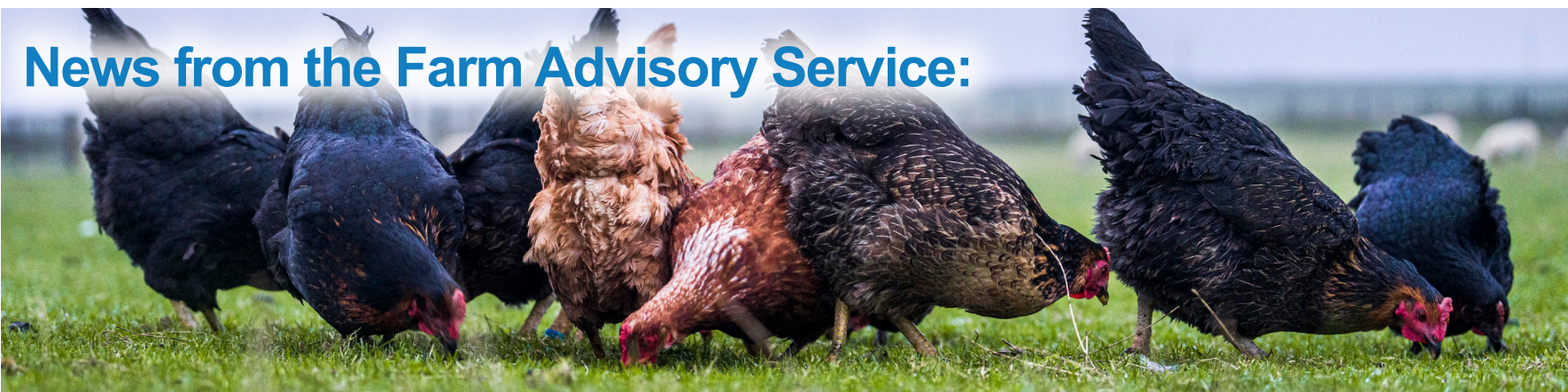


## News from the Farm Advisory Service:



### New poultry registration requirements

New registration requirements are coming into effect for all keepers of birds. The Scottish Kept Birds Register (SKBR) replaces the previous GB Poultry Register for bird keepers in Scotland. The previous register only applied to keepers with more than 50 birds. The new SKBR applies to everyone who keeps poultry and aims to help provide the industry with the information it needs to monitor and manage any future outbreak of notifiable diseases.

The SKBR opened on the 1st of September 2024 and **all keepers must be registered by the 1st of December 2024**. You must also update the register at least once every twelve months.

If you need assistance registering, contact the SKBR helpline by calling **01466 405101** emailing [skbr@scotaid.com](mailto:skbr@scotaid.com) or by visiting: [keptbirdregister.service.gov.scot](http://keptbirdregister.service.gov.scot)

### Scottish Upland Sheep Support Scheme 2024

Deadline 30th November 2024

Apply online, it's quick, easy and reduces ear tag errors

[www.ruralpayments.org](http://www.ruralpayments.org)

### The value of specialist advice

Do you have specific areas of interest or concern on your farm or croft? The Farm Advisory Service (FAS) offers specialist advice to help identify business strengths and opportunities and is suitable for all types of farms and crofts, regardless of its size or your experience. You can choose from thirteen topics, including farm business efficiency, soil and nutrient management, animal welfare, and crofter's plans.

Last year, 98% of farmers rated the advisors' practices as either good or excellent, and 97% rated the quality of the reports similarly. The benefits of receiving specialist advice reported by farmers include better planning and decision-making, financial improvements, and livestock

and crop enhancements, among others. The service is invaluable, as evidenced by the 82% of farmers who plan to implement all recommended actions after receiving specialist advice.

The Scottish Government funds two specialist advice options per business, with up to £3,200 available to help you address weaknesses or improve profitability, output, or sustainability.

For more information on the available options and to apply for funding, visit [www.fas.scot/advice-grants/](http://www.fas.scot/advice-grants/) or contact FAS at [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot) or by calling **0300 323 0161**.

### Avian influenza (bird flu) update



**There are currently no outbreaks of Avian Influenza in Scotland. However, there have been recent outbreaks in England, in Yorkshire and Cornwall. In addition, across the UK there are weekly cases of wild birds having been found to have died with/from Avian Influenza.**

The Avian Influenza viruses are classified based on their ability to cause severe disease (pathogenicity). Currently there are two classes: low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) and highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI).

LPAI is difficult to detect and has few clinical signs. Signs that your birds are infected with an LPAI virus can include but are not limited to: respiratory distress, diarrhoea, loss of appetite, drop in egg production of more than 5%.

HPAI often presents suddenly, with high mortality, with affected birds sometimes presenting swollen heads, blue colouration of the comb and wattles, dullness, lack of appetite, respiratory distress, diarrhoea and a significant drop in egg production.

If you suspect your birds, or any wild birds in your area are infected with any form of Avian Influenza you must contact your local animal health office immediately.

Visit [www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-apha](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-apha) for your local office contact details.

James Orr, 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.

#### Deciding on Diversification - What Are Your Options?

Online, 25th November, 6:00pm - 7:00pm

**Nutrient Management Workshop - Stirling**  
Stirling, 26th November, 10:30am - 1:00pm

#### Sustainable Sheep Systems - Consumer & Climate

Online, 26th November, 7:00pm - 8:00pm

**Grassland Roadshow 2024**  
Lanarkshire, 27th November, 10:30am - 3:00pm  
Caithness, 28th November, 12:30pm - 3:00pm

### Keeping poultry occupied during housing order

During recent housing orders, in which the Government mandated that all poultry be kept inside to reduce the spread of Avian Influenza, many keepers noticed increased incidence of undesirable behaviours such as feather pecking. Feather pecking is an abnormal behaviour where hens peck each other, which can lead to feather loss and skin damage. This can then lead to injurious pecking where the birds start to harm one another which can result in death and cannibalism.

#### What causes undesirable behaviours?

Feather pecking can be caused by many factors, but is generally linked to a stressor, which could include, but is not limited to, inadequate housing, lack of suitable foraging material, high temperatures, poor quality litter, changes in environment (housing order - birds no longer able to range), changes in feed/poor nutrition, uneven flock uniformity, poor animal health and external parasites such as red mite.

#### Enrichments

Enrichments are an important tool in a poultry keepers' arsenal to control undesirable behaviours and allow the poultry to exhibit natural behaviours while housed. Destructible enrichments such as egg trays, lucerne bales or other fibre source, pecking blocks and jute rope are preferable as the bird gets feedback (destructible) and depending on the material some can be eaten.

Less desirable options which are relatively commonly used in the poultry industry are plastic bottles filled with coloured liquid, footballs, parking cones, CDs hanging from the ceiling and other non-destructible materials. These options are less desirable as there is less positive feedback and some are not safe for the chickens to consume.



Figure 1 - Jute Rope



Figure 2 - Pecking Block

#### Top Tips

1. Inspect your poultry regularly – monitor their behaviour and look for signs of undesirable behaviour such as feather pecking.
2. Investigate potential causes for any undesirable behaviour – is the ventilation adequate, is the litter dry and loose, has the diet changed, has there been high temperatures in the housing etc.
3. Correct any potential causes of undesirable behaviour found in tip 2.
4. Utilise enrichments as a preventative measure not just as a treatment for undesirable behaviour.
5. Use destructible/edible enrichments where possible versus non-destructible/inedible enrichments.

James Orr, SAC Consulting

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 £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)