE, Exeter, Tel: 01392 352073,
<u>THE FROME, THE FLEET, PART OF POOLE HARBOUR</u>	James Grischeff, NE Taunton, Tel: 01823 285514,
<u>TAMAR - TAVY ESTUARY</u>	Conor Doherty, NE, Exeter, Tel: 01392 352074,
<u>HAMPSHIRE AVON SYSTEM</u>	Melissa Robson, EA, Blandford Forum, Tel: 01258 483302,
<u>DORSET STOUR (MIDDLE REACHES)</u>	Louise Moderski, EA, Blandford, Tel: 01258 483335,
<u>RIVER CAMEL VALLEY AND TRIBUTARIES</u>	Kate Allingham , Exeter (NE), Tel: 01392 352073 ,
<u>YEALM AND ERME ESTUARIES</u>	Lizbe Pilbeam, NE, Exeter, Tel: 01392 822924,

The initiative aims to assist farmers and landowners to improve water quality by reducing diffuse pollution (nutrients, erosion, pesticides, pathogens, as well as flooding of roads and property). This will be achieved by offering advice and information coupled with a **limited** Capital Grant Scheme (details available www.defra.gov.uk/farm/environment/water/csf/grants/capital-grants.htm)

The initiative will run until March 2008 as part of the national response to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.

West Devon BIP (Agri-BIP) are pleased to have been selected as an approved contractor for the initiative and look forward to assisting with the delivery of some elements of the programme.

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.

Sponsored by The European Social Fund, Devon Renaissance/SWRDA, West Devon Borough Council, Dartmoor National Park Authority, Lantra and East Devon ANOB (Sustainable Development Fund).