

NFU Technically Speaking

e-news from the Science and Regulatory Affairs section of the NFU Policy Services Department

April 2014

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HGV Road User Levy- Starts 1st April

From 1st April the HGV Road User Levy will introduce a charge for all lorries in excess of 12 tonnes maximum authorised mass using UK Roads. However this will be off set with reduction in VED (Road tax). Read more here:

<http://www.nfuonline.com/business/transport/hgv-road-user-levy-starts-april-1st/>

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CE Marking of Farm Buildings

After the 1st July 2014 it is a criminal offence to sell or supply a steel framed building without having a CE mark. This will include agricultural buildings members can read more here:

<http://www.nfuonline.com/business/inputs/ce-marking-of-farm-buildings/>

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EU sees sense on tractor MOTs

The NFU has successfully secured exemptions for agricultural vehicles from unnecessary MOT testing, following a vote by the EU Parliament. Read more here:

<http://www.nfuonline.com/business/transport/eu-sees-sense-on-tractor-mots/>

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The voice of British farming

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HSE Work at height guidance revamped

The Health and Safety executive (HSE) has overhauled its guidance relating to work at height to make it easier for employers and employees to understand what the law requires of them when working at height. Read more here: <http://www.nfuonline.com/business/farm-safety/hse-work-at-height-guidance-revamped/>[\(back to top\)](#)



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Investment for business growth - The legal side explained

Is your start-up ready for investment? Join us at Rothamsted Research on Friday 11th April for a breakfast seminar on the benefits and potential pitfalls associated with the different types of finance available for businesses, from loans and equity investment to crowd funding.

Book your FREE place today at: <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/investment-for-business-growth-the-legal-side-explained-tickets-10739236345>

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Rothamsted Research Association alive and well, and a new Rothamsted Director is on his way

Our Chief Science Adviser Helen Ferrier is a trustee of the newly re-constituted [Rothamsted Research Association](#), an organisation designed to foster close links and knowledge exchange between [Rothamsted](#) scientists and farmers, advisors and the wider agriculture industry. If you weren't already a member, you will now be able to register as an 'interested party' of the RRA for free. Timing is ideal for a refresh, with [Achim Dobermann](#) starting as Rothamsted Director 1 June.



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Defra Chief Scientist sees farming in the flesh

Last week we took Prof Ian Boyd, the Defra Chief Scientific Adviser, for a day of farm visits in Warwickshire. There was a focus on combining environmental land management with commercial production, with some excellent examples of wild bird feeding, water courses and wetlands, conservation grade production and scheduled ancient monuments. The farms were mixed livestock and arable, including some diversified businesses. It was also a chance for Prof Boyd to meet Minette Batters, our new Deputy President who has taken on the science and research policy portfolio for the officeholder team.

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Hear about Agri-Tech Strategy progress direct from the team

You can subscribe free to the Agri-Tech e-newsletter by emailing agritechstrategy@bis.gsi.gov.uk. And you can follow them on Twitter too [@AgriTechGov](https://twitter.com/AgriTechGov). Hear about the latest news, events, competition announcements, interesting articles etc. plus give you views. This month's newsletter includes a 'spotlight' on James Townshend, NFU member and Chief Executive of Velcourt, and also Agri-Tech Business Ambassador on the Leadership Council. Also, the first round of Catalyst projects have just been announced <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/4-million-for-agricultural-innovation>, including work on pesticides, hydroponics, crop genetic improvement, vegetable seed quality, mastitis and pig disease control.



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PM gets the evidence on GM

The Council for Science and Technology, a Government advisory body, was asked by the Prime Minister to set out the evidence on risks and benefits of GM technologies and how to improve the current situation in terms of debate, decision-making and regulation. Last month, a letter and report were published

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/genetic-modification-gm-technologies>, with

key statements about safety, the need for evidence-based regulation, encouraging research to address UK farming challenges and tackling barriers to field trials. The authors called on food producers and retailers to be more open about production challenges in order to raise consumer awareness and build trust. They also pointed out the responsibility that NGOs and the media have to ensure debate on GM reflects the scientific evidence.

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April's NADIS Webinars available

NADIS (National Animal Disease Information Service) produces advanced training for on-farm disease recognition.

This April there is a specially commissioned webinar on managing milk fever. Milk fever is still one of the most common diseases of the calving cow; in this webinar Associate Professor Richard Laven BVetMed, PhD Lond. MRCVS looks at how to recognise treat and prevent this condition.

The [Parasite Forecast](#) outlines the parasitic challenge facing cattle and sheep in the different regions of the UK. This month's webinar includes Nematodirus and Coccidiosis in lambs, worming of ewes at lambing and prevention of lungworm and PGE in cattle.

NADIS publishes a monthly [Disease Alert](#) which brings attention to key diseases. With turnout just around the corner, James Aitken BSc BVetMed MRCVS, of Orchard Veterinary Group in Glastonbury, discusses White Muscle disease which is most commonly seen at this time of year. He also discusses Border Disease in sheep which is a complex disease and one possible cause of an abnormally low lambing percentage.

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Want to be part of crop or livestock disease research?



As part of the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Innovation Platform (SAF-IP), the Technology Strategy Board and partners are about to launch a new **£16.5M funding competition** in the area of **Crop and Livestock Disease Challenges**. The Knowledge Transfer Network (KTN) is organising a free workshop to enable potential applicants to get a better understanding of the competition process, rules and scope, and to help with consortia building. This will be held on **6th May** in **Birmingham**. Places at this event are limited, so please **register as soon as possible to avoid disappointment** by visiting the following website: <http://safip-birmingham.eventbrite.co.uk>

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Efra publication of report on the Tree Health & Plant Biosecurity

Efra has published its report on Tree Health and Plant Biosecurity, together with the Proceedings of the Committee, which can be read here:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmenvfru/469/46902.htm>

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CRD Publish responses to Non-formal Consultation on Proposals for Comparative Assessment and Substitution

The Chemicals Regulation Directorate (CRD) of the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have published the responses of consulted stakeholders to proposals for a possible way to implement the requirement for comparative assessment and substitution in Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 (concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market).

[http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/guidance/industries/pesticides/News/Collected-Updates/Information-](http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/guidance/industries/pesticides/News/Collected-Updates/Information-Updates-2014/March/responses-comp-assess-consult)

[Updates-2014/March/responses-comp-assess-consult](http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/guidance/industries/pesticides/News/Collected-Updates/Information-Updates-2014/March/responses-comp-assess-consult)

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Regulators Compliance Code

A Regulators Code will come into statutory effect from 6 April 2014 under the Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006. This code revises the Regulators Compliance code and aims to provide a clear, principles based framework for how regulators should engage with those they regulate. Nearly all non-economic regulators including local authorities, need to have regard to the code when developing standards, policies and procedures that guide their regulatory activities with business. The NFU believes there is a need for the code to be part of the overall framework regarding regulatory enforcement, but it must be followed by regulators and Government must be committed to the code. The revised code allows businesses to challenge regulators who they believe are not acting in accordance with the code. For more information on the code please see [NFU Online](#).



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The Latest 'Skills Roundup' (April)



Every month the NFU puts together a list of some of the main agricultural and agriculture-related training courses and events by Region. For more information, please click [here](#) and open the link in the article.

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The Environment Agency website has moved

The EA website has moved to gov.uk in a move to make it simpler, clearer and faster to find information from the Government. For more on this please [click here](#)

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