

News from the Farm Advisory Service:



Video: Farm safety for temporary staff

During peak times, such as harvest, silage, sowing, lambing, and calving, there is often demand for additional labour on farm where temporary staff are brought in to support farm activities. Temporary staff play a fundamental part of the agricultural industry and can fulfil a variety of skilled and non-skilled tasks.

In this video, Calum Johnston from SAC Consulting and Andy Findlay from Findlay Training provide us with guidance on some of the 'typical' health and safety considerations for temporary staff working on a mixed arable/livestock farm.

Find this video by scanning the QR code below or search for Scotland's Farm Advisory Service on YouTube.



Government boosts support available to Scottish farming businesses

From 4th July 2024, the Farm Advisory Service (FAS) announced that all Scottish farms and crofts are eligible to receive up to £5,860 worth of funding for on-the-ground support from its network of qualified advisors.

Significantly, the support quota reset, meaning businesses that have previously used any FAS services can do so again.

Funded by the Scottish Government, FAS is dedicated to enhancing the profitability and sustainability of farms and crofts throughout Scotland and offers a comprehensive suite of support services, including:

- **Integrated Land Management Plans (ILMP)** – choose from a panel of experts to help develop a step-by-step action plan and ensure your business is profitable and

sustainable for the years ahead.

- **Specialist Advice** – take a deeper look at specific issues of concern or interest and identify business strengths and opportunities.
- **Mentoring** – get an experienced mentor with valuable skills and knowledge, matched to your business's needs.
- **Annual carbon audits** – identify and monitor the sources of emissions on your farm, opportunities for improvements, cost savings and how your performance compares with other businesses.

You can access more information and apply for support via the FAS website at www.fas.scot/advice-grants, or by contacting **0300 323 0161** or emailing advice@fas.scot.

Selecting the right ram for the job

Selecting the right ram for your system is an important management decision, due to the influence they have on the overall flock's performance. To ensure that any lamb born into the flock is suited to the system and fits your breeding goals, choosing a good ram will significantly help optimise your time spent managing the flock and increasing overall profitability.



The traits that are selected will differ depending on what you need the ram to achieve. The main aim of maternal rams is to breed replacement ewes; therefore, the selection criteria should focus on traits on the maternal line of breeding compared to the ram's growth and muscling. In contrast, the aim of terminal rams is to produce lambs with good growth traits suitable for meat production. Therefore, selection will be more focused on growth and carcass traits in the ram.

These eight questions are a great place to start when assessing whether a ram is right for your flock:

1. Is the ram in sound working order: condition, teeth, testicles, locomotion?
2. Has the ram been fertility tested or used previously as a tup hogg?
3. Has the ram been born or reared as a single, twin or triplet?
4. How has the ram been fed previous to sale? Grass based or concentrate fed.
5. Do the rams breeding values fit your goals?
6. Is the breeder part of any health schemes or vaccination programmes?
7. Do the conditions that the ram has been reared in fit your system?
8. Has the ram got any estimated breeding values (EBVs) or performance figures available?

Mary Young & Lorna Shaw, SAC Consulting

For more information, please visit:

www.fas.scot/article/selecting-the-right-ram-for-the-job/

Free Events

At the Farm Advisory Service we run a range of events both online and in-person.

Visit www.fas.scot/events to sign up or contact the advice line and we'll help you get booked on.

Test Before You Treat - St Boswells
Hawick, 20th August, 08:45am - 10:45am

Perthshire Women in Agriculture - 2025 Changes to Subsidy Conditions
Perth, 27th August, 12:15pm - 3:00pm

Scotland the Bread - Heritage Grains & Diversification
St Monans, 29th August, 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Don't Be Sheepish, Plan Ahead - Improving Flock Efficiency
Thurso, 10th September, 11:00am - 2:00pm,

Whole Farm Plans

From 2025 onwards, under the new Agricultural Route Map, if businesses wish to apply for support payments through the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), they will be required to undertake a series of initiatives as part of a Whole Farm Plan.



What you need to do, and by when:

By 15th May 2025

Businesses will have to have in place at least two out of the five Whole Farm Plan Baselines. The five baselines and their review periods are:

Baseline Plan/Audit	Reviewed
Animal Health and Welfare Plan	Annually
Integrated Pest Management Plan	
Biodiversity Audit	Five yearly
Carbon Audits	
Soil Sampling and Analysis incl. soil carbon (Region 1 land)	

Businesses will need to indicate on their 2025 Single Application Form (SAF) what audits/plans they have and keep a record of any actions under each plan.

By 15th May 2028:

- All businesses will need to have a Biodiversity and a Carbon Audit.
- Businesses with Region 1 land that apply artificial fertilisers and/or organic manures to it will need to have a Soil Analysis Plan.
- All cattle, sheep, pig and poultry (350+) keepers will need an Animal Health and Welfare Plan.
- All businesses that apply plant protection products (e.g. pesticides and herbicides) must have an Integrated Pest Management Plan.
- There are also plans to introduce a Nutrient Management Plan which will provide recommendations for crop and grassland.

Christine Beaton, SAC Consulting

For further details of the Whole Farm Plan and the five baseline initiatives, please see online at:

www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/whole-farm-plan

Scotland's Farm Advisory Service is funded by the Scottish Government. It is delivered by SAC Consulting, part of Scotland's Rural College, and Ricardo Energy and Environment.



National Advice Hub
T: 0300 323 0161
E: advice@fas.scot
W: www.fas.scot

If you need more advice on any topic, the Farm Advisory Service has a range of support and help available:

Advice line

For free telephone advice on a wide variety of topics including cross compliance, water framework directive requirements, climate change and other technical issues call us on **0300 323 0161** or email advice@fas.scot. The advice line operates between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.

Bespoke Advice and Grants

FAS can also help you to increase the profitability and sustainability of your farming business through Scottish Government grants including Integrated Land Management Plans (ILMPs) – worth up to £2,000.

The ILMP will identify opportunities and cost savings for your business, based on an independent and confidential assessment of your business by an experienced farm business adviser of your choosing. As part of your plan you can choose to benefit from up to two further specialist advice plans.

Online

Our website contains articles, videos and much more at www.fas.scot



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