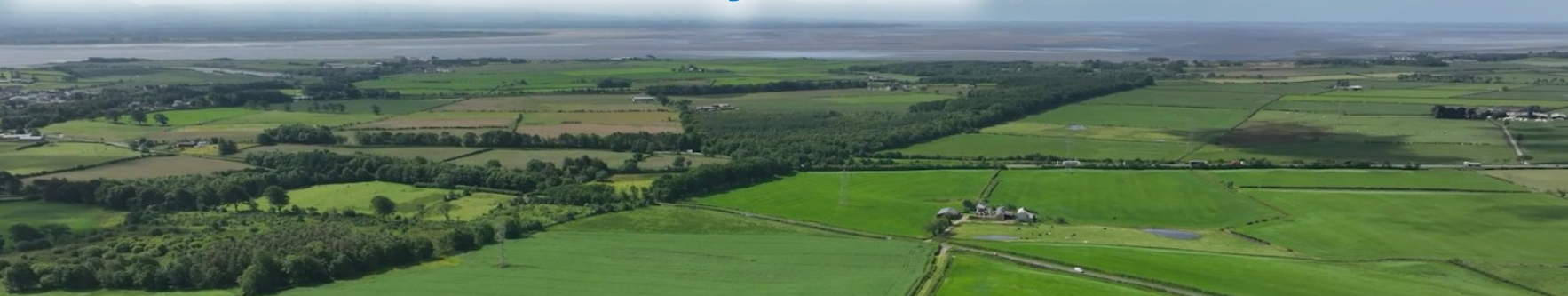


## News from the Farm Advisory Service:



### Keeping hens entertained

Good range management is crucial in allowing your free-range poultry to exhibit natural behaviours, thereby reducing undesirable behaviour.

Our video series covers range design, encouraging birds to use the range, shelter design, and maintaining a good vegetative cover. They also cover pop hole design, appropriate stocking density, range monitoring and management, and biosecurity.

Another video focusses on keeping poultry entertained in the house, including litter quality, lighting, air quality, enrichments, and perches.

Watch the videos by scanning the QR code below, or visiting [youtube.com/@FASscot](https://youtube.com/@FASscot)



## Get support to integrate AI into your operations

Farmers and crofters across Scotland are increasingly exploring the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance their businesses.

From streamlining operations to improving decision-making, AI offers a range of tools that can help boost productivity, reduce waste, and adapt to changing environmental conditions. As the sector faces growing pressures - from climate change to market volatility - AI presents an opportunity to innovate and build more resilient, data-driven farming practices.

You can receive support from the Innovate UK BridgeAI training programme, which is tailored to the agri-food sector to teach you how these

powerful technologies can boost sustainability, increase efficiency, and drive profitability across agricultural operations. Join one of their free full-day workshops, which include expert-led sessions, hands-on demos, CPD certification, and lunch.

Alongside this support, you can also receive up to £3,200 of funding through the Farm Advisory Service for two areas of advice, including business efficiency and resilience planning.

To find out more and apply for funding, visit our Specialist Advice webpage. For support choosing the best grant options and help finding an advisor, contact [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot) or 0300 323 0161.

## Organics in Scotland – Lower Mill of Tynet

Lower Mill of Tynet has been farmed organically by Gordon and June Whiteford since 2012, blending traditional organic farming practices with direct-to-customer strategies, marketing produce from the farm gate.

Laying hens are the main farm enterprise, with 6,000 organic and 9,000 free range birds contributing to 80-90% of the business. Egg sales are made directly to the customer where possible with any over-production going to a local Aberdeenshire producer.

Lower Mill of Tynet also supports 30 Scandinavian Red Procrosse dairy cows, with milk and ice cream processed on farm. As well as a small flock of sheep and range of crops including grass, wheat, barley, rye, oilseed rape, beans and peas, which are either combined or mown for whole crop silage for use on farm or sale.

