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FEBRUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER

DEFRA's Animal Health and Welfare Review

A slightly different looking "newsletter" this month - January has been very busy and it is only going to go one way from now on! I wanted to update everyone however on the progress of DEFRA's Animal Health and Welfare Review.

We had an excellent attendance to our two meetings about this at the end of January, with good engagement and some excellent discussion. The good news is DEFRA **opened up the Pathway scheme for applications on Tuesday 7th February**. This link will take you to the correct page to sign up - <https://apply-for-an-annual-health-and-welfare-review.defra.gov.uk/apply/register-your-interest> To remind you, currently you can only apply for one species (beef/dairy/sheep). "Shortly" you will be able to apply for multiple species, however due to how long it has taken to get here, I wouldn't expect it to happen too soon! For beef you need to test 9-15mth old animals for BVD, for dairy it is a bulk milk BVD test, for sheep it is a worm treatment check. The review needs to be completed within 6mths of sign up, so perhaps think which animals you have available over the next months and sign up for that species (for example, if you are a suckler farm and won't have eligible stock of the correct age for 9 months, consider signing up for sheep now, or vice versa).

Guidance which explain the eligibility criteria and what a review consists of can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sfi-annual-health-and-welfare-review#your-eligibility-to-apply-for-this-funding>

Also, on Thursday 9th February, Defra published guidance for the new round of the Farming Equipment & Technology Fund (FETF). This is the first step in the process and it will be followed by the opening of the application portals. What is FETF? The fund offers grants for farmers, foresters and growers (inc. contractors to these sectors) of sums between £1,000 and £25,000 to go towards the costs of farm equipment from a set list. In 2023, the equipment on offer will fall under two themes: productivity and slurry as well as animal health and welfare. Read more about the 2023 fund in the latest blogpost <https://defrafarming.blog.gov.uk/2023/02/09/new-round-of-farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-grants-opening-soon/>. What should I do now? To prepare for the opening of the application portal, read the guidance and find out what items Defra will fund <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/farming-equipment-and-technology-fund-fetf-2023>. When are applications open? Applications for productivity and slurry equipment will open later this month, and applications for animal health and welfare equipment will open in March.

To keep up to speed with all further announcements, I would recommend signing up to the **future farming blog**. You will then automatically receive emails as new schemes open <https://defrafarming.blog.gov.uk/subscribe/>

As discussed at the meetings, there is also a drive from industry, including most producers and retailers, to engage with the AHDB medicine hub. If you sign up and grant us third party permission, we can upload data on your behalf. This would occur when we do an annual antibiotic collation for red tractor (we would simply upload the same data). <https://ahdb.org.uk/medicine-hub>

That is all for this month. Have a good spring everyone!



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