

# 24 NFU SUCCESSES IN 2016/17

## **NEONICOTINOID SEED TREATMENTS BAN DELAYED**

The NFU has been successful in delaying the Commission's proposal to extend the ban on neonicotinoids to all outdoor crops. We have urged the Commission to wait until the European Court of Judgement decision is announced and for the European Food Standard Authority to submit their conclusions in November 2017. NFU members have been very involved with the **#SaveOurSeedTreatments** campaign which has highlighted the consequences of this proposed ban.

## **2 FARMER REPRESENTATION ON THE EXPERT COMMITTEE ON PESTICIDES**

The NFU has long argued that Defra's Expert Committee on Pesticides (ECP) should have some agronomic representation. The Regulators have listened and are now in the process of recruiting an agronomist to join the ECP. The NFU will ensure that farmers' voices are now part of the discussion when pesticides are authorised for use in the UK.



# 3

## **COMMONERS TO RECEIVE TOP-UP PAYMENTS AFTER MAJOR LEGAL WIN**

Top-up payments totalling millions of pounds will be paid to eligible farmers following a landmark case backed by the NFU's Legal Assistance Scheme. Previously, the Rural Payment Agency had denied those that farm on commons the ability to claim for all of their farmed area, instead reserving proportions of the land for other rights holders. This win underlines the strength of the NFU and the value of the NFU's Legal Assistance Scheme.

# 4

## **NFU WIN ON DIRECT PAYMENTS**

As a result of NFU lobbying, the amount of Pillar 1 direct payment transfers to Pillar 2 rural payment schemes has not increased for 2019 and 2020 and it will remain at 12% in England. Based on the average 2016 Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) payment rates, this NFU win means a retention of over £570 to members' BPS payment.

# 5

## **NFU LOBBYING ON BPS**

The former Secretary of State, Andrea Leadsom, announced at NFU Conference 2017 that bridging payments of 75% would be paid to those not issued a full 2016 BPS payment by the end of March 2017. The NFU lobbied for a number of months for bridging payments to be made and was the only organisation calling for these payments to be issued. In Wales, 90% of farmers received their BPS on the first day of the payment window (1 December) as a result of NFU Cymru lobbying.

# 6

## **FUNDING COMMITMENT TO AGRI-ENVIRONMENT SCHEMES**

Agri-environment schemes are a key part of our environmental story. The NFU secured Treasury commitment to fully fund existing agri-environment schemes including those agreements entered into before we leave Europe.

# 7

## **NVZ NOTICES REISSUED**

Following weeks of pressure from the NFU in England, Defra agreed to reissue Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) designation notices that were sent to agents instead of farmers in the first and second tranche of notifications in early 2017. These reissued notices had a new 28-day appeals window from the date on the notice.

# 8

## **FLOODING MANIFESTO LAUNCHED IN WESTMINSTER**

In January 2017, the NFU launched its Flooding Manifesto, setting out clear policy asks of government and others on future flood management at a high profile event in Westminster. The NFU has highlighted the need for long-term strategic plans to mitigate future flood risk and include proper financial resources to deal with extreme weather events and help increase the resilience of farmland from flooding.

9

## DELIVERING FOR THE BRITISH DAIRY INDUSTRY

The NFU were instrumental in setting up the Dairy Antibiotics Stewardship Group and the Dairy Environmental Issues Group to promote some of the good practices in place on British dairy farms and to seek consensus on ways of tackling some more challenging issues. Both these groups seek to deliver for the supply chain, and more importantly, for farmers.

10

## POSITIVE CHANGES TO FARM ANIMAL MOVEMENT RULES

NFU lobbying has ensured that the changes made to the way farmers register their land for the purposes of reporting livestock movements is as practical as possible on farm. These changes will benefit the majority of livestock keepers, and is estimated that the new rules will deliver a benefit to the industry of circa £927,000 through reduced paper movements for sheep.



## NFU CYMRU LOBBYING SUCCESS ON BOVINE TB

Following years of lobbying by NFU Cymru, the Welsh Government has now recognised the bovine TB transmission link between cattle and badgers and has announced measures to break the link in some chronic TB herds.

12

## NFU WIN ON OILSEED PRICING

Traders on Euronext had sought to abolish the moisture content bonus and increase threshold for oil content from 40% to 42% before a bonus was paid. The NFU lobbied against this and prevailed. This is worth 5% of the contract price for each tonne of oilseed rape sold (around £15/tonne or £1,000 for 50 acres of oilseed rape).

