

FEBRUARY 2024

eNEWSLETTER



DEFRA in the media: Judicial review on nutrient regulations for farmers

Yesterday, 7 February, there has been media coverage on a Judicial Review by River Action on the Farming Rules for Water (FRfW).

Farming Rules for Water (2018) is one of the frameworks for the Environment Agency's farming and agriculture regulation and sets out that farmers are responsible for minimising the risk of pollution from applications of nutrients to land and livestock management. The Environment Agency is using funding and regulatory powers to work with farmers to reduce water pollution, ensure they comply with the rules and tackle inadequate infrastructure, poor soil, and nutrient management.

The Environment Agency does not hesitate to take appropriate action, up to and including enforcement, when breaches of regulations are identified. Anyone who has a concern about pollution should notify the Agency immediately using the 24-hour incident hotline: 0800807060.

Last year the Environment Agency carried out more than 4,000 farm inspections across England, including 493 in the Wye catchment. This resulted in more than 5,000 improvement actions across England, and 285 improvement actions in the Wye, being undertaken to improve farm practices. This ranges from improving storage of slurry to better management of nutrients and soils.

There were 11 other prosecutions against farmers last year for causing pollution under the Environment Permitting Regulations.

The Farming Rules for Water are one of many regulatory tools used by the Environment Agency

to manage the nutrient load in the Wye Catchment. Furthermore, the impact of farming is not the only source of nutrient levels. Phosphorus has accumulated over a number of years and is affected by climate change, flow levels in the Wye, increased housing development as well as industrial discharges from industry on the Wye.

An Environment Agency spokesperson said:

Since 2021 we have performed more than 7,000 farm inspections and required farmers to carry out over 11,400 improvement actions, including around the River Wye. These range from improving slurry storage to better management of nutrients. Our inspection regime is supported by the use of technology such as satellite images and drone footage.

Anyone caught breaching environmental laws faces enforcement action, up to and including prosecution.

We are unable to comment on ongoing legal proceedings.

A Defra spokesperson said:

We have set highly ambitious legally binding targets to reduce water pollution from agriculture. We are committed to working with farmers to deliver improvements; this includes conducting more than 4,000 farm inspections in the last financial year to help farmers comply with legal requirements.

We are also supporting farmers to deliver environmental improvements in their local areas through our Environmental Land Management schemes, which includes work to improve water quality, reduce carbon emissions, and create and preserve wildlife habitats.

We are unable to comment on ongoing legal proceedings.

Source: www.farming.co.uk, 8 February 2024

FUEL NEWS: What price oil? 2023 In review - In association with The Oil Market Journal, New Products from Atlantis Tanks Pages 14-15

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LIVESTOCK POULTRY & DAIRY NEWS: Bluetongue virus – what is the latest situation? Dairy farm switches to grazing fodder beet as high-quality winter feed & more... Pages 11-13



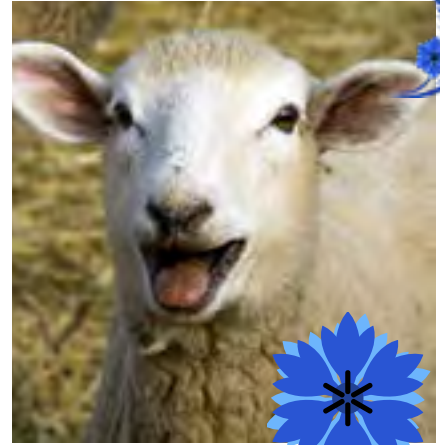
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BLEATINGS FROM RAMSAK HQ...



Dear Reader

So we're over a week into February already and Spring within grasping distance!

*It is essential that the details we hold for you are up to date with regards to your contact details, plus products and services available to the membership as we prepare for the next growing season. **We are unable to pair you with jobs that come in and market you fully if we don't have up to date information on our database.** Make sure we are added to your own mailing lists for special offers, etc. from you for further distribution on to the membership and that we have email addresses for all members of staff that should be receiving eNewsletters and email updates from us. Let Lynsey know if you need anyone added to the circular list.*

Advertising opportunities are available from just £20, so contact us for an advertising price list. Adverts go in the monthly eNewsletter, on our social media platforms and in our weekly email updates.

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The RAMSAK Team

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SHEEP SECTOR WELCOMES IMPROVED POLICE POWERS TO TACKLE DOG ATTACKS

The sheep sector has welcomed steps taken toward tougher punishments for the crime of livestock worrying by dogs.

Following updated legislation, the police will now be given greater powers to respond to dog attacks on sheep and cattle more effectively.

The Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) Bill's aim is to make it easier for them to collect evidence and, in the most serious cases, seize and detain dogs.

Responding to it, the National Sheep Association (NSA) said sheep worrying by dogs had a devastating impact on livestock across the country.

The body said it was 'fantastic news' that the updated Bill had been approved as it would help increase powers to protect livestock.

Since the original 1953 Act was brought in, the number of livestock in England and Wales has doubled with more people visiting the countryside.

This has highlighted the need for an updated piece of legislation, something the NSA and other bodies have campaigned for for years.

NSA chief executive, Phil Stocker said: "The Bill addresses issues identified with a lack of police powers, relating to gaining evidence, detaining, and gaining entry to property where responsible dog owners and their animals reside.

"The Bill will include also extending the landscape covered where attacks on livestock can be considered a crime to include roads and paths.

The NSA's own work to highlight the issue has demonstrated the incidence and severity of sheep worrying by dogs cases across the country.

Cases have reportedly increased year on year, particularly following the Covid periods of lockdown and subsequent increase in dog ownership.

NSA project manager, Nicola Noble said the Bill won't be an immediate fix for resolving the problem, but will provide the police with more powers.

She said: "As UK farmers we work to some of the highest standards of health and welfare, and are bound by rules and regulations to ensure standards are maintained.

"What's most frustrating is all our hard work, time and investment can be undone in one irresponsible action, completely out of our control."

While news of improved police powers was welcomed by the sector, Mr Stocker said it did not go far enough to act as a serious deterrent to irresponsible dog owners.

He concluded: "Despite this welcome news it is still very disappointing that there is no significant strengthening in the financial penalty or criminal penalty for offences."

Source: www.farming.co.uk, 7 February 2024

AHDB LEVY RATE INCREASE CONFIRMED TO COME INTO FORCE FROM APRIL 2024

Farmers and growers across the country will be affected by the AHDB levy rate increases, which will take effect from April at the start of the 2024/25 financial year. Find out what the proposed rate increases mean for you.

The rate increase is the first that AHDB has made in over a decade, and range from a 25% increase for beef, lamb and cereal producers, whilst dairy producers face a 33% increase in levies. Pig producers and processors will be paying 20% more than previously, the first rise in almost 30 years for pork producers.

The rise was first proposed back in October 2023 and has now received full ministerial backing from Defra and the devolved administrations.

AHDB say that the rate increase, which will affect farmers in the livestock, dairy and crop sectors, has been made to allow the organisation to

deliver more key services, including marketing and exports for the livestock and dairy sectors and more independent research for cereals and oilseeds.

It also says that it has been affected by rising costs due to the increase in inflation.

At the time when the proposals were first put forward, AHDB chair Nicholas Saphir said there was "never a perfect time for such proposals" but that inflation had affected the value of the levy by "around 40%".

Following the confirmation of new levy rates, he said that the increased income to the organisation will help to "enhance key activity".

"Levy payers can be assured that our commitment to helping them navigate through an unprecedented period of change for the industry is secure and we will continue to listen to their feedback to ensure we are delivering real value for money", he said.

[THE LEVY INCREASES IN FULL CAN BE FOUND HERE](#)

Source: www.nfuonline.com, 7 February 2024

AHDB: INFLATION AND COST OF LIVING PUT LONG-TERM RESILIENCE OF FARMING UNDER PRESSURE IN 2024

Long-term resilience in farming will be challenged amid cumulative inflationary pressure and the ongoing impact of the cost of living on consumer demand.

Our latest agri-market outlook has highlighted cumulative inflation of more than 30% in agricultural inputs since 2019, coupled with market stresses and policy uncertainty, as the key drivers behind the threat to long-term resilience in the industry.

It also revealed markets, food businesses and consumers are still battling with the ongoing challenges of inflation, fuelled by the energy crisis, the war in Ukraine and shortage of labour. Recent developments in the Middle East represent additional risk to the global economy and UK inflation.

Farmers are likely to feel the effects of cumulative inflation in inputs. Combined with energy and interest rates, this is continuing to pressure businesses and consumers, fuelling an ongoing price-sensitive consumer market for their produce. This has the potential to significantly impact trends in food consumption in 2024 and beyond.

Sarah Baker, AHDB Head of Economics and Analysis, said:

"Farmers saw input costs rise significantly during 2023, putting pressure on farm business margins with the cost of fertiliser being a prime example. While some input costs are falling, they remain above pre-inflation levels and are likely to remain risky due to linkage to energy markets and instability around the world. Coupled with market stresses and policy uncertainty around burgeoning environment schemes and the budgets that underpin them, long term resilience will be put under pressure.

"With the current level of uncertainty on multiple fronts, markets, businesses, and consumers are now operating in a short-term bubble which poses a risk to long-term resilience and inward investment. Without long-term certainty and the recovery of consumer confidence, challenges are likely to persist for the industry in 2024."

Our agri-market outlook examines the factors likely to affect farm businesses, helping levy payers plan and budget for what may lie ahead. The analysis features detailed market outlooks for each levy-paying sector we cover: beef, lamb, dairy, pork, cereals and oilseeds. It examines trends in farm business inputs and consumer demand.

