

## News from the Farm Advisory Service:



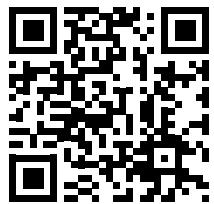
ROB WAINWRIGHT  
ON AGRITECH

### Video - Rob Wainwright on using Agritech

In this video, featured at this year's Farm Advisory Service Conference at Perth Racecourse, Karen Stewart and Kirsten Williams from SAC Consulting speak to Rob Wainwright.

He talks about how he has been using agritech on his farm to futureproof his land, biodiversity and efficiency.

Find our video by using QR code below, or visit our YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/FASScot](http://www.youtube.com/FASScot)



### Preparing for Sustainable Farming (PSF) Deadline

All claims must be submitted by 28th February 2025

## Retention of landscape features

Scotland's semi-natural habitats, linear and spatial landscape features help habitat connectivity, resilience to climate change, protection of soils and other valuable functions. The Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) rules set out minimum standards and requirements to protect these important features, under GAEC 7: Retention of Landscape Features.

GAEC 7 prohibits the following activities being undertaken without prior consent (exemptions can apply):

1. Remove or destroy drystone or flagstone dykes, turf and stone-faced banks, walls, hedges, ponds, watercourses or trees (in line, in a group or isolated).
2. Trim hedges or lop branches off trees during the bird nesting and rearing season starting on 1 March and ending on 31 August.
3. Cultivate land within two metres of the centre line of a hedge.
4. Apply fertilisers (organic manure, chemical or nitrogen) or pesticides within two metres of the centre line of a hedge.
5. Alter, damage or destroy a Scheduled Ancient Monument.



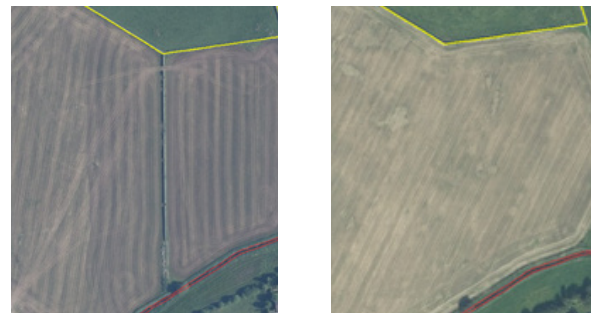
A traditional stone wall, showing early signs of dereliction and in need of restoration

Consent is not required to:

1. Widen field entrances to enable access for livestock or farm machinery.
2. Fell trees which are exempt from or are covered by a 'Felling Licence' issued by Scottish Forestry.
3. Fell trees that are dead, diseased, damaged or insecurely rooted and because of its condition it poses a risk to human safety.

The SGRPID mapping team can very easily pick up changes to field boundaries due to the accuracy of the satellite imagery being used - if they suspect hedges or dykes have been removed, they will send the information to the local Area Office for further investigation. The minimum penalty for removal of these features without permission is 3%.

Failure to comply with GAEC 7 could result in a cross-compliance breach, intentional or otherwise and result in financial penalties and in some cases legal action.



Scottish Government has supported the Agri-Environment Climate Scheme (AECS) and other initiatives to facilitate the enhancement of these landscape features and others through management payments and capital aid, and many of these features will form important parts of biodiversity audits under the Whole Farm Plan.

Alexander Pirie & Alison Clark, SAC Consulting

## Free Events

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

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

### How to Start Your Succession Journey With Your Accountant

Online, 10th February, 7:00pm - 8:00pm

### River Eden Water Catchment River Bank Maintenance

Cupar, 12th February, 12:00pm - 3:30pm

### WiA - Understanding Farm & Croft Accounts

Inverness, 13th February, 10:45am - 1:30pm

### Argyll WiA - Sustainable Livestock Management

Luining, 13th February, 11:00am - 1:30pm

### Crofting Sheep - Lamb Preparation & Practice

Dornie, 15th February, 11:00am - 3:30pm

## A beginner's guide to egg grading and handling

Egg grading of table (eating) eggs describes the process in which eggs are classified and categorised based on their production standard, shape, weight and hygiene level. Egg grading and marketing are regulated under UK legislation to ensure quality, safety, and transparency for consumers.



Equipment is available to help egg producers with grading and stamping, both manual and automated systems are available. The class of an egg is based on an inspection of its cuticle, shell, airspace, yolk, white, germ cell and smell. Class A eggs are sold for human consumption while class B eggs can be used by food industry for processing.

### Hygiene and storage

Poor hygiene and/or storage can cause an egg to deteriorate from class A to class B.

- **Hygiene:** Producers must ensure high levels of cleanliness in all production stages, including hen housing, egg handling facilities and transportation.
- **Grading Facilities:** Eggs must be graded and packed in approved packing centres that comply with food safety regulations.
- **Storage Conditions:** Eggs must be kept dry, clean, and at a consistent temperature to prevent quality deterioration.

### Records

Egg producers must keep records of the following:

1. The date of placing, age at placing and number of laying hens.
2. The date of culling and the number of hens culled.
3. Daily egg production.
4. Number or weight of eggs delivered per day.
5. Number and weight of eggs sold from the farm-gate.
6. Names and addresses of purchasers and the establishment number.

### Exemption from egg grading

Producers with fewer than 50 laying hens are exempt from egg grading and marking requirements if:

- Eggs are sold directly to consumers (e.g. at local markets).
- Packaging or signs clearly state, "These eggs are ungraded and sold directly from the producer."

James Orr, SAC Consulting

For our full article, please visit:

[www.fas.scot/article/a-beginners-guide-to-egg-grading-and-handling/](http://www.fas.scot/article/a-beginners-guide-to-egg-grading-and-handling/)

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.

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](mailto: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](http://www.fas.scot)