13

## MINIMISING PENALTIES OF ERUCIC ACID

The NFU facilitated cooperation between crushers and farmers, where farmers had been suffering increasingly frequent penalties from hundreds and up to thousands of pounds per load for high erucic acid in oilseed rape. This action helped minimise contamination, as well as mitigating the damage and future risk with much lower claims subsequently charged to farmers. Claims were between £20 and up to £350/tonne.

# 14

## **NFU INTERVENTION ON FORWARD SALES**

Regulators had sought to implement onerous international financial rules, which would have effectively prevented farmers selling crops forward unless they and their farm trader were both regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) in London and its equivalent in Paris. Without NFU intervention at regulator and government level in the UK and EU, farmers would have been limited to spot-selling from January 2018; crippling their ability to manage price risk.

# 15

## **VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF FARMING: A NEW DOMESTIC AGRICULTURAL POLICY**

On the same day that Article 50 was triggered by the Prime Minister, the NFU published the first of a series of policy papers setting out its Vision for the Future of Farming. The report details the framework being proposed and consists of three 'cornerstones': productivity measures and business resilience; volatility mitigation measures and management tools; and environmental measures, all to facilitate the development of a future domestic agricultural policy.

# 16

## **PLANT HEALTH FEES DEFERRED FOR 12 MONTHS**

In September 2016, Defra deferred its intention to increase plant health fees for a further 12 months as a result of NFU lobbying. This has saved the industry £205,000, or the equivalent of £270 per plant health client.

# 17

## **THE NFU SECURES BUSINESS RATE CHANGES FOR NURSERY GROWERS**

The NFU successfully secured government's promise to amend legislation; ensuring nursery growers remain exempt from business rates. This has saved growers up to £8,000 per acre of glass.

# 18

## **RETAILERS BACK NFU FRUIT AND VEG PLEDGE**

The Co-op became the third retailer to sign up to the NFU's Fruit and Veg Pledge after Aldi and Lidl. The pledge calls for retailers to commit to selling British fruit and veg when in season, as well as improving long-term relationships with British growers to help improve the profitability of the sector.



## 19 LAUNCH OF THE CONSULTATION INTO EXTENDING THE GCA REMIT

Following extensive NFU lobbying, a government consultation into extending the Grocery Code Adjudicator (GCA) remit has been launched after months of delays. This consultation allows the industry to investigate if greater enforcement is needed to oversee the relationship between farmers and processors. The NFU submitted a full response to this and is awaiting BEIS outcome.

## 20 NFU RAISE AWARENESS OF AVIAN INFLUENZA (AI)

The NFU has raised awareness of AI and its impact through the NFU AI roadshows held in late 2016; these will be run again in October 2017. The NFU has also represented the concerns of members with Nigel Gibbens, Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), and other senior Defra and Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) officials. In addition, the NFU has liaised with the CVO and licensing team to assist members with obtaining movement licences. Literature has also been produced for members and for backyard flock keepers to raise awareness of the threat that they pose to the commercial poultry sector. The NFU will continue to ensure members' concerns on AI are raised, listened to and dealt with.

## 21 FARM BUSINESS GRANT

After extensive lobbying by NFU Cymru, the Welsh Government has announced a £40m small grant scheme in Wales available to farmers to help improve resilience and competitiveness.

## 22 THE NFU SPEARHEADS MOVEMENT TO COMBAT RURAL CRIME

This year NFU members have reported big increases in various rural crime incidents that severely impact their ability to run their businesses; many of which are associated with intimidation and threats of violence. The NFU stepped up work on rural crime issues, engaging with key police figures and decision makers, culminating in the launch of the Combatting Rural Crime report at the House of Commons. This has provided a platform for ongoing work to prevent rural crime.

## 23 RETAILER COMMITMENTS

Our Back British Farming and Back Welsh Farming messages have inspired even more retailers to follow suit. The Co-op has moved all its fresh bacon and lamb lines to be 100% British, in addition to signing up to the NFU's Fruit and Veg Pledge. Morrison's have moved to 100% British fresh lamb, and Aldi now stock Protected Geographical Indication Welsh lamb in 29 of its South and West Wales stores. We have also seen Tesco Everyday Value and Asda standard yoghurt move to 100% British dairy. This clarity and support for British and Welsh is something the NFU continues to pressure for.

# 24

## FARMING - BRINGING WALES TOGETHER

NFU Cymru launched a booklet and video showcasing agriculture's contribution to the economic, environmental, social and cultural well-being of Wales at the Senedd, in the presence of Assembly Members from across Wales. The booklet demonstrates the significance of farming to all aspects of Welsh life and is an example of how we represent our members with government.

For the latest information on the current work  
of the NFU and NFU Cymru,  
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