The business sells farm-produced eggs, milk, ice cream and meat through vending machines in the on-farm shop which operates 24-hours a day, as well as supporting other local businesses by marketing produce through the shop. Moving forward the business would like to open a manned farm shop to increase customer contact.

In the future, the farm is looking to increase output from the dairy and poultry enterprises by increasing animal numbers and expanding facilities.

To find out more about the farm read the full article at: [www.fas.scot/article/organics-in-scotland-lower-mill-of-tynet-case-study](https://www.fas.scot/article/organics-in-scotland-lower-mill-of-tynet-case-study)



Kirsten Craig, 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](https://www.fas.scot/events) to sign up or contact the advice line and we'll help you get booked on.

**NE Organics: Walk & Talk at Glenrinnnes Estate**  
Keith, 18th August, 12:30pm - 4:00pm

**Farm Wildlife Walks: Grazing, Biodiversity & Collars**  
Oban, 21st August, 12:00pm - 4:00pm

**Succession for Crofters**  
Taynuilt, 20th August, 7:00pm - 9:00pm

## Get oilseed rape off to a good start

As interest in growing oilseed rape grows due to its profitability as an enterprise, a break crop and potential entry for winter wheat, getting the crop off to a good start is vital.

### Variety

Yield and agronomic traits should be considered with scores for key diseases such as Light Leaf Spot (LLS) at least 7, and resistance to lodging, earliness and pod shatter resistance also scoring highly. Clubroot resistant varieties should be grown where sites have a history of oilseed rape or other brassicas.

### Establishment

Regardless of establishment method, seed to soil contact is key along with consolidation of seedbeds to retain moisture.

Seeds should be sown at between 40 – 60 seeds per m2 with adjustments made for quality of seedbed and into warm soils around mid to late August at a depth between 2 - 3 cm to ensure consistent germination.

### Nutrition

Oilseed rape crops will respond to seedbed nitrogen applications, typically up to 30kg/ha N, usually applied as a compound along with P & K with Boron added. Placing fertiliser near the seed allows the crop to take up these nutrients quickly, encouraging faster development of the important rooting system. Field pH levels should also be in order.

### Weed control

With weed control options in the spring limited, effective early weed control is vital. Many programs will be based around metazachlor, being relatively cheap and offering control of a number of broadleaved weeds, although other actives can offer a wider spectrum of control. Crops need to be covered with at least 1.5 cm of soil if applied pre-emergence.

Volunteer cereals and grass weeds can also be a problem, with effective control using graminicides required.

### Pests

Oilseed rape crops face challenges from both slugs and Cabbage Stem Flea Beetle (CSFB) as they become established. Slug activity should be assessed by using bait traps with pellets applied accordingly, monitoring for effectiveness. CSFB activity should also be monitored and where damage is high, an insecticide application may be necessary.

George Chalmers, SAC Consulting

For further information, articles, videos and more visit our website at [www.fas.scot](https://www.fas.scot)

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](https://www.fas.scot)

If you need advice on any topic, the Farm Advisory Service can help

### Advice line

For free telephone advice on a wide variety of topics, including the Whole Farm Plan, cross compliance, water framework directive, and other technical issues, call us on **0300 3232 0161** or email [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot). The advice line operates between 9 am–5 pm Monday to Friday.

### Funded advice and grants

**Integrated Land Management Plans (ILMP).** Up to £2,000 of funding is available for you to commission an adviser to undertake a confidential assessment of your business and develop a step-by-step action plan.

**Specialist advice.** Get support to take a deeper look at specific issues of concern or interest. You are eligible to receive specialist advice for two topics with £1,600 of funding per topic (see [www.fas.scot/specialist-advice](https://www.fas.scot/specialist-advice)).

**Mentoring for new entrants.** If you are new to farming, you can receive up to **four days of FREE**, one-to-one Mentoring support from an experienced farmer or crofter.

### Online

More information can be found at [www.fas.scot/advice-grants/](https://www.fas.scot/advice-grants/)



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot