

NFU Technically Speaking

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

February 2014

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Withdrawal of methiocarb slug pellets

The EU Commission has voted to revoke the use of the molluscicide methiocarb in slug pellets, due to their risk on none target grain-eating farm birds. Read the NFU briefing [here](#).

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Campaign highlighting the risk of illegal pesticides is launched

The Watch Out! For illegal pesticides campaign is a yearlong campaign, promoted nationwide, to raise awareness of the risks of illegal pesticides and to demonstrate a proactive approach by the industry to this issue. Read more [here](#).

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Regulatory update – endocrine disrupters

HSE has provided a regulatory update on the progress on endocrine disrupters and candidates for substitution. The update outlines current situation and expected future regulatory progression of these criteria in pesticide registration. Read the update [here](#).

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Tractor and trailer weights and speeds consultation submitted



The NFU [responses](#) to the Department for Transport's consultation on tractor and trailer weights and speeds have been submitted. We are very grateful for the extensive engagement from our members across the country on this issue and for the number of considered comments we have received and believe the level of detail and analysis in our response provides a strong evidence base. We will continue to work with the DfT to demonstrate the need for change.

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The voice of British farming

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Legal Clarification on feeding calves

The NFU recently commented on a series of questions from the Farm Animal Welfare Committee on the role played by nutrition, on optimising the health and welfare of artificially reared calves originating from the dairy herd, with a focus on the timeframe from birth to weaning. These questions explored the dairy industry's use of 'once a day feeding' regimes for young calves – a controversial and potentially illegal management practice (dependent on the age of the animals). A document clarifying the legal position has been developed and published online, please follow the link [here](#).



The NFU would like to draw members' attention to this issue and suggests that all members review their calf feeding regimes to ensure that they are compliant with the current legal position.

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February's NADIS Webinars available

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



Parasite forecast:

Liver fluke – chronic weight loss despite adequate feeding

This February's [Parasite Forecast](#) outlines the parasitic challenge facing cattle and sheep in the different regions of the UK including liver fluke forecast and advice especially in breeding ewes and out-wintered cattle, continuing risk of PGE in store lambs and replacements and lice in sheep.



Disease Alert:
Dairy Fertility

In addition, NADIS publishes a monthly [Disease Alert](#) which brings attention to key diseases. One of the most costly issues for dairy farmers is that of poor fertility, and one of the main contributing factors is delayed calving to first service. In this webinar James Aitken BSc BVetMed MRCVS, of Orchard Veterinary Group in Glastonbury discusses anoestrus in cows as well as factors important in maximising new-born lamb survival.

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NFU witness in a Commons Select Committee investigating antimicrobial resistance

The NFU's animal health and welfare adviser, Catherine McLaughlin, accepted an invitation from the Commons Select Committee for Science and Technology to give evidence at a session on antimicrobial resistance and the UK's Five Year Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy 2013-2018. The appearance was preceded by a written submission in December 2013. Coverage from the two and a half hour long session, including a link to the Parliament's video coverage and a Twitter storify can be found on the NFU website [here](http://www.nfuonline.com/science-environment/animal-and-plant-health/nfu-is-witness-in-a-select-committee-debate/). <http://www.nfuonline.com/science-environment/animal-and-plant-health/nfu-is-witness-in-a-select-committee-debate/>

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Agri-Food Advanced Training Partnership

Members are reminded that skills and training courses are available to businesses in the Agri-food sector through the Agri-food Advanced Training Partnership. This is one of four higher level training partnerships that have been awarded funding by the BBSRC. Training is delivered by four leading recognised university and research institutes: The University of Nottingham; Harper Adams University; Cranfield University and Rothamsted Research. Training is delivered in short courses and through e-learning, and can be anything from one day workshops and field days to short courses and accredited postgraduate programmes. If you are currently employed in a UK based company in the Agri-food sector, you may also be eligible for a bursary to cover 100% of the fee of the course. More information is available on the [ATP website](#).



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The Latest 'Skills Roundup' (February)



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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A new route into agriculture

A new agriculture course has been launched at the University of Hertfordshire www.herts.ac.uk/courses/sustainable-agriculture-and-food-security.

The Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security BSc brings together the University of Hertfordshire, The Royal Veterinary College, Rothamsted Research and Oaklands College and has been developed in conjunction with leading employers in the agricultural and food industries including BASF and Sainsburys.



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BBSRC is 20 years old



The main research council for agricultural research celebrated its 20 year anniversary with a reception in London, attended by Peter Kendall. BBSRC will also be exhibiting at NFU conference 2014. For lots of information about the impact of bioscience on the economy including an interactive timeline see <http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/news/twenty/20-years-of-bioscience-index.aspx>

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Rothamsted and industry

One of our key publically funded crop science institutes, Rothamsted Research, is looking at how it works with industry to find solutions to the big production and food security challenges we face, and turn these into practical tools and technologies. It is holding workshops with interested parties, including NFU, and the wider public to discuss guiding principles for industry collaboration and joint research work.

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New GM field trial



Rothamsted Research has submitted an application to Defra to test whether GM Camelina plants designed to make omega-3 fatty acids in their seeds produce significant quantities under field conditions. For more information see:

<http://www.rothamsted.ac.uk/news/rothamsted-research-submits-application-defra-permission-carry-out-gm-field-trial>

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