Key findings

Beef

- Cattle numbers remain finely balanced in 2024 with concern over the long-term direction of the national suckler beef herd – driven by production economics, access to land and agricultural policy

- We will be conducting further in-depth analysis of the beef supply base this year
- Some optimism for some discrete volume demand increases but will be sensitive to consumer finances and competition from other proteins

Lamb

- Slight declines in domestic production, from limited expansion in the lamb crop, and contraction in the breeding flock due to general industry uncertainty
- Pressure from imports with large price disparity with the Southern Hemisphere and increased tariff-free access with Australia. Exports will decline in line with lower domestic production, as the EU remains our key destination
- Falling domestic demand continuing to cause concern as consumers are squeezed by the cost of living. However, key seasonal events, such as Easter and Eid, could see improvements

Pork

- No recovery in the herd or production expected, with competition from chicken causing demand challenges
- Small uplift in trade with potential opportunities in USA and Mexico alongside competitive EU imports
- Fall in feed prices will bring some relief, depending on how much decline in grain prices is seen in finished feed costs
- Escalating straw costs present a risk through 2024

Dairy

- There are green shoots of recovery with commodity prices starting to build, but the approaching spring flush will drive market direction
- Demand continues to be muted, a little growth coming back into retail, but China continues to disappoint in import demand
- Falling fertiliser and feed costs will help, but higher straw costs should be expected through 2024

Cereals and oilseeds

- A massively challenging autumn and winter has disrupted crop areas for harvest 2024, with markets anticipating that the UK will need to be a net importer of wheat
- We will be updating estimates of crop areas for 2024 in mid-March
- While crop prices have returned to pre-inflationary levels, fertiliser costs remain above the 'normal' levels
- Recent falls in commodity prices are a cause for concern for profitability and cash flow. Lower fertiliser prices have helped, but they remain above pre-inflationary levels.

[READ THE 2024 AGRI-MARKET OUTLOOK HERE](#)

Source: www.ahdb.org.uk, 8 February 2024

ARBORICULTURE NEWS: THE INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED FORESTERS (ICF) RESPONDS TO FARMING SCHEME UPDATES



The Institute of Chartered Foresters (ICF) welcomes the recent upgrade to farming schemes announced by the Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP on Thursday 4 January 2024.

As the biggest update to the UK's farming schemes since leaving the European Union, we're pleased to see trees on farms moving up the agenda based on their wider benefits to business and the environment. Around 50 new actions that farmers can get paid for across all types of farm businesses, including actions for agroforestry, were among the improvements to the schemes. The new actions for the creation and maintenance of in field agroforestry systems have been designed to cover a wider range of farmers and land types.

This announcement may lead to more questions than answers from the forestry sector – harnessing the relationships between professional foresters and farmers will be key to success. We believe that there is a need to build transparency and trust, and encourage fairness and pragmatism in relations between the forestry and agricultural sectors. As such, while we support the increased payment rates and extended contracts for woodland creation and maintenance, we would like to see more equitable payment rates for woodland creation, maintenance, and agroforestry schemes. Louise Simpson, Executive Director of the ICF, commented:

“The many benefits of integrated tree and forest systems need to be recognised, be they environmental or commercial, and all of which should comply with the UK Forestry Standard. Whilst we appreciate that agroforestry has the potential to help us meet our planting and environmental targets, it will be of limited benefit if trees are not correctly established and maintained to maximise resilience, biodiversity and soil health.

“As a professional body the ICF is ideally positioned to provide support to governments and sector organisations, and would welcome further engagement in assisting landowners with finding professional advice and support.”

To find out more, visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-2021-to-2024/agricultural-transition-plan-update-january-2024>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-2021-to-2024/technical-annex-the-combined-environmental-land-management-offer#agroforestry>

DETECTING THE EARLY SIGNS OF UNHEALTHY TREES

Trees can encounter health problems or issues that make them unhealthy or potentially hazardous. Therefore, it is important to identify the early signs of tree health decline.

Detecting early signs of tree health issues is crucial for routine tree maintenance. The sooner a problem is identified, diagnosed, and addressed, the less likely it is to cause long-term damage. Here are some key signs so you can promptly take action to protect your property, workforce and the public:

- Check for Dead Tree Branches
- Check for Holes in the Trunk
- Check the Leaves
- Leaning
- Root Girdling

Regular inspections are essential for identifying tree issues before they become severe. An inspection by an arborist, an expert in tree care, can help identify problems early and facilitate easier treatment. If you suspect your tree needs assistance, consult a qualified arborist who can assess the situation and provide suitable solutions. These signs are just a few indicators of tree health problems, so there's no need to panic—seek professional advice to address any concerns. Contact RAMSAK on 01622 815356 or email enquiries@ramsak.co.uk for your nearest arborist fellow member.

**CONTACT RAMSAK NOW FOR ALL
YOUR FORESTRY REQUIREMENTS,
FROM PLANTING TO TRAINING TO
TREE REMOVAL SERVICES**

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Farmers are being reminded that a new, non-regulatory approach to urea fertiliser use will be implemented this season, as part of the government's efforts to tackle air pollution and improve air quality.

In a move designed to reduce ammonia emissions from agriculture, a stewardship scheme developed by an industry consortium to limit the volatilisation losses from applied urea fertilisers will start on 1 April 2024.

England rules outline that:

- Regulation applies to any fertiliser that contains 1% or greater of urea nitrogen
- Untreated solid urea/liquid UAN fertiliser can be applied between 15th January to 31st March each year
- Applications of solid urea/liquid UAN fertiliser from the 1st April will need the inclusion of a urease inhibitor
- Foliar urea applications do not require the inclusion of a urease inhibitor
- Untreated liquid UAN fertiliser can be applied after 1st April if agronomic justification is provided by a FACTS qualified advisor that demonstrates ammonia losses will be at or below the level of including a urease inhibitor.

These rules will be enforced from the spring on 1st April 2024 and then annually every April thereafter.

Sources: www.fwi.co.uk and www.frontierag.co.uk, (edited) January 2024

LITHAN THE ALTERNATIVE

Achema Lithuanian Ammonium Nitrate began arriving to mainland UK in the late 1980's and soon became established as a reliable and consistent source of AN.

Produced by Achema in Jonava near Kaunas in central Lithuania since 1973, Lithan AN 34.4%N is today a recognised and respected brand of Ammonium Nitrate.

Achema is the principle producer of nitrogen fertilisers in Lithuania and in addition to supplying their local markets, the UK mainland and France are important markets for Lithan AN. Whilst Achema are best known in the UK for Lithan AN, they also produce significant volumes of UAN liquid, Calcium Ammonium Nitrate, Sulphur and Urea fertilisers.

The trend towards wider spreading bouts has increased demand for fertilisers of higher density and larger granule size. Lithan AN represents a viable alternative prilled AN capable of spreading up to 36 metres with the correct spreader settings.

Lithan AN spreader settings are commonly available direct from spreader manufacturers or RAMSAK member, Thomas Bell.

In these challenging and uncertain times, more so than ever we need to consider the reliable fertiliser options available to the UK market – Lithan AN spread tested to 36 metres is one such product.

Lithan AN 34.4%N is bagged at the point of production in Lithuania into branded 600kg and 1000kg Lithan bags. The bags then remain under warehouse cover at our UK ports ready for despatch to farm.

More than just AN import. Its trusted, reliable and consistent. Contact RAMSAK for a quote.

Source: www.thomas-bell.co.uk 23 January 2024

RAMSAK FERTILISER

We can source a complete range of high quality fertilisers and ensure that our products are sold and marketed in a responsible way.

Our comprehensive product list includes:
Ammonium Nitrate, Ammonium Sulphate, MOP, DAP, TSP, CAN, Granular Urea, Prilled Urea, Straights, Compounds and Blends.



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TAKING A FRESH LOOK AT FODDER BEET FOR 2024

Plenty of positives for growers from the UK's highest yielding forage crop

With spring firmly on the horizon, it's time to start thinking about planning fodder beet says agronomist Lyndon Harris. Based in Pembrokeshire, West Wales and dividing his time between Agrovista UK and CCF Agri, one of the UK's oldest farmer-owned co-operatives, Lyndon has been working with fodder beet growers for over 11 years.

But, despite its popularity amongst growers who value its reliability for producing high yields and unique position as the highest yielding forage crop, he feels Fodder Beet is often overlooked by farmers.

Lyndon says "Despite strong economic and agronomic arguments for including fodder beet in rotations as a high energy feed for cattle or sheep, it does have a very long harvesting period so many arable or mixed farmers dismiss it on the basis that they can't always follow it with an autumn drilled crop. In truth, 30-40% of existing fodder beet growers harvest a good percentage of their fodder beet early enough in order to still drill winter wheat, so incorporating fodder beet successfully into existing rotations is readily achievable.

"However, I think the main factor holding back fodder beet from a wider grower audience is that, for many grassland farmers with little arable experience, it can be seen as a challenging crop to grow, which is disappointing to hear. If grown well, fodder beet can offer very high yields per hectare - and every single dairy farmer that I deal with tells me that when they include fodder beet in their feeding system, milk yields go up.

"As with all crops, detailed planning is essential to achieve maximum yield potential with specific focus on good seedbed preparation, the right fertiliser and herbicide application advice and, most importantly, selecting the right variety for farming systems.

"As fodder beet seed is small, good seed to soil contact is essential. Establishing a fine seedbed and a favourable tilth on the soil surface ensures good contact is made and will also help increase the effectiveness of pre-emergence herbicides on the newly established crop.

