

Warm weather impact – your help needed

We would be grateful for your help in assessing the impact the heatwave is having across the region. We need as accurate and comprehensive a picture as possible to brief Defra's National Drought Group, MPs and to assist with media enquiries. In particular we would like information on:

- How rainfed crops are faring, including initial results from those of you who have started harvest
- Water availability for irrigators in the short and medium term
- Feedback from livestock farmers, including on availability of grazing now and possible silage and fodder shortages for the winter
- How the high temperatures are affecting fruit, vegetable and salad crops.

Please email your response to east.anglia@nfu.org.uk. It would be helpful if you include your membership number in your response.

Advice on reducing wild fire risks

With the current heatwave predicted to last for at least another week, there is an increased risk of wild fires in the countryside. One farmer lost more than 20 acres of crops in a fire in Suffolk this week and Norfolk Fire and Rescue has dealt with 110 grass and countryside fires in just seven days. To help reduce the risk of fire, we've put together some advice on the key things to be aware of. [Follow this link to find out more.](#)

Environment Agency briefing on water resources prospects

The dry weather and high daily demand of water for irrigation is resulting in lower river flows in East Anglia, especially in Suffolk and Essex. To update abstractors on the current situation, so they can make some informed decisions, the Environment Agency's hydrology team has provided an assessment of water resources prospects for Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk. [You can access the update here](#) (member login required).

Impact of hot weather on stewardship agreements

The hot weather conditions are leading to hay crops being ready earlier than normal, or members wanting to alter grazing, cropping and supplementary feeding requirements due to the heatwave.

In situations where the agreement holder cannot meet agreement requirements due to adverse weather conditions, they can ask Natural England for either a derogation under Environmental Stewardship (ES) or a Minor and Temporary Adjustment (MTA) under Countryside Stewardship (CS). The CS form can be found [here](#) or request a form from Natural England Delivery Services (customer number 0300 060 3900). [More information on MTAs is in the CS MT manual](#), 6.20 on pages 64-65, and [in the HT manual](#), 6.21 on pages 70-71. For ELS / HLS, derogation forms are available on GOV.UK ([here for ELS](#), [here for HLS](#)). Alternatively call Natural England Delivery Services (customer number 0300 060 3900). Natural England aims to respond as quickly as it can in dealing with these cases. NE encourage agreement holders to get in contact as soon as possible, explaining the issue and the actions they would like to take, as they need to obtain their derogation or MTA before they need to make changes to agreement management. Where a derogation is given, such as for early cutting of hay, the agreement holder should ensure they avoid areas with ground nesting birds.

Mid-Tier Countryside Stewardship deadline extended

Defra has [announced](#) that the deadline for Mid-Tier Countryside Stewardship (CS) applications has been extended by one month to 31 August. The extension has come as a result of NFU lobbying, since Natural England is still issuing application packs, leaving some applicants with less than a month to complete the application. (If you did not request an application pack by 31 May 2018, it is too late to be able to apply this year.)

Further updates on Countryside Stewardship, including the NFU's request to let existing expiring HLS agreements roll over, can be found on the NFU website:

- [Making a good Mid-Tier application](#)
- [Key tips for Mid-Tier applicants](#)
- [Countryside Stewardship Update: June 2018](#)
- [NFU outlines immediate action needed from Defra on Countryside Stewardship](#)

Events shine spotlight on farm safety

Farmers were urged to make health and safety their top priority, during and after harvest, at two events organised by the NFU in East Anglia. It arranged the events with organisations including the HSE and NFU Mutual to help reinforce crucial farm safety messages to almost 200 farmers and farm workers. One event was organised with the NFU's Ely & Soham branch and hosted by F. C. Palmer & Sons at Chittering, Cambridgeshire. It concentrated on vehicle and transport safety. It involved practical demonstrations and discussion on areas including vehicle and driver regulations, teleporter and trailer maintenance and record keeping. The second was a pre-harvest safety event hosted on his Bedfordshire farm by County Chairman Gary Speirs. It took farmers through transport issues and also covered health and safety issues around working at height, working near overhead powerlines and with chemicals. NFU Vice President Stuart Roberts, who holds the health and safety brief for the NFU officeholder team, attended and spoke at both events. [Find out more here.](#)

