

For the past year the bulk of my work seems to have centred around the unfolding crisis within the dairy industry. The Milk price continues to decline with no apparent light at the end of the tunnel. New Zealand farmers have cut back considerably in an effort to respond to the situation, yet in the UK the exact opposite response appears to have happened with milk deliveries in excess of last year. Yet we see farmers giving up, we see money haemorrhaging from farm businesses and for those with TB it's hard to comprehend the difficulties they face, with a 1/3 off milk price, no cattle sales and livestock numbers stacking up. I have brought this latter scenario up at two meetings I attended with George Eustace MP, once at Chatsworth House with Prince Charles and the second at Landithy Hall Madron.

If that wasn't bad enough the cauliflower crop defies logic, I understand that on some farms only 50% is being harvested, of that 50% only half of it is saleable with spot prices somewhere between 18-22 pence. Varieties which would normally be ready for harvest in March have been cut in early January. This has to lead to shortages further down the line but to be sure those shortages will not demand a premium. One of the real problems of UK agriculture is that whilst you are expected to follow the economic cycle of peaks and troughs, the troughs are very real but the peaks never quite happen or are short lived indeed, with no chance to ever put some fat into the business.

BASIC PAYMENT SCHEME

2015 Payments - If you are struggling to make ends meet because you have not yet received your 2015 payment and your bank has not extended funds to cover this then please do contact us so that we can forward the information to the Rural Stress helpline via Farming Community Network (FCN) or if you prefer contact FCN directly on 03000 111 999

We are now in the new BPS year. Here are a few key dates to remember;

1 Jan to 30 June – EFA Fallow period for greening requirements

1 Jan – beginning of year for assessing the annual amount of livestock manure applied to your land (SMR1)

1 Jan – Lambs ID'd with single slaughter tag must have EID tag only. Tag numbers for sheep ID'd prior to 2010 must be included on movement documents.

1 March – You must not cut hedgerows or trees from this date but you can carry out hedge laying & coppicing from 1 March until 30 April (GAEC 7)

30 April – Farmers with an NVZ Grassland derogation must submit 'Fertiliser Accounts' to the Environment Agency

We are moving

FarmCornwall has had a difficult year for funding and at the end of last year Helena, who has worked for us since our inception in 2002 took redundancy. She was a real help and will be very much missed. Fortunately thanks to support received recently from Cornwall RCC, The Tanner Trust and HRH Prince Charles, Duke of Cornwall we are able to continue the work of the Farm Advisor. We have also just been informed that we are to receive some further funding this year from The Princes Countryside Fund. However in order to reduce costs and make the money go further we are moving to Newlyn to share an office with Seafood Cornwall Training, a not dissimilar organisation to ourselves for the Fishermen. Our new address is at the bottom of this sheet and our telephone and email details remain the same.

If you would rather receive our newsletter via email to save on printing and postage costs or alternatively if you would rather not receive it at all anymore perhaps you could let us know either by calling 01736 367589 or emailing debbie@farmcornwall.co.uk. Thank you.



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THE PRINCE'S
COUNTRYSIDE
FUND

Changes to Cross compliance rules

SMR 7 – Cattle identification and registration

Cattle keepers must still record (in their holding register) the dam's ear tag number for animals born on their holding. However, they no longer need to record the dam's ear tag number for animals arriving on their holding. This changed on 6 April 2015 and is now updated in the 2016 guide.

GAEC 1 – Establishment of buffer strips along watercourses

From 1 January 2017, land parcels of 2 hectares or less next to watercourses will have to comply with the need to protect watercourses against pollution and run-off from agricultural sources, by maintaining buffer strips. Therefore, for all land:

- within 2 metres of the centre of a watercourse or field ditch
- from the edge of the watercourse or field ditch to 1 metre on the landward side of the top of the bank

both of the following apply:

- you must take all reasonable steps to maintain a green cover
- you must not cultivate or apply fertilisers or pesticides.



Gould Electronics are a Cornish, family-run business focusing on providing communication systems to various businesses, both here and abroad, for over three decades. With our local knowledge, we can offer farming businesses throughout Cornwall and Devon an improved method of communication. Due to our unique location and the poor cellular network coverage in many parts of Cornwall, we are finding that more farming businesses are realising the benefits of switching from mobile phone use to our fully managed radio network in order to stay in touch. The network operates using both hand portable and vehicle mounted devices which we supply. It provides for vehicle to base, vehicle to vehicle and group calls with immediate connection and without the need for a licence.

We offer a range of tariffs. Full terms and conditions are available on request. Please do call on 01209 821804 during office hours and ask Stephen Smith for details on further offers.

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PENDEEN COMMUNITY SAFETY DAY

Thursday 11th February 2016

The Centre of Pendeen

10am – 2pm

Cornwall Fire and Rescue Service would like to work together with your community and provide support or advice on:

- Fire safety, including free home fire safety visits
- Road safety, for all ages
- Saving money on your fuel bills
- Plus educational and fun activities for under 5s

For further information call free on 0800 3581 999 or e-mail: roadsafety@cornwall.gov.uk



CORNWALL
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
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Slip of the tongue!

Last week I attended a meeting and was asked to discuss the recent Countryside Stewardship Scheme. I drew attention to the requirement for farmers who had opted for the Traditional Farm Building option to undergo a bat and owl survey. Unfortunately this came out as a "bowel" survey, which given the over indulged requirements of the scheme might be more appropriate than you think!

Spreader^{sl}

Need help with NVZ?

Our new computer software for recording your NVZ applications is now ready for sale. It is easy to use and can help you keep a record of your applications. You will receive a USB stick and a user guide that will help you load and use the software. The price is only £45. If you would like to try before you buy then please give us a call and we can arrange a time for you to come into the office and have a look at the programme.

If you come out of ELS this year and choose to enter Countryside Stewardship, please be aware if you choose to take options which are rotational they must be preceded by a rotational crop. If it is preceded by permanent pasture then permanent pasture under CS rules cannot be ploughed up even if they can be under BPS rules – contact Edward for further clarification on this.