"It's also important to recognise that cold, wet conditions don't phase fodder beet. It thrives in

areas where there is very high rainfall and is capable of growing in much lower soil temperatures than other arable crops, although drilling too early can be problematic in frost prone regions. Soil depth isn't a major factor either, given fodder beet doesn't suffer from soil compaction problems as much as other crops, especially maize.

"On crop nutrition, although fodder beet is not particularly nitrogen hungry, it does require a significant amount of potash sourced from slurry or farmyard manure. A good agronomy tip is to substitute 50% of the potash requirement with agricultural salt. Fodder beet is one of the few crops that is salt tolerant. It absorbs salt very effectively, in the same way other crops would absorb potash, because it was originally grown in Mediterranean countries in soils with very high salt content. On trace elements, the important one for fodder beet is Boron, which can be added to agricultural salt at very little cost. Boron plays a key role in supporting a diverse range of plant functions, including cell wall formation and stability, and is a must for improving potential yields.

"For fodder beet growers, particularly new or first-time growers, good variety selection is critical. First and foremost, decide which variety suits your preferred system whether its graze in situ, lift to feed or - in the case of an arable farm - lift and store to sell. If you're grazing then you need a variety with a lot of top visible above the ground, if you're on heavier soils then a smooth skinned variety with low dirt tare for easier lifting is desirable - and, depending on whether you're lifting earlier or later, good frost tolerance has to be a factor.

For advice on what variety to grow or for a quote for seed, contact RAMSAK on 01622 815356 or email enquiries@ramsak.co.uk

Source: www.farming.co.uk, 24 January 2024

£25,000 PAYMENTS FOR FLOOD SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Defra's £74m grant to help farmers invest in improved slurry infrastructure to tackle water pollution and improve air quality soon closes for applications.

Farmers and growers affected by recent flooding caused by Storm Henk and other heavy rainfall events could be eligible for Flood Recovery Grants of up to £25,000. The funding is provided in exceptional circumstances to help councils and others following severe flooding.

Defra Secretary Steve Barclay said, "45,000 properties are already protected thanks to our flood defences, and I would like to pay tribute to the work of Environment Agency teams, first responders, and others.

"For those who have sadly been affected, our Property Flood Resilience Repair Grant Scheme will soon be open to help residents protect their property in the future, while our Farming Recovery Fund will support farmers who have suffered damage as they work to put food on our tables."

Source: www.hortnews.com (edited) 17 January 2024



The genetic resources behind some of the most important plant traits driving agricultural crop production are being made easier to access by researchers with the development of open-source genomic tools.

The project will focus on seven plant species of high relevance to UK researchers: arabidopsis, barley, oat, oilseed rape, rice, tomato and wheat. The aim is to integrate, analyse and add value to existing plant population DNA sequence data in a user-friendly, browsable genomic context, ultimately opening up opportunities in crop research innovation.

Funded by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) the £1.2 million 'Ensembl Plant Populations' project will be led by the UK-based research organisations NIAB and [EMBL's European Bioinformatics Institute \(EMBL-EBI\)](#), finishing by October 2026.

These new capabilities will be hosted within the already established 'Ensembl Plants' online open-source web platform, used by crop researchers around the world. The new integrated pipeline will empower users to conduct statistically rigorous analyses on genetically diverse biological populations. It also enables direct bioinformatic exploration of resulting genetic regions through enhanced 'Ensembl Plants' genomic and variant data resources and tools.

Dr Sarah Dyer, overall project lead at EMBL-EBI, highlights that the United Kingdom has unique strengths in the realms of plant genomics, germplasm resources, and genetic trait dissection. "However, bridging the gap between these fields has historically presented challenges, demanding substantial technical expertise from researchers. 'Ensembl Plant Populations' aims to provide a cohesive platform for integrated genetic and genomic analyses. Essentially, this funding will enable a significant leap forward in our ability to explore the genetic basis of important plant traits."

[Dr James Cockram](#), principal investigator at NIAB, explains that 'Ensembl Plant Populations' will help lower the barriers to dissecting the genetic and genomic features that underpin crop traits, and encourage the use of the wealth of germplasm and DNA resources available to plant researchers.

"By providing a unified platform for research and analysis, 'Ensembl Plant Populations' promises to empower scientists across the UK and beyond with tools and resources that will help accelerate innovation in plant genomics. The project exemplifies our collective efforts to advance agricultural and biological sciences, ultimately contributing to sustainable agriculture and food security," finishes Dr Cockram.

Source: www.niab.com, 2 February 2024

NFU AND NFU SCOTLAND REJECT MOVE TO DIGITAL GRAIN PASSPORTS

The NFU and NFU Scotland say they remain unconvinced that moving to digital grain passports will be better than the current paper system.

The news follows an AHDB consultation with the industry over the introduction of a digital passport for combinable crops, which closed for responses on 2 February.

Digitising paper passports to improve food and feed safety data communication, through supply chains, has been discussed for more than a decade.

The NFU and NFU Scotland went out to its membership to gather feedback on the proposal, online and through their regional and national boards.

Based on the business case put forward by AHDB's Digital Grain Passport Leadership Group, the NFU said it was "not in a position to support progressing the digital grain passport in its current format".

NFU Scotland added that its members determined that three of the six key criteria - accessibility, efficiency and proportionate costs versus benefits - had not been met.

However, criteria centred around being fit for purpose, data ownership and data usage had been met.

AHDB's business case for adoption said that switching to a single, industry-wide digital passport would improve data integrity and security, provide scope for real-time assurance checks and reduce costs across the supply chain.

The move was also expected to increase confidence and credibility to growers, buyers' customers, stakeholders and regulators, the organisation said.

But the NFU said: "A critical benefit of a digital passport for our members is the transparency and efficiency that immediate feedback of sample data at intake would deliver for their farm business.

"This must be guaranteed, not simply an 'expectation' as stated in the business case."

NFU Scotland said that, broadly, its members remained unsupportive of the introduction of digital grain passports.

The union added that the current paper-based system "seems to work well for farmers and merchants because it is simple and cost effective."

AHDB's Leadership Group said it would collate and analyse the consultation's feedback, with a response expected in March.

Source: www.farminguk.com, (edited), 7 February 2024



In a recent opinion piece written for the Fresh Produce Consortium, Oli Pascall, managing director of Clock House Farm warned that the soft fruit sector is in crisis, facing “an unprecedented and complex set of challenges, which are having a profound impact on growers.”

He warned that retailers were still not accepting that growers had seen production costs rise by as much as 22 per cent, and that without meaningful price rises, growers would scale back production.

Oli suggested, “The result will be a reliance on imported goods and a failure for consumers to access the high-quality British produce, which is grown to some of the highest standards of production in the world. It is also a step backward in terms of reducing the carbon footprint of the nation’s shopping basket and encouraging the population to adopt a healthier diet.”

Despite many warm words from last year’s UK Farm to Fork Summit, there had been little real action, while other developments such as increasing the pay rates for workers on the SAWS scheme in line with the minimum wage without consultation “was a real blow.”

He praised the enthusiasm of young fruit growers, but also stressed that it is not sustainable for businesses to remain in permanent survival mode. “The UK general public needs to accept that if we as growers invest in supplying better quality fruit that has been produced in line with the journey towards net zero, then this should reflect a higher price tag,” Oli added. “Isn’t it time we as a nation woke up to the fact that it makes sense to pay more for healthy, sustainably produced food, with the retailers taking responsibility for ensuring any increased price delivers a fairer deal to the growers?”

Source: www.hortnews.com, 3 January 2024

INDUSTRY REELING AFTER CHANGES TO BORDER CHECK CLASSIFICATIONS

The last few weeks have seen growers, packers and processors expressing their concerns about the imminent border inspection regime. However, last week they were dismayed when the Government Plant Health Portal for the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM) suddenly reclassified a substantial volume of EU fresh produce as medium risk, with the

implementation date given as 31 October 2024.

The Fresh Produce Consortium (FPC) said, ‘Despite the lack of an official public statement, FPC believes the implications of this decision are profound.’ CEO Nigel Jenney added, “This verdict delivers a severe blow to the industry and will have widespread ramifications.”

Exporters in the EU will have to complete Phytosanitary Certificates (a sort of health certificate), which will be signed by a health official. Those certificates must then be lodged by the importer on DEFRA’s Import of Products Animals, Food and Feed System (IPAFFS) to notify the enforcement authorities in the UK.

Even if produce is not diverted to a Border Control Post for inspection, a Common User Charge will be levied on each consignment. Although the Government estimates this charge to be between £20 and £43, details have not been released. As the majority of fresh produce is transported in mixed ‘groupage’ loads, the FPC believes the system could cost the industry £200 million a year.

“The system is not fit for purpose,” Nigel Jenney told ITV News. “I doubt there are enough officials in the EU to generate the volume of Phytosanitary Certificates which are going to be required.”

In a further development, some of the information was then removed from the Government website. “We are seeking urgent clarity,” added Jenney. “However, the October date has now removed from Defra’s website, which simply causes further confusion.

“The cost implication is basically a combination of different fees that the industry will have to pay to the UK government to manage the import process and subsequent inspections. There’s a much more effective way of actually managing the controls, which are absolutely appropriate, and that allow controls at the point of destination. These have already been approved by the UK government.”

Elsewhere, Steve Cock, director at customs broker The Customs House Ltd, commented, “The announcement by Defra, that it will require Phytosanitary Certificates for a significant proportion of the fruit and veg arriving from the EU, is utter madness. Whilst this will not add significantly to the costs associated with moving a lorryload of a single product to a supermarket, it will be highly inflationary for businesses that move smaller often mixed consignments.”

A government spokesperson said, “We are committed to delivering the most advanced border in the world. The Border Target Operating Model is key to delivering this, protecting the UK’s biosecurity. We have introduced these import controls to support businesses and ensure the efficient trade of fruit and vegetables is maintained between the EU and Great Britain.

“We are taking a phased approach – including temporarily moving all medium risk goods from EU, such as fruit and vegetables, to low risk to ensure business do not face any unnecessary burdens. We will continue to work closely with businesses across the UK as the controls are implemented.”

Source: www.hortnews.com, 31 January 2024

FORAGE

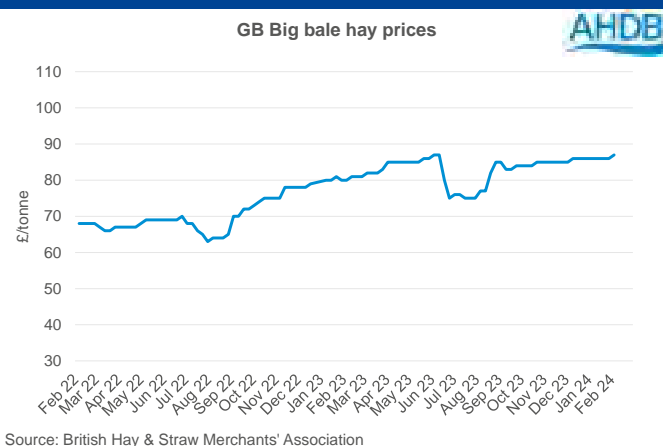
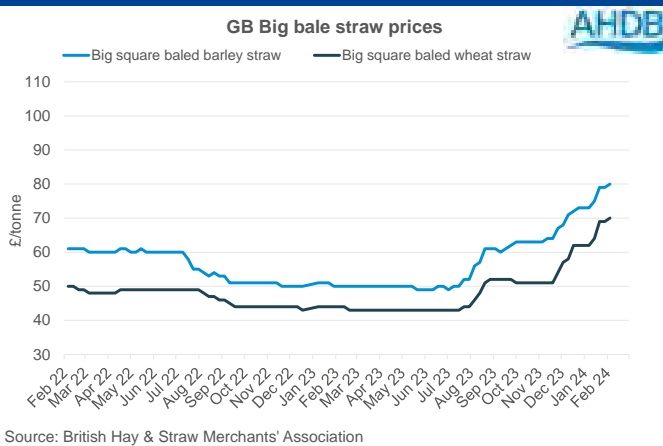


HAY AND STRAW PRICES

These figures, from the British Hay and Straw Merchants' Association for Great Britain show average merchant buying prices and are available on a monthly and weekly basis. The downloadable Excel file also shows weekly prices for the key regions across GB. Prices include big bale hay and big square baled barley and wheat straw.

GB weekly hay and straw prices				
£/tonne (ex-farm)	04/02/2024	28/01/2024	Weekly change	06/02/2023
Big bale hay	87	85	2	83
Big square baled barley straw	80	79	1	76
Big square baled wheat straw	70	69	1	61

Source: British Hay & Straw Merchants' Association



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LIVESTOCK, POULTRY & DAIRY NEWS

DAIRY FARM SWITCHES TO GRAZING FODDER BEET AS HIGH-QUALITY WINTER FEED

Grazing fodder beet as a winter crop for beef and dairy cattle is reducing wintering costs at a Pembrokeshire farm.

The James family grow 10ha for wintering dairy beef stores produced by their dairy herd at Stackpole Home Farm, but are scaling that up to 45ha to provide feed for lactating and dry cows.

Cows are currently wintered on deferred grazing or kale with baled silage but switching to fodder beet will provide a cheaper, higher quality source of feed.

During a recent Farming Connect open day, George James said growing kale was getting trickier because of periods of prolonged drought following drilling in late May or early June.

“The earlier drilling dates for fodder beet give it an advantage, and we can comfortably get 20 tonne dry matter (tDM)/ha from it so it is by far the highest yielding winter grazing crop,” he said.

At around seven pence per kilogramme of DM, it works out at around half the cost of silage therefore the new system will reduce winter feed costs, plug feed gaps in late and early lactation, and capitalise on the farm’s free-draining sandy soils.

But transitioning the herd onto the crop and correctly allocating it will be crucial to animal health and performance.

During the open day, fodder beet expert Dr Jim Gibbs, a research scientist in ruminant nutrition at Lincoln University, New Zealand, and Marc Jones, an independent grass and forage consultant, shared advice on how to get that right and how to avoid common pitfalls.

Fodder beet has a high sugar and water content so sufficient time must be given for feed intakes to adjust.

Dr Gibbs warned that dairy cows are the livestock class most susceptible to transition acidosis due to gorging, a situation which occurs if too much fodder beet is allocated too early in the transition process.

To prevent this, he advised feeding low amounts of fodder beet initially, building up intakes slowly, and providing supplementary feed to keep the cow’s rumen fully fed.

Feeding grass or silage as the supplement initially is advisable as if less palatable feed like straw is offered, cattle won’t eat the quantities they need to maintain condition and performance.

A marker for whether cattle have properly transitioned is if they are leaving beet behind – Dr Gibbs suggested this should be around 5-10% a day.

“There is no risk of acidosis after full transition providing intakes are adequate,” he pointed out.

A lactating cow needs 15-18kg DM in total therefore

5-6kg DM of fodder beet plus grass or silage should be the target for lactation feeding as the crop should not make up more than a third of their feed.

“Start by offering them 1kg DM/day and, once all the animals are eating the bulb, move up 1kg DM/day every two days,” said Dr Gibbs. He recommended transitioning until target intakes are met.

For dry stock weighing 500kg and for in-calf heifers, the daily feed requirement is 14kg DM – as fodder beet can make up 80% of their diet, they can be allocated 11-12kg DM of fodder beet and 2kg DM roughage once they have transitioned.

Build them up to this in stages, 1-2kg DM at day one, increasing 1kg DM every other day, with 7-8kg of supplement until day seven, gradually dropping supplement to 2kg at 14 days when they have fully transitioned.

If feeding 2kg of supplement, careful consideration needs to be given as to how the supplement will be fed to enable all animals to access it; if feeding bales in ring feeders, increasing to 3-4kg is needed due to the restricted feed space.

For youngstock aged from six months, Dr Gibbs recommended starting with a daily intake of 0.5 kg DM a head of fodder beet, increasing this by 0.5kg every other day, fed with 3-5kg of grass or silage.

At day 14 that mix should be 5-6kg of fodder beet and 1-2kg of grass or silage.

Marc Jones, who shared details of how he operates his system of growing and feeding fodder beet on his farm at Trefnant Hall, Berriew, said matching fodder beet varieties to class of stock is important.

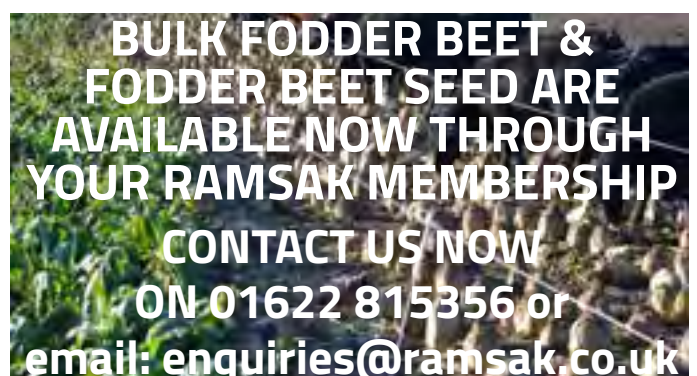
He said Lactimo and Geronimo are excellent grazing varieties because they have a high proportion of leaf and more of the bulb sits out of the ground, which allows for a high level of utilisation.

A lower DM variety such as Brigadier is more palatable and will achieve better utilisation in smaller calves weighing around 200kg, he added.

Delana Davies, cross sector manager at Farming Connect, who facilitated the event, said growing fodder beet provides real opportunities for reducing winter feeding costs in all classes of stock.

“Added to this there are savings to be made on housing and straw requirements plus reduced slurry and manure production and spreading issues, making growing the crop a worthwhile consideration for many dairy, beef and sheep farmers.”

Source: www.farminguk.com, 6 February 2024



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BLUETONGUE VIRUS — WHAT IS THE LATEST SITUATION?

Defra has announced that we are in a seasonally vector low period when midge activity is much lower, leading to some changes to disease control measures for the strain of bluetongue virus (BTV) currently being found in northern Europe and the UK.

However, with lambing and spring calving well underway, it is important to look out for signs of BTV and other viruses such as Schmallenberg and bovine viral diarrhoea (BVD), which can cause abortions and birth defects.

BTV-3 is the new strain of bluetongue currently being found in northern Europe and the UK and is mainly transmitted via biting midge, affecting cattle, goats, sheep, deer and camelids such as llamas.

“The current weather conditions and time of year mean that Culicoides – the type of midge able to spread viruses such as BTV-3 – are highly unlikely to transmit the virus to livestock”, explains Dr Marion England, Institute Fellow in Vector Ecology at The Pirbright Institute.

“Under these conditions, midges previously infected with BTV-3 are currently highly unlikely to transmit the virus.

“The most active period for midges is during the warmer months in spring, summer and autumn, and midges can become newly infected with bluetongue virus and spread disease when the weather is above 12°C for a sustained period.