Wide loads dispensation for harvest

With harvest having started for a number of members or just around the corner for the majority, please make sure that you have obtained your annual dispensation for abnormal loads from the police. These apply if: You are moving machinery or vehicles over three metres wide, either over a distance of five miles or more and/or are moving on a road which has a speed limit of 40mph or less. You are required to give notification to the police at least 24 hours before the journey. Registering for a dispensation means that the notification conditions are reduced or removed altogether. However, dispensations are issued annually, at the start of the year, so ideally you should make a point of doing it every new year. If you still need to apply please contact your relevant police force listed below:

- **Essex:** email: abloads@essex.pnn.police.uk or telephone: 0300 333 4444 Ext 486128
- **Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire** - (combined dispensation) email abloads@herts.pnn.police.uk or telephone: 01234 846854
- **Norfolk & Suffolk** (combined dispensation for both counties) – email abnormalloads@norfolk.pnn.police.uk or telephone: 01953 424672

Don't forget, as a member you can access our very useful and informative [Harvest Machinery Movements Business Guide](#). You will need to logon with your membership number and password. If you have forgotten these please contact CallFirst on 0370 845 8458.

SSSIs and coming out of agri-environment agreements

The NFU is hearing from a number of members who are coming out of agri-environment agreements on SSSI land and are surprised to find that Natural England continues to restrict the activities which take place on the SSSI. The NFU's legal team has put together a Q&A document addressing some of the commonly asked questions from those exiting agri-environment agreements. The briefing provides a general overview of the legal regime governing SSSIs and the powers that Natural England has to control the activities which take place on the land. It is not intended to be a substitute for independent legal or professional advice on the facts of any specific case. NFU members can obtain free initial legal or professional advice regarding their particular situation from NFU CallFirst. The NFU's panel firms of solicitors can also advise on these issues in more detail. Members can access the briefing [here](#).

Flying the flag for farming at Bedford River Festival

The NFU's Discovery Barn will finish this year's regional tour at Bedford River Festival on 14 and 15 July and we need your support. This biennial festival is one of the largest free outdoor events in the country, attracting around 250,000 people in 2016, and provides an ideal opportunity for us to highlight the good work that farmers do. The Discovery Barn will be manned from 11am to 6.30pm on both days and we're looking for farmer volunteers who can help. If you can spare an hour or two on either day, please email brian.finnerty@nfu.org.uk or call 01638 672125.

NFU National Tenants Conference 2019 comes to East Anglia

The biennial NFU National Tenants Conference is coming to our region next year. It will take place on Thursday 14 November 2019 at The Haycock Hotel, Wansford, near Peterborough. Members with any form of land tenure situation,



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from share farming agreement to contract farming arrangement, to FBT, or AHA tenancy, are all invited to attend. Further details will be published nearer the time but please put the date in your diary now.

Dates for your diary

Carcase losses in the lamb supply chain workshop, 12 July

Join AHDB Beef & Lamb for a workshop looking at minimising carcase losses in the lamb supply chain. It takes place at the Sheep Unit, Rutland Stud, Saxon Street, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 9RS on Thursday 12 July from 4pm to 7pm. Clean footwear is required. To register your free place, ring the AHDB KE Events Hub on 01904 771212 or email: ke.events@ahdb.org.uk. Full details are available [here](#)

The management of wild Red Deer in the East of England, 20 July

The event will be held at Helmingham Hall, IP14 6EF, by kind permission of The Hon. Edward Tollemache. Registration 9am for 9.30am start and finish at 1pm with a venison pie lunch.

Red deer are native to the UK and there are five main strongholds of the East of England population: north Norfolk, north east Norfolk and the Broads, Stoke Ferry/Wissey, The Brecks, and Dunwich/Minsmere. This meeting will provide an opportunity to look at red stag management and to debate and discuss the intricacies of this management. There will be talks from national experts on:

- The history of red deer in the region with discussion of their current range, distribution
- Red deer population dynamics
- Managing farming and red deer impacts – A farmer's perspective, lethal and non-lethal management action taken to reduce impacts
- Getting the best from your venison - When and what to cull for maximising venison production and does this fit with cull planning?
- Future red deer management objectives, and research opportunities
- An open discussion providing an opportunity to question and debate current management thinking
- A tour of the Red Deer Park, looking at stag quality and aging of beasts in the field to assess cull suitability.

If you would like to attend please email central@basc.org.uk to request a booking form.

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