

## News from the Farm Advisory Service:



### Video - 10 years experience multi-cutting silage: Tips & lessons learned

In this video, the Farm Advisory Service took a trip south of the border to hear from Andrew Griffiths, who swapped to multi-cut silage to try and improve efficiency and reduce concentrate usage.

Andrew shares his top tips for people looking to adopt the method, and we hear from Vet John Yarwood about the potential health benefits of a switch.

Find our video by using the QR code below, or by finding Scotland's Farm Advisory Service on YouTube



### Agricultural Wages Update

The Agricultural Wages Board have updated their rates.

Visit the Scottish Government website at [www.gov.scot/publications/](http://www.gov.scot/publications/) for more information

## Funding for business energy efficiency on dairy farms



Electricity use accounted for around 3% of the average dairy farmers costs in Scotland in the 2022/23 Scottish Farm Business Survey (and was 4.32% of fixed costs). As such, improving the energy efficiency of your buildings and equipment is important to future proof your business.

### SME Loan Scheme

Business Energy Scotland have launched a new Small Medium Enterprise (SME) loan scheme to fund improvements in energy efficiency, and most dairy farms in Scotland are classed as an SME. The loan has a lower limit of £1,000 and an upper limit of £100,000 and includes a cashback component of no more than £30,000. This means that some of the cost of the measure you apply for is refunded to you, with the remaining loan amount to be paid back within eight years at 0% APR.

### What is eligible?

Options listed on the Business Energy Scotland website that are of particular interest to dairy farmers are as follows:

- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning – cooling system replacement/upgrade, ventilation systems and building control systems.
- Renewables – wind turbines, small scale hydro, solar panels, biomass and anaerobic digestors.
- Other equipment – measuring, monitoring and control equipment, lighting systems, fitting and controls and air compressors.

### How do I apply?

To apply for funding from the SME Loan Scheme, you need a report from Business Energy Scotland that recommends the energy efficient systems, equipment and/or building fabric improvements that you would like to use the funding to install. These reports are free and it typically takes between 2 to 6 weeks to prepare your report. Provided that all appropriate information is received, Business Energy Scotland will aim to make a decision within ten working days.

### How does the cashback work?

Cashback is awarded based on the total value of eligible measures applied for within your loan application. The cashback grant funding can be awarded as per below:

- 75% of eligible costs up to a maximum of £20,000 can be claimed by the qualifying applicant for energy efficiency measures (see list of measures on page 8 of the application form).
- 75% of eligible costs up to a maximum of £10,000 can be claimed by the qualifying applicant for air/ground/water source heat pumps, biomass boilers, or solar thermal renewable technologies.

A maximum of £30,000 cashback can be awarded to a single business for eligible technologies and across all their SME applications (previous or current).

*James Orr, SAC Consulting*

For the full version of this article and for further information, please visit: [www.fas.scot/article/mmn-may-2024-funding-for-business-energy-efficiency/](http://www.fas.scot/article/mmn-may-2024-funding-for-business-energy-efficiency/)

## 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.

### Preparing for Sustainable Farming: Animal Health & Welfare - Cattle

Online, 21st May, 8:00pm - 9:00pm

### Common Grazings Lairg - Finance & Procedures Part 1

Lairg, 23rd May, 6:30pm - 9:00pm

### How to Benchmark your Business and Find Missing Profits

Online, 27th May, 8:00pm - 9:00pm

### Common Grazings Lochcarron - Finance & Procedures Part 1

Lochcarron, 28th May, 6:30pm - 9:00pm

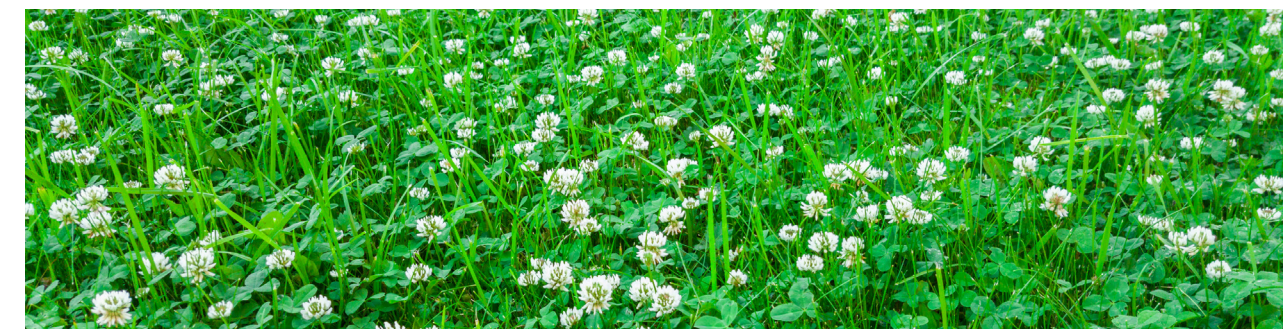
### Preparing for Sustainable Farming: Animal Health & Welfare - Sheep

Online, 28th May, 8:00pm - 9:00pm

### Common Grazings Lairg - Finance & Procedures Part 2

Lairg, 30th May, 6:30pm - 9:00pm

## Grazing to promote white clover



Understanding a plant's physiology and growth habit is key to effective grazing management. White clover has a multi-branched creeping stem called a stolon from which it grows new leaves, roots, and flowers. This makes white clover grazing tolerant, with a persistent lifespan in well managed swards.

Its low growth habit means that effective grazing management to promote its yield and persistence is based on maintaining light levels down to the base of the sward as clover can become shaded out by grass reducing its ability for photosynthesis.

Annual growth pattern is also important, with clover only starting to grow when soil temperature is 8°C, whilst grasses start at around 5°C means grass gets a head start in the spring. This means that early spring grazing is beneficial for clover to keep on top of grass covers and maintain light levels to the clover, when it is most vulnerable, with grazing to tight 4cm residuals recommended. Tight grazing late autumn is also beneficial as light penetrating to the base of the sward directly influences the survival of stolons over the winter.

Through the main growing season, target entry heights of 8-10cm and 4cm residuals on rotation to avoid high pasture covers smothering out clovers and bring light to the base of the sward on grazing. Excess paddocks taken out of the rotation to maintain entry heights across the platform should be cut as a light crop of high quality silage (not left to high covers which will shade out clover). In set stock systems aim to maintain covers at 4-6cm.

*Daniel Stout, SAC Consulting*

For the full version of the article, please visit: [www.fas.scot/article/grazing-to-promote-white-clover/](http://www.fas.scot/article/grazing-to-promote-white-clover/)

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](mailto:advice@fas.scot)  
W: [www.fas.scot](http://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](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 £1,200.

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)



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