“Midges infected in late autumn 2023 are now not likely to be a risk for spreading disease because they usually die off during winter, and are not actively biting when temperatures are below 4°C”, adds Dr England.

Because of the reduced risk of transmission between midges and animals, Defra has taken the decision not to cull infected animals where test results indicate older infection and the presence of BTV-3 antibodies.

Infected animals may still be restricted at their current locations and other disease mitigation measures taken as appropriate.

The reduced risk from midges means that some restrictions on movements of live animals from the temporary control zones (TCZ) can now be eased if they meet certain conditions, including testing negative in a pre-movement test; a licence is required.

Some restrictions on movements of animals into and within the TCZ have also been eased.

For the latest update on BTV-3 and restrictions please visit the Ruminant Health and Welfare bluetongue hub that contains the most up to date information and signposts all of Defra and APHA's latest updates: ruminanthw.org.uk/bluetongue-virus.

Surveillance of susceptible animals and epidemiological assessments within the TCZ will continue and Defra will keep the situation under

review.

The advice from Ruminant Health and Welfare remains three-fold: farmers need to be aware, take action to report any signs, and remain vigilant.

Farmers can call the dedicated bluetongue hotline (024 7771 0386) to get advice or ask questions linked to the current situation.

In the UK, bluetongue, including BTV-3, is a notifiable disease, so anyone suspecting the disease must take action and [report it](#) to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).

Source: www.ahdb.org.uk, 7 February 2024

AHDB BLUETONGUE VIRUS — TECHNICAL WEBINAR (5)



Wednesday, 21 February 2024, 6:00pm-7:30pm

[CLICK HERE FOR INFORMATION AND TO BOOK](#)

Join the AHDB webinar to hear from a panel of experts who will provide an update on bluetongue and the current BTV-3 strain that has been confirmed in cases in cows and sheep in Kent and Norfolk.

This event forms part of a series of webinars that we are running fortnightly on Wednesdays at 6pm to provide live updates and presentations from industry experts.

The webinars offer vet practitioners and other stakeholders valuable technical information about BTV-3 that will help answer farmers' questions.

Each webinar will start with a BTV update followed by a detailed briefing on a specific topic. We are collecting feedback on what is of interest, this will inform our programme.

There will be an opportunity to ask questions of the speakers.

If you are unable to attend the webinar, please still register for it and you will be sent a recording following the event.

[Find out more about bluetongue virus on our website](#) or visit ruminanthw.org.uk for advice and support.

If you have concerns or questions, contact the bluetongue virus helpline on: 0247 771 0386

[Sign up to receive the latest information from AHDB](#)

Source: www.ahdb.org.uk, 7 February 2024

Launch of New Livestock Website

Cumbria based printers and digital marketing experts, H&H Reeds, are proud to announce the launch of a new website for the national Livestock Auctioneers Association (LAA) that provides a major new service to the national livestock industry.

As part of the H&H Group which includes the UK's leading Borderway Mart centres, H&H Reeds has developed a unique understanding of the agricultural sector, and the new LAA website is a perfect example of their ability to bring the latest technology together with design and imagery that fully engages with the LAA's membership and customer base.

The Livestock Auctioneers Association Limited (LAA) is the national representative organisation for livestock markets & auctioneers' in England & Wales who provide vital market hubs for livestock farmers, breeders and meat suppliers to sell and buy cattle and sheep across the UK.

The new website has been designed to provide member organisations with clear and easy access to essential best practice and compliance information, and the LAA's support and guidance in the development of a strong and growing industry.

Even more importantly, it also includes a major new independent platform for the monitoring and reporting of market data and prices across the UK, a critical service for auctioneers, farmers and buyers

for which the LAA has taken responsibility from the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB).

The LAA market platform will provide consumers with even greater access to timely information and regularly updated prices, helping the industry to benchmark against the latest market trends, and the technological expertise behind the platform is fundamental to the success of the new website, says LAA Development Officer Zanna Dennis.

Visit the Livestock Auctioneers Association website at: <https://laa.co.uk/>

Source: www.farming.co.uk, 11 January 2024



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FUEL PRICE OVERVIEW

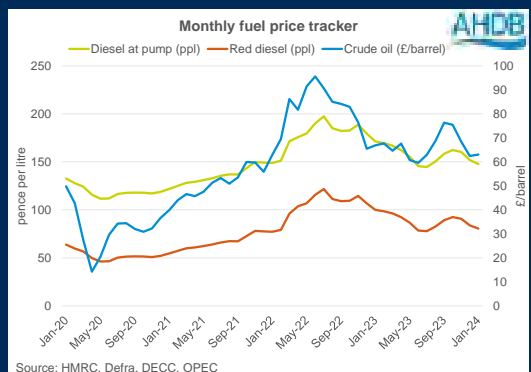
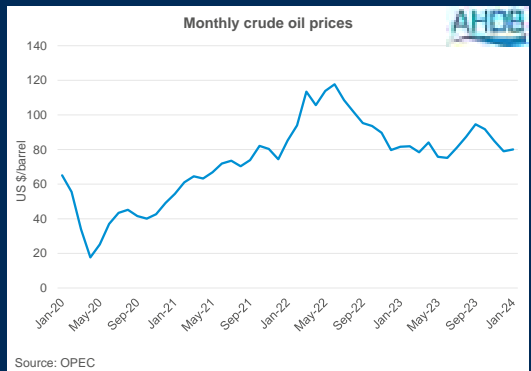
Monthly

These figures give an overview of the fuel markets, focusing on crude oil and diesel prices on both a monthly and annual basis.

Month	ICE price (£/barrel)	ICE price (\$/barrel)	UK red diesel (ppl)	UK diesel (ppl)
Jan-24	80.88	93.93	50.42	41.83
Dec-23	79.02	92.48	50.79	41.83
Monthly change	1.86	1.45	-0.37	0
% change	2.35	1.57	-0.73%	0%
Jan-23	81.82	95.98	50.90	41.27
Year-on-year change	-0.94	-2.05	-0.14	-0.44
% change	-1.15%	-2.14%	-0.27%	-1.07%

Source: Refinitiv, US DOE, OPEC, AHDB

*Red diesel duty = 11.14ppl from April 2011 to March 2022, 10.18 from April 2022



Visit the OPEC for more on crude prices
 Figures Courtesy of: www.ahdb.org.uk



FUEL NEWS

What price oil? 2023 In review - In association with The Oil Market Journal

With data supplied by The Oil Market Journal, the markers highlight some of the key events throughout the year that have impacted on the pricing. We hope it provides an interesting look back over a year which, once again, presented unforeseen and unpredictable challenges.

At the time of going to press, in mid-December, oil prices have had an “up and down” year as supply and demand pulled prices in either direction. It was another volatile year with a year-to-date price range on ICE Gasoil of 636/t. – 1,000/t. This size of range has become the norm post-COVID, although it is much lower than 2022’s annual range of 836.75/t, and is lower than 2020’s range of 418.75/t. Despite being lower than recent years, the range is much higher than 2019’s \$153/t. and 2018’s \$250/t.

Prices were particularly volatile at the start of the year, as news of China reopening and the impending ban on Russian diesel led to sharp rises. Prices quickly fell back, however, as a wave of diesel entered the ARA storage hub and macroeconomics began to stoke demand fears (a theme that would persist through 2023).

Production cuts and unplanned outages

With an abundance of diesel stocks amidst some of the most aggressive monetary policy tightening not seen since the 1980s, oil prices fell during Q1 and Q2. The weakening of global oil markets led the OPEC+ cartel to cut production by 2 million barrels per day. As prices remained weak several OPEC+ countries, led by Saudi Arabia, would voluntarily cut production further. Eventually, Saudi Arabia agreed to voluntarily cut production, until the end of the first quarter of 2024, by 1 million barrels per day.

Production cuts began to bite, and European refineries were hit with unplanned outages in the summer months. As a result, oil prices began moving higher, with ICE Gasoil pushing above \$1,000/t. and ICE Brent Crude peaking at \$95.55/b. ARA diesel inventories began falling below long-term averages as the reality of leaving Russian diesel behind hit markets.

Weakening demand

Early October saw the tight supply side overtaken by fears over weakening demand as macroeconomic troubles hit market sentiment. “Higher for longer” interest rates amidst strong US economic data led to a surge of US treasury yields as the 10-year and 30-year both hit 5%. Prices continued to fall, despite markets beginning to price in looser monetary policy in 2024 as demand growth concerns persisted. US crude oil production also reached all-time highs in another blow to OPEC.

With prices falling, markets began to speculate on more OPEC cuts. More voluntary cuts were announced amidst OPEC infighting, but markets shook these cuts off as they believed they would not materialise.

Source: www.fueloilnews.co.uk (edited) 19 January 2024

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PLANT & MACHINERY NEWS



NEW VARIABLE CHAMBER BALER WITH FILM BINDING

The Fendt Rotana 160 V Combi baler-wrapper is now available with film binding and a variety of features which enable it to produce 30 more bales a day and save up to three metres of film per bale

The new model also features a quick-change system for film and net rolls as well as a 'Speed' tailgate function. Fendt's Ed Dennett explains:

"Film binding is already available for the fixed-chamber, baler-wrapper combi machines. To offer variable chamber baler operators the same advantages, this technology has been transferred to variable chamber models of the Rotana."

Using only film, the Rotana 160 V Combi reduces the air between the bale and the film. This reduces feed losses caused by mould formation and also protects the bale in freezing temperatures.

