

FUTURE FARM SUPPORT: ESSENTIAL REFERENCES/READING LIST

In this article Richard Wordsworth concludes his look at the change to farm support as Defra develops an approach that moves away from the CAP in England, with some recommendations on where to find more information.

As alluded to in my previous piece [‘Top 10’ suggestions & tips list](#) for preparing for what’s ahead’ it is vital to keep engaged and up to date with developments as Defra and its delivery agencies move away from current scheme offerings. To help you with getting up to speed or keeping you informed, I hope the following information will assist you. In the main this information is being published online, but I am keen to see information is also distributed to those less digitally connected than others – i.e. in hard copy.

It is important to appreciate the best information, (whilst it may not be all there and in the detail you want it to be) comes from the authors of this change in support arrangements - that means Defra and the Defra family of delivery bodies and this is where I focus on below:



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Where do I start?

Launch of Defra’s path to sustainable farming from 2021 via its Agricultural Transition Plan (ATP):

www.gov.uk/government/news/government-unveils-path-to-sustainable-farming-from-2021. This took place on the 30 November 2020 and is the start of the latest instalment of information.

This aforementioned announcement led to the publication of the **‘Farming is changing’** document which can be found [here](#): www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-farming-changes-to-farming-in-england. If you want more detail than this summary then head to: **‘The path to Sustainable farming: An Agricultural Transition: Plan 2021 to 2024’** document which is found [here](#): www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-2021-to-2024. There is also an adviser pack that may give you more information which is found [here](#): www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-adviser-pack.

If you want to find out more on the Environmental Land Management scheme, a good place to start is [here](#): www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-environmental-land-management-scheme-an-overview. Key here is to get an overview of the various approaches that Defra are taking, understand what the various phrases like ‘Sustainable Farming Incentive’ mean and how they relate to other schemes and themes mentioned in the information.

If you did want to look back before November, there is some useful information set out in the previous Defra update to what is now referred to as the ATP, on the 25 February 2020, in the **‘Farming for the future: policy and progress update’** found [here](#): www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-future-for-food-farming-and-the-environment-policy-statement-2020. Just bear in mind that the latest information is always going to be more up to date on the future design and approach to farm support policy.

Where to keep up to date with new developments?

Future schemes - Not all the finer detail is published yet, as the Defra family are still developing the various policies, as I call them ‘themes and schemes’, so it is key to keep up to date. Also it is important to acknowledge Defra’s current iterative and co design approaches to the development of the new farm support programme means that rollout of information will be over time and some information will also become outdated. It is also important to note that organisations such as the Rural Payments Agency (RPA), Natural England (NE) and Forestry Commission (FC) will be involved in the roll out of schemes and thus information.

To avoid missing anything, which is always a danger with a gradual rollout of information, I suggest putting the ATP timeline contained in the **'Annex of the 'Farming is changing'** leaflet on your office wall. This has a summary of new schemes - please refer back to it on a monthly basis to see what should be happening when and then seek out information on this.

There will be information coming out all the time, I would be looking regularly at the following webpages and signing up to the following Defra update services going forward:

- Defra Blog on future farm support developments - defrafarming.blog.gov.uk/ - gives an insight into what is happening
- Defra's e-alert service for receiving information as it released - preferences.defra.gov.uk/. emails should be coming from 'GOV.UK Email gov.uk.email@notifications.service.gov.uk'
- Defra's contact list - www.gov.uk/guidance/contact-defra – useful for both future as well as other scheme .
- RPA - www.gov.uk/government/organisations/rural-payments-agency – delivery body and will no doubt have information on new schemes going forward such as the Environmental Land Management scheme National Pilot and Sustainable Farming Incentive 2022.
- NE www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england – delivery body and will no doubt have information on new schemes going forward,
- FC www.gov.uk/government/organisations/forestry-commission and its e-alert service for grants and regulations - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/email-alerts-ealerts-for-grants-and-regulations-customers> - delivery body and will no doubt have information on new schemes going forward on schemes like the Tree Health scheme

As set out in the aforementioned **'The path to Sustainable farming: An Agricultural Transition: Plan 2021 to 2024'** document, there are a number of consultations which will add to the information available and to your knowledge base These, as well as scheme launch details, should be covered in these aforementioned information sources.

As time moves on there may be other sources of information to consider - for example funding for farmers in 'Protected Landscapes', which is aimed at areas within National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and so may need to be in communication with relevant organisations involved in those areas.

Also remember existing scheme rules and requirements.

At this time, it is also important to consider some of the information produced relates to current schemes and what will affect you in 2021 and beyond. Below are useful links to the aware of

- Rural grants and payments: detailed information on elements such as Cross Compliance, Countryside Stewardship and Basic Payment Scheme - www.gov.uk/topic/farming-food-grants-payments/rural-grants-payments
- RPA - www.gov.uk/government/organisations/rural-payments-agency - it has an extension 'Rural payments and grants' section
- FC - www.gov.uk/government/organisations/forestry-commission - it has a lot of information on current woodland grants and schemes

Finally

I hope this helps, it is not an exclusive list and over time other the communication and information framework may evolve.

For some, searching via the likes of Google or using social media such as Twitter, Facebook or Instagram to get information will be the route taken, but remember there is a structure of information out there already that will be developed and I hope through my suggestions above, you will appreciate that searching by a key word may not get you to the starting point or see all the information.

Also do not forget the work done by [AHDB](https://www.ahdb.co.uk/) in this area, and finally for those of you that are NFU members, we have a suite of information available via NFUOnline website [here: www.nfuonline.com/cross-sector/farm-business/farm-support/](https://www.nfuonline.com/cross-sector/farm-business/farm-support/) and we will be offering a range of information and events as support schemes develop.