

Prince's Farm Resilience Programme

We are delighted to be partnering with The Prince's Countryside Fund to deliver The Prince's Farm Resilience Programme.

The aim of the programme is to support family farm businesses to improve their confidence, efficiency, and resilience. An added bonus of the programme is that it brings together like minded small- to medium- sized family farm enterprises in local networks, to help them review their current activity and identify opportunities and improvements that can be made on-farm to build resilience, and to help sustain a diverse farming sector in the UK.

The Programme structure comprises of a series of group workshops and one-on-one meetings with local co-ordinators. A key feature of the Programme is the Business Health Check Tool, an entry-level benchmarking tool designed to demonstrate the benefits of improved record keeping on farm, and allow anonymised comparison against similar businesses.

FarmCornwall previously assisted in the delivery of the 1st Year of the Programme which was run in the Launceston area and can recommend the benefits of participating.

Interested in taking part?

The Prince's Farm Resilience Programme is now being run in the Penzance area and is open to family farms whose main enterprise is livestock or dairy. Many of the farms who participate are mixed, with more than one on-farm enterprise, including diversification to help bring in an additional income. The programme is relevant to both owner occupied and tenanted farms, on conventional or organic systems. Farms sign up to the programme as a family business and the whole family are invited to attend workshops.



Places are limited so if you would like to sign up for the programme or find out more about it please contact Edward Richardson on **01736 367589** as soon as possible.

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Succession Plans – Don't leave it too late!

Over the years I have been involved in quite a few clients with issues over succession. Nothing quite prepares you for the situation where even with plans in place for a son or daughter to take over, the actual succession has been left a bit late and unfortunately the parent is now in need of care before the process is completed. The average costs of care are £50,000 per annum for residential care or £500 per week if cared for at home by two carers per day. On top of that it can cost in the region of £25,000 to convert the house so that Mum or Dad can live at home. As far as the County Council are concerned a combined pension received by Mum and Dad of £1000 per month is sufficient to live on and the only assets needed to create that home life for Mum and Dad are a house and a garden. All the land, cows, machinery, sheep, crops and renewables are considered irrelevant to Mum and Dad's needs. Any such 'surplus' assets owned by parents could therefore potentially have to be sold or used as collateral to secure borrowing to pay for their care. Secured borrowings will be taken into account at this point but not unsecured e.g. Credit Cards. For example, a farmer with 100 acres of crops let to a potato grower and a daffodil grower would not be classed as long term let and therefore the asset (the land) would need to be offered to the County Council as payment towards care, either through a sale or borrowings secured against that land.

Where the son or daughter has taken on the farm in an informal arrangement with parents to farm the holding, that too can be called into question as to whether those assets would need to be used to provide care. If there had been a formal arrangement such as a FBT it "may" be enough to ward off the Council. Viewed through the eyes of the Council their duty lies with the person seeking care and the ability of the spouse to provide care, not any offspring or businesses they may have or where those offspring live or work.

The next question to ask is - if you can't afford care but have not been awarded any benefits from the state, who will look after Mum and Dad and what effect will this decision have on your ability to run the farm? SEEK PROFESSIONAL ADVICE – from your Solicitor and Accountant. If you are in difficulties and need help you can also contact RABI, The Addington fund or Farm Cornwall for assistance.



Red Tractor – New Standards

Red Tractor has now published the new standards which members will be assessed against as of the 1st October 2017. They aim to be easier to understand, less wordy using simpler language plus stating clear reasons why the standards are important.

These are highlighted by the words NEW in front of them. Some of the main areas of change include;

- Documenting medicine records & antibiotic use
- Biosecurity Plan
- Colostrum policy
- Water Use & Irrigation
- Silage storage
- Farm map showing buildings, fields, watercourse and high pollution risk areas.
- Rodenticide use
- Metaldehyde use
- Preventing product contamination
- Category specific Fresh Produce standards
- Temporary holding of grain

Copies of the new standards and a checklist detailing all the changes are available online at:

<http://assurance.redtractor.org.uk/tools-and-library>

Requirement to inspect pesticide application equipment - reminder

On 26 November 2016, it became a requirement that all in-use pesticide application equipment over 5 years old – apart from knapsack and handheld sprayers – must have passed inspection by the National Sprayer Testing Scheme (NSTS) within the last 5 years. The NSTS is the only body designated to inspect and certify pesticide application equipment for use. Therefore, having equipment tested by an approved NSTS examiner is the only way to stay compliant. A list of approved examiners can be found on the NSTS website. After 26 November 2016, equipment must pass an inspection every 5 years and then every 3 years from 26 November 2020. Equipment that has a 'low scale of use', such as granular applicators and boom sprayers less than 3 metres wide, must pass inspections at an interval of no more than 6 years.

NVZ: Back to basics & Revised RB209 Guide

The Farming Advice Service has produced a technical article called 'NVZ: Back to basics', which provides a simple guide to the NVZ requirements. This can be downloaded for free from www.farmingadvice.org.uk

In May 2017, The Agriculture & Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) launched a revised edition of 'The Nutrient Management Guide (RB209)'. The latest version of RB209 provides recommendations for a broad range of crops. All changes from previous versions are based on a comprehensive review of trials data conducted by a consortium of research scientists. The Guide can be downloaded from www.ahdb.org.uk/projects/RB209