"Two gathering arms, and a shaft binding system specially developed for the variable presses, guide the binding material into the baler chamber. The shaft formation also protects the film from damage. An electro-magnetic brake controls the pre-stretching of the net or film according to the binder and its roll diameter," says Mr Dennett.

Only one waste material is created with film binding and film is typically much less contaminated and, therefore, easier to recycle. Usage is also reduced compared to net and Fendt's new film binding system can save up to three metres of film per bale.

The arrangement of the rolls on a magazine enables a quick change between film and net. This allows operators to quickly switch from silage to hay or straw bales and there is a choice between Eco Load and Comfort Load systems.

"Machines with Eco Load have a simple loading chute that requires a little more muscle power. With Comfort Load, the operator places the roll in a padded carriage, lifts it and guides it up to the quick-change system. A further benefit is that rolls can be loaded from the ground," says Mr Dennett.

An intelligent lever system makes it possible to switch between the three ready-to-tie rollers in a few simple steps. In addition, the easy operation and padded contact surfaces prevent damage to the net or film.

The new model benefits from a faster 'Speed' tailgate capable of baling up to thirty more bales per day than the previous Rotana. Folding, self-steering, pick-up wheels can also be specified on all Fendt Rotana Xtra and Combi machines. To make reversing the baler easier the pick-up wheels can be locked with a pin, an addition that will help operators baling on steep slopes.

For those looking to maximise forage quality, Fendt's automated dry mass control will be a useful feature. Operators can select how much dry matter a bale should contain before the baling process. Two synchronously operating sensors in the bale chamber record the moisture and mass of the bales. From this, the software calculates the dry matter content during the baling process.

www.agrimachinerynews.com, 31 January 2024



'Record breaking' visitor numbers at LAMMA 2024

The UK's premier agricultural event LAMMA reached a milestone in its 42-year history with record-breaking visitor numbers and an impressive 95 new exhibitors.

This year's show – held at Birmingham NEC on January 17 and 18 – solidified its status as the go-to event for agricultural machinery enthusiasts. More than 40,000 visitors attended to see a host of new products being launched to the UK market alongside existing favourites.

The international presence at this year's show was also notable, and the LAMMA team hosted the AGM for EURASCO, the European Federation of Agricultural Exhibitions and Show Organisers. The meeting brought together 24 members from across Europe, who shared valuable insights and discussed best practices for attracting visitors, exhibitors, and press to events.

The Careers Zone was a new feature this year launched by Jobs in Agriculture. Through its own seminar programme and input from training and employment specialists, the Zone highlighted the wealth of opportunities across the land-based sector and showcased invaluable resources to those looking to start or evolve their career.

For LAMMA Event Director Sarah Whittaker-Smith and the rest of the organising team the highlight of this year's show was the range and breadth of the exhibitors. "The big-name manufacturers, niche offerings from smaller businesses and the superb line up in the LAMMA Live schedule really hit the spot with visitors. Agricultural businesses are keen to embrace new technology as they move into a new way of farming and manufacturers are stepping up their offers to help them meet the challenges.

"We look forward to building on this success next year when we return to the NEC for LAMMA 2025 on 15th and 16th January."

www.farming.co.uk, 23 January 2024



CRAWFORDS SPECIAL OFFERS:



Cover All Your Bases – Sprayer Winter Check and FREE NSTS Test £850+VAT

Prepare your sprayer for the winter months and beyond with our all-inclusive service package for only £850 + VAT. Say goodbye to downtime and hello to seamless operations by ensuring your machine is primed and ready to go when the weather permits.

Our Winter Check goes beyond the basics, encompassing a thorough examination of calibrations and application accuracy. By identifying and rectifying any issues during this process, you can uncover cost-saving opportunities and ensure your machine operates at peak efficiency.

But that's not all – included in this package is a FREE NSTS (National Sprayer Testing Scheme) test. This comprehensive testing service ensures your pesticide application equipment complies with the Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012, providing you with both compliance and peace of mind.

T's & C's: Offer ends 31/03/2024. If this offer is carried out on farm a mileage/travel cost will be applied.

Get Your Spreader Ready – Winter Check and FREE Tray Test £600 + VAT

Ensure your spreader is winter-ready with our comprehensive Winter Check and FREE Tray Test offer for only £600 + VAT. Don't let downtime delay your operations—get your machine prepped and primed to seize every weather window for work.

Our Winter Check includes a thorough examination of your spreader's calibrations and application accuracy. Identifying and addressing any issues during this process can lead to significant cost savings by ensuring your machine operates efficiently.

With our FREE Tray Test included in this package, you can rest assured that your spreader is not only winter-proofed but also calibrated to deliver precise and accurate application, maximising its effectiveness.

Don't miss out on valuable work opportunities due to equipment downtime or inefficiencies. Schedule your Winter Check and FREE Tray Test today to keep your spreader running smoothly and ready for action when you need it most.

T's & C's: Offer ends 31/03/2024. If this offer is carried out on farm a mileage/travel cost will be applied.

Contact RAMSAK today to schedule your appointment!

Source: www.rwcrawford.co.uk

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Valid until: 31st March 2024

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Are you ready for spring cultivations and drilling?

Free MXP Beanie Hat or MXP Water Bottle
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SKELTON GROUP A leading family business for Plant Hire equipment

Here at the Skelton Group we have been providing Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Essex, London and Northern Europe with state of the art plant, machinery and equipment for hire in the agricultural, construction and domestic markets for over 30 years. We pride ourselves on our top quality customer service and believe that our consistent investment in both our company and client requirements are paramount to maintaining our success year after year.

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Leading brands such as Atlas Copco, Bobcat, Bomag, Caterpillar, Hitachi, JCB, John Deere, Kubota, Manitou, Mecacac, Takeuchi and Thwaites are available with either a CITB registered and trained operator or as a self-drive hire. Our service engineers are also trained and qualified to a high standard, as are all of our staff within the Skelton Group, due to ongoing training programmes and constantly evolving I.T. systems. This combination assists our dedicated office team in running a smooth and knowledgeable operation.

Skelton Plant Hire consistently reinvests in new plant, vehicles and cutting edge technology to keep us at the forefront of this fast moving and

responsive business. Our transport and service vehicles are Euro 5 and 6 compliant and in recent years our investment has focused on lower emitting plant and machinery. All machines are fitted with security devices and recently we have invested in GPS satellite technology to aid the security and servicing of the machines.

OUR RANGE INCLUDES:

- Excavators
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- Telehandlers
- Rollers
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- Fuels Bowers
- Small Tools
- Cabins
- Trailers
- Snow Ploughs
- Lighting Platforms

Contact RAMSAK to find out more and hire today on enquiries@ramsak.co.uk or 01622 815356

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VERSATILE EQUIPMENT New areas for Versatile

RAMSAK member, Versatile Equipment Ltd, a leading dealer of Bobcat compact equipment, proudly announces its expansion into Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire & Northamptonshire, and replaces RTC Plant as the official Bobcat dealer for these areas, further solidifying its commitment to serving the construction, utilities, landscaping, and agriculture industries in the United Kingdom.

With a successful track record of providing top-quality Bobcat compact equipment across London, Kent, Surrey, West Sussex, East Sussex, Essex, Hertfordshire & Suffolk, Versatile Equipment are excited to bring its own expertise, extensive product line, and aftersales service to customers in these new territories, strategic expansion allows the company to reach new

markets, meet growing demand, and better serve professionals and businesses in the region.

The decision to expand into Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire & Northamptonshire This aligns with Versatile Equipment’s mission to deliver exceptional customer service and innovative solutions to meet the evolving needs of its clients. The company’s dedication to providing reliable, high-performance Bobcat compact equipment coupled with an unrivaled aftersales service has earned them a strong reputation in the industry.

“We are thrilled to announce the expansion of our operations into Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire & Northamptonshire” said Barry Gass, Sales Director at Versatile Equipment. “This move is a testament to our commitment to providing the best compact equipment solutions to our customers. We look forward to building new relationships and continuing to exceed the expectations of our clients.”

As part of the expansion, Versatile Equipment will offer a comprehensive range of Bobcat compact equipment Sales, Rental, Parts, and services, including skid-steer loaders, compact track loaders, mini-excavators, compact tractors and telehandlers. These machines are renowned for their durability, versatility, and advanced technology, making them indispensable tools for various applications across different sectors.

For a quote contact RAMSAK via enquiries@ramsak.co.uk or telephone 01622 815356

EUROPLANT

RENTALS

Units 1-3 Leys Ind. Park, Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood TN11 2 6PX

OPERATED & SELF DRIVE HIRE

- Mini Excavators 0.8–3 Tonnes
- Mid Excavators 6–9T Tonnes
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- Dumpers 1–9 Tonnes
- Telescopic Handlers 4m–21m
- Rollers 80ADH, 100ADH, 120ADH
- Ramsak Remote Control Trench Compactors
- Hydraulic Breakers, Augers & Attachments
- Bunded Fuel Bowsers, Static & Wheeled
- Generators
- Transport
- 26 Tonne Beaver Tail
- 32 Tonne Beaver Tail

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For a quote or to book call RAMSAK on

01622 815356

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MACHINERY LIST FOR SALE & WANTED

ADVERTISING COSTS

All adverts for used machinery/equipment listed for sale and wanted are subject to an admin fee of £20 for 2 months in the newsletter, which includes an initial 2 weekly circular emails and a Facebook post. For items over £500, commission is applied at 1.5% (up to a maximum of £150) on the sale of your listing via RAMSAK.

Please ensure you advise us if you have sold/purchased an item through us (or elsewhere) to help avoid outdated adverts, saving us all time and charges being made.



£18,000 +VAT NEW!

KOMATSU PC130 TRACKED EXCAVATOR

2010, 8,100 hours, One owner, full service history c/w hydraulic quick hitch, 2 buckets, cab guards

Delivery in the South can be arranged at cost

Location: TN27 2/24



£12,500 ono NEW!

MINI COUNTRYMAN COOPER SD ALL4 (4WD) Auto

Park Lane Special Edition, 2015, 2 owners, 70,500m, MOT Feb 25. FSH. Very high spec. inc. a/c, nav, full leather and rare panoramic sunroof. Excellent condition. Metallic grey/dark red. Black leather.

Location: ME17 2/24



£5,000 REDUCED!

RANGE ROVER SPORT

- 2010
- 3 litre
- 113,500 miles
- MOT until Aug '23

Serviced and MOT'd in August and not used since

1/24



£300 +VAT NEW!

BALE SPIKES

Bale spikes with euro brackets

Location: CT4 2/24



£500 +VAT NEW!

DISCS

Set of Parmeter fold up discs

Location: CT4 2/24



£4,500 +VAT NEW!

BUNNINGS TRAILER

Bunnings trailer (low ride) with dolly - 32' long

Location: CT4 2/24



£500 +VAT NEW!

BALE SQUEEZER

Set of McHale bale squeezers with euro brackets

Location: CT4 2/24

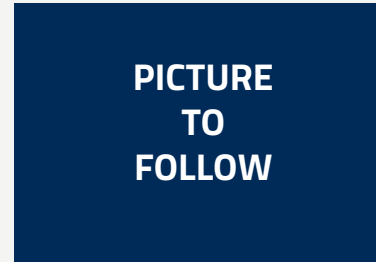


£3,500 +VAT NEW!

QUICKIE LOADER

Quickie 980 loader with JD brackets to fit 6 & 6R series tractors

Location: CT4 2/24



£750 +VAT NEW!

MOWER

Tarrup mower (no skirt but in good working condition)

Location: CT4 2/24



OFFERS NEW!

MOBILE HOMES

Two vans getting to end of useful life, but may be useful to someone. Small contribution offers invited to RAMSAK for admin costs in exchange for removal.

Location: TN11 2/24

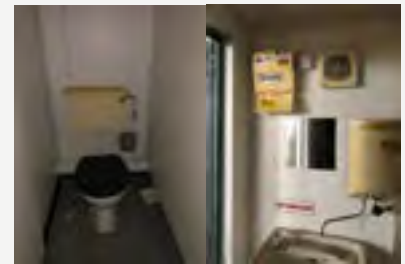


£1,000 NEW!

PORTACABIN

Buyer to collect. Sound, just one small leak in roof and a rotten patch on base of door. More photos available.

Location: RH19 2/24



£3,500 ono NEW!

TOILET BLOCK

Tatty but sound. Buyer to collect. Three cubicle toilets, a shower and a block of 2 urinals. Plus sinks etc.

Location RH19 2/24



£4,000 NEW!

SHEEP RACE

IAE Sheep race with 29-30 separate gates and parts to the race + pins to match. Overall in very good condition and ready to collect. one or two gates have lost the bit where the pin goes in but replacements can easily be welded back on. I am £4,000 will include a footbath. More photos available.

Location: TN12 2/24



£4,500 +VAT

QUAD

2021 Honda Quad ATV TX420 FM1 petrol 4wd auto gears Datatag registered.

Location: TN3 1/24



£1,600 +VAT

SNOW PLOUGH

S

Location: DA3 10/23



£2,000

DARI-KOOL BULK TANK,
5000 litre, automatic wash,
regularly maintained.

Location: BN8 1/24



£11,995 +VAT

BATWING MOWER
Ransomes HR6010
Batwing Mower Year
2015 736 Hrs. 127"
cut.
More photos available.

Location: TN19 1/24



£OFFERS

PetSafe Stubborn Dog In

PetSafe Stubborn Dog IN
GROUND INVISIBLE FENCE
& Collar Radio Receiver and
Extra Wire & Flags (300m total)
NEW/UNUSED

Location: ME17 2/24

ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR SALE - PHOTOS AND LOCATION AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

- 9T FEED HOPPER. Very good condition Located BN8 (1/24) £2,500
- Indian Sandstone Patio Slabs (Grey) 600x900 (2/24) £19.99 per m2
- 3 sets aluminium cavalletis (horse jumps) unused (1/24) £295
- Cotswold tank wash auto cleaning system. (1/24) £500
- POULTRY PANELS 80 to 100 panels for poultry wired up and ready for construction. Located TN27.
- 8 Black Mild Steel Flat Bars - 40mm x 5mm x 2555mm. Weight approx 4kg each. Un-used. Left over from a project. Cost £120 but any sensible offers considered. (2/24) Offers
- MOUNTED SPRAYER Blanchard 800 litre tractor mounted sprayer. Excellent condition. Located TN19. (1/24) £995 +VAT
- PHOTOCOPIER Canon Image Runner Advance. Very low usage. £250
- Heavy duty extra long 1.5M PALLET FORKS c/w jcb telehandler fittings(1/24) £500 +VAT
- Road barriers (1/24) £10 each +VAT
- Reclaimed Kent Peg Tiles, Orange tinge (1/24) £1 each
- Block Paving 300 x 150 Light Grey (new) (1/24) £37.80 per m2 + VAT
- 1100 litre used WHEELIE BINS excellent condition (1/24) £150 each

A RAMSAK member has the following available surplus to requirements in TN27 following a build:

OAK & TIMBER & VARIOUS BUILDING MATERIALS AVAILABLE

- Lots of new Oak beams.
- Lots of old Oak beams.
- Various sizes of soft wood timber.
- Large pack of wood wool insulation.
- Some Celotex.
- Underfloor heating pipe.
- Misc drainage connections (man holes, adaptors).
- Large amount of helicoil fixings.



WANTED

We have members looking for the following items. Please contact us if you have anything available, with information, price and photograph to: lynsey@ramsak.co.uk

- Laddingford [Newman] engineering single leg subsoiler with PTO drive. Do you have one lying around? Call us!
- Portacabins/Caravans

FOR SALE - SECOND HAND PRESSURE WASHERS

[Karcher PC 100/M1](#)

£718.80 inc. VAT

SECOND HAND, Karcher PC 100/M1, a new innovative solution for removing oil, grease, soot, etc. from all kinds of parts. A water based non-toxic, PH neutral cleaning detergent without solvents is used to achieve excellent cleaning results. Organic particles like oil, lubricant and other greases from the parts biologically degenerate.

[Nilfisk Scrubtec 344 B](#) **NEW LISTING!**

£1,896 inc. VAT

Explore the exceptional cleaning capabilities of the second-hand Nilfisk Scrubtec 344 B. Engineered with advanced technology and built for durability, this scrubber offers reliable performance in commercial and industrial settings. With its ergonomic design and efficient operation, it's the ideal choice for those seeking quality cleaning equipment at a cost-effective price. Discover the value and reliability of the Nilfisk Scrubtec 344 B for your cleaning needs. Comes with the chemical solution kit.

[Karcher BR 75/140 ride on scrubber dryer](#) POA

The Karcher BR 75/140 Ride On Scrubber Dryer offers superb performance and high versatility. The Karcher BR 75/140 R Ride On Scrubber Dryer features a 750mm roller scrubbing head and has a maximum cleaning width of 1140mm and despite of the Karcher BR 75/140 R Ride On Scrubber Drier's capacity of 140 Litres they are narrow and extremely manoeuvrable, easily fitting through doorways or high bay warehouse aisles View the video: [Karcher br 75/140 scrubber dryer](#) 4/23

[Nilfisk MC 6P-170/1600 cold pressure washer](#) £1,200 inc. VAT

The MC 6P range of cold water pressure washers brings together an unbeatable working life and durability, high cleaning performance and optimal ergonomics for the most demanding heavy duty cleaning tasks for industry, agriculture, shipping, transport sector and food industry.

The MC 6P is equipped with the NA6 wobble disc pump with 4 ceramic pistons and robust construction optimised for intense use greater than 5 hours per day. The NA6 pump is inspired by our longest lasting and renowned pump and offers unbeatable lifetime.

[V Tuf Torrent 3](#)

£660 inc VAT

Prepare to transform your cleaning routine with the remarkable V-TUF Torrent 3. This versatile cleaning powerhouse has undergone meticulous engineering to completely redefine the concept of portable cleaning. Featuring an 'easy-pull' frame, a cutting-edge 15HP engine, an oversized pump, and comprehensive thermal protection, the Torrent 3 is tailored to effortlessly tackle demanding tasks with exceptional ease and efficiency.

[PC 15/250 petrol pressure washer](#)

£900 inc VAT

Second hand PC 15/250 petrol pressure washer.

A true embodiment of versatility. This powerhouse is designed to excel.heavy-duty, industrial, and commercial cleaning applications, making it your go-to solution for various cleaning needs.

The heart of this exceptional machine lies in its reliable Honda GX engine. Which in turn will ensure unwavering performance and durability. It is equipped with a 2:1 gearbox and a 1450 RPM Inter pump, the pressure washer is built to endure and deliver top-notch results.

All of these machines have been fully tested by engineers. Refurbished machines offer excellent value for money and comes complete with a three-month warranty. Please click on the blue title for links to more information and photographs. Contact lynsey@ramsak.co.uk for info.

WINDSOR DOUBLE FIELD SHELTER (5.4m x 3.0m) available for February Delivery!



Windsor Double Field Shelter (5.4m x 3.0m)

- Frame: Ex 75mm x 50mm stress graded framework at maximum 610mm centres
- Cladding: Ex 125mm x 19mm redwood shiplap kiln dried
- Kickboard: 11mm OSB kickboard to 1050mm high (approx. half height)
- Roof: Ex 100mm x 50mm stress graded roof joists at maximum 610mm centres in joist hangers. Black corrugated bitumen sheets with zinc ridge capping
- 900mm unlined front overhang
- Guttering – Front guttering and one downpipe
- Galvanised skids
- FREE TOW KIT
- We use stainless steel nails, all timber is tanalised, pressure treated.

Total: £3,465 excl. VAT (including delivery & Installation within 40 miles of TN21 9HJ)

10% discount £3,118.50 excl. VAT (including delivery & Installation within 40 miles of TN21 9HJ)

For the full specifications, please contact lynsey@ramsak.co.uk

CLASSIFIED ADVERTS

JOBS, LIVESTOCK, PROPERTY

PROPERTY FOR SALE, TO LET & WANTED



BUILDINGS & YARDS AVAILABLE - ASHFORD AREA **NEW LISTING**

Buildings and yard space available for agricultural and commercial use at several locations within 5 miles of Ashford. Units ranging from 400ft² to 8000ft². Gated sites with CCTV. Good access with parking and turning areas. Opportunity for long-term leases for the right tenants. Viewings strictly by appointment via RAMSAK.

DEPOT REQUIRED - COVENTRY/RUGBY **NEW**

We have someone looking for a small to medium sized secure depot for a Grounds Maintenance team in the Coventry/Rugby area for the purposes of housing plant & equipment and associated sundries with enough outside space to place a skip for general waste and some outside storage for materials.

If you are able to help, email us the details or call us on 01622 815356.

BUILDING & YARD REQUIRED - KENT

A RAMSAK member currently based in South East Maidstone is looking to move location to somewhere closer to the M20 corridor between Wrotham and Hollingbourne. Building circa 5-6000 sqft required, with yard space and parking for approximately 20 vehicles. They are happy to carry out building works and modifications (i.e forming of offices)

Preferably to purchase or would consider renting. (1/24)

Contact lynsey@ramsak.co.uk for info.



RESIDENTIAL FLAT TO RENT - ASHFORD AREA
1 bedroom residential flat available in working commercial yard in Ashford area. £700 pcm including services & rates, but excluding telephone & internet. (1/24)
Please contact enquiries@ramsak.co.uk for more information.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTS CONTINUED...

PROPERTY & LAND cont'd...

OAST AND YARD TO RENT - RYE, TN31 (IMMEDIATE AVAILABILITY)

Converted Oast formerly used as a paint shop and storage and yard for a hoarding company, which is now quitting... due to having outgrown the site.

The Oast is on 3 floors - ground floor 1,444 sq ft, first floor 900 sq ft plus loo and kitchen, second floor 727 sq ft which has 2 Offices and storage area. Total area 3,071 sq ft.

Outside is a good size L shaped yard with added storage both open and secure.

The property has security gates as does the whole farm.

There is added storage available if necessary 3 phase electricity

Fibre optic to be installed.

The unit is on a working farm with a residential element and another commercial site.

This property is available to lease immediately.

Please contact lynsey@ramsak.co.uk for more information.

LAND RENTAL WANTED - TONBRIDGE AREA

RAMSAK Member looking for approximately 70 acres of land in the Tonbridge area for longer term rent for hay-making enterprise. Will consider arable land to re-seed for grass. Tonbridge area preferred. Please contact enquiries@ramsak.co.uk for more information. 11/23

WANTED - WINTER SHEEP KEEP - ANY AREA
Please contact enquiries@ramsak.co.uk for more details

SITUATIONS VACANT AND WANTED

PLUMPTON COLLEGE APPRENTICESHIPS
The full offer of apprenticeships currently available can be found [HERE](#).

SITUATIONS WANTED

Conscientious, professional and proactive individual with extensive experience in Accounts, Office Management, Event Management and Executive PA Role looking to return to the farming sector. CV available from lynsey@ramsak.co.uk

OTHER



BULLS FOR SALE - ASHFORD, KENT NEW!
Aderdeen Angus, Simmental and Limousin bulls for sale. All bulls have worked, progeny can be seen. Price on application.



CRUSHED FIELD BEANS AVAILABLE
Crushed field beans in one tonne bags
An ideal source of protein for those who mix their own rations. £295 per tonne ex farm (TN19).

PAS110 & PAS100 Compost Available - South East

A trusted supplier, compliant with PAS110 and PAS100 standards, offering high-quality compost and digestate for your agricultural and horticultural needs. Available in convenient 900-litre bulk bags or bulk loose loads, we cater to your specific requirements. Our soil amendments are suitable for various applications. Contact RAMSAK on enquiries@ramsak.co.uk

WELL ROTTED HORSE MANURE WANTED

Collected using 8 wheel grab lorries. Contact RAMSAK on enquiries@ramsak.co.uk

CHARCOAL FOR SALE

Contact RAMSAK for more information on 01622 815356.

WANTED—LARGE VOLUMES OF STANDING OAK/TIMBER Various members seeking to purchase all grades and species of standing timber. Ref: 1254/P & Ref: 1506/P

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES RAMSAK

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Helping our members manage, support and grow their business is at the heart of your co-operative and we are able to cover a diverse array of professions from legal services to accountancy, land agents to energy consultancy, insurance advisors to training bodies.

We are constantly working on increasing the range of advisors and consultants available to you as a Member of RAMSAK with just one call to the office on 01622 815356!

NFU MUTUAL: LOW COST AGRITECH OFFERING SUBTLE CHANGES TO FARMS

The latest survey from NFU Mutual* has found that, in 2023, nearly a fifth of farmers had invested or planned to invest in agritech, up from 13% the previous year.



- Nearly a fifth of farmers have invested or plan to invest in agritech, latest NFU Mutual survey finds
- But 62% of farmers have yet to consider new agritech
- Small, accessible agritech can be part of solution
- New NFU Mutual agritech hub offers advice to farmers

However, investment in and uptake of farm technology continues to be cautious, with 62% of farmers still to consider it.

Barriers could include financial, lack of knowledge about the technology or confidence to try something new. The perception that agritech is only suitable for larger commercial farms may be another blocker.

Yet experts at NFU Mutual say low cost accessible agritech, such as CCTV, immobilisers, weather sensors and RFID Eartags, can be a subtle adaption to a farming system which can make a huge difference to its productivity and efficiency.

To help farmers and rural businesses adopt agritech, NFU Mutual has set up a new hub with advice. The website comes as the Defra Secretary of State Steve Barclay urged farmers to uptake readily available technology at the Oxford Farming Conference on January 4.

Charlie Yorke, Farming Propositions Manager at NFU Mutual, said: "By their very nature, farmers are natural innovators, coming up with fresh ideas and methods year after year to improve their farm's efficiency.

"Our research shows farmers are increasingly leveraging digital solutions to optimise their operations, enhance productivity, save costs and ensure sustainable farming practises.

"But a large proportion of farmers are still hesitant investing in agritech due to a number of factors.

"Although it may sound daunting, the adoption of agritech doesn't need to be resource intensive or expensive.

"While some large farms have invested in complex and large-scale agritech such as self-driving vehicles, alternative fuels and data driven sensors, it is important to remember agritech can be implemented at any scale, large or small.

"Simpler technologies such as gate sensors, RFID Eartags or the integration of an online data system to assist with farm administration duties, are all forms of agritech.

"There are plenty of low-cost innovations which could benefit your farm, making them safer, more secure and more efficient."

The new hub can be accessed at www.nfumutual.co.uk/agritech.

www.nfumutual.co.uk, 15 January 2024

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Members of RAMSAK and Supporters of RAMSAK Members

EVENTS:



KRESTON REEVES: Spring Budget 2024 Question Time Webinar

Adapting to the changes

The Spring Budget announcement will take place on Wednesday 6 March 2024. Following the announcement by the Chancellor, our panel of tax and business experts will be on hand to answer your questions during our Spring Budget question time webinar, highlighting key implications, and providing insights and guidance so you can adapt to the changes.

Date and time:

Friday 8 March 2024

9:30am – 10:30am GMT

Send us your questions

If you would like our panel to cover your questions as part of the discussion, you can ask them during the live webinar, or you can submit them ahead of time via the form below or by emailing events@krestonreeves.com.

The questions submitted won't be attributed to individuals during the webinar.

Register

By registering, you will be taken to our GoToWebinar registration page

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER NOW](#)

Source: www.krestonreeves.com, 12 December 2023



THE BIG CAT SANCTUARY

THE BIG CAT SANCTUARY: 2024 Open Day Tickets Available

Don't miss out of The Big Cat Sanctuary's Open Days, running from 24th to 28th July! Immerse yourself in a morning or afternoon of excitement whilst supporting global conservation efforts. Have the chance to meet all of our majestic big and small cats, creating unforgettable memories. Book your tickets now for an roar-some day!



[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)

CONTACT THE RAMSAK TEAM:

KAREN WHEELER GROUP MANAGER

Phone: 01622 815356

E-mail: karen@ramsak.co.uk

LUCY DAY

FUEL MIRACLES & SALES MANAGER

Phone: 01622 815356 / Mobile: 07776 302847

E-mail: lucy@ramsak.co.uk

LYNSEY DENNESS

MARKETING MANAGER & CREATIVE GENIUS

Phone: 01622 815356

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