

Latest news from NFU south east region

Editor: sandra.nichols@nfu.org.uk  [follow us on Twitter](#)

Member benefit of the week:

The NFU produces over 150 legal guidance booklets exclusively for our members. The user-friendly and easy to understand guides are written to assist you with legal matters you may face when running your farming business. Have a look [here](#)

Basic Payment Scheme latest:

We understand that a further 1000 claimants were paid this week – great for those who got it, but progress remains slow! Our people were involved in yet another four and a half hour meeting with the RPA yesterday. We understand that Claims Statements will start to go out soon, although we have been told this for three successive weeks and nothing has gone out yet! There are reports of people thinking that they may have been underpaid, but without the Claims Statement it is difficult to quantify this. As a rough ‘rule of thumb’, and with no changes to the claim or penalties, etc, payments would be expected to be between 7 and 8% less this year in any event.

BPS 2016 meetings:

We are in the final stages of planning our BPS 2016 regional roadshow for early April – full details next week.

EU referendum meetings:

Watch this space! We hope to have full details by next week of a series of meetings, also in April, for NFU members across the region to discuss the pros and cons of in or out!

National Living Wage MP briefing:

Thanks to everyone who urged their MP to attend our briefing on the implications of the NLW on the horticultural sector. MPs from across all parties were given the hard facts and heard testimonials from growers who set out what the legislation will mean for horticultural businesses across the country. The introduction of the National Living Wage will increase the cost of seasonal wages for grower businesses by 35 per cent over the period 2016-2021, equivalent to an average annual wage inflation of just under 7 per cent per year, significantly more than the 2.5 per cent annual rate of wage inflation growers reasonably expected to take place over the next few years. The NFU has lobbied on eight key issues prior to the introduction of the National Living Wage. The NFU fully supports the principle of a living wage for all workers in the horticultural and agricultural industry, but we have a number of ‘asks’. See more [here](#)

Watch out - *Xylella fastidiosa*:

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APHA has published an information note on implications for the nursery trade of the current outbreaks of *Xylella fastidiosa* in Italy and France (Corsica and mainland France). An outbreak in the UK could lead to destruction of host plants within 100m, and a 10km movement ban for host plants for five years. Full details are [here](#)

Countryside Stewardship application dates announced:

Defra and Natural England have confirmed the application windows for 2016. These dates have been confirmed following our meeting with the Minister on Monday this week, as mentioned in Wednesday's NFU Bulletin. They have listened to our request for a longer application window to allow time to develop applications before harvest and it also gives time to drop from a Higher Tier application to a Mid-tier application. The 2016 application window for the Higher-tier and Mid-tier Countryside Stewardship extends from 14 March until 30 September. New guidance material will be available in mid-March. Higher Tier applicants must to submit an Expression of Intent (EoI) by 30 April. Higher tier is designed for those creating habitat or seeking to achieve higher environmental goals (old HLS). NE will be approaching some HLS expirees to convert to CS Higher Tier. All applications involving woodland will be Higher Tier, although the EoI process is different with different dates. Unless the rules change from last year, Higher Tier is the only way to access Educational Access options.

New guidance for manure and silage storage:

Updated guidance is now available which will help farmers make the right decisions when adding new manure and silage storage infrastructure on the farm. The updated guidance (CIRIA 759 A&B) incorporates amendments to the Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil (SSAFO) Regulations from 2010 and also takes into account the evolution of construction and storage technologies which has taken place since 1992. The guidance comes in two parts:

- Part 1 provides the legislative background and presents the characteristics of farm wastes and principles of treatment and disposal. This part is of particular use to farmers as it provides an overview of the topic and provides advice on selecting the most appropriate store.
- Part 2 is the design and construction guide and is aimed at consultants, designers and contractors. It also includes guidance on storage maintenance and health and safety considerations.

Both documents can be freely downloaded from the [CIRIA](#) website.

Boost for UK crop science as NIAB and EMR join forces:

Two leading UK crop research institutes are joining forces to create a major new centre for applied crop science and innovation. East Malling Research (EMR) has become part of the NIAB group. This alliance, bringing together internationally renowned expertise in crop genetics, agronomy, environmental and data science, will strengthen NIAB's ambition to lead the UK in crop innovation. EMR brings international leadership in top fruit and soft fruit research, complementing NIAB's scientific expertise in arable crops, potatoes and ornamentals. Both organisations have a focus on industry-facing, applied research aimed at addressing the challenges facing UK and global agriculture. The partnership will strengthen the UK's crop

science infrastructure and capabilities, with the pooling of complementary research expertise, and a shared commitment to the translation and application of science to support crop production in the UK and internationally. In research terms, the integration will align EMR's internationally renowned capabilities in horticultural and environmental science, including expertise in plant breeding, soil science, water use and biological pest control, alongside NIAB's existing strengths in genetics and pre-breeding, variety evaluation, agronomy research, precision farming and informatics. The combined organisation, employing more than 300 staff and with a turnover in excess of £22 million, will provide long-term stability, scale and capacity for investment in crop science. NIAB EMR will be established as a wholly owned subsidiary of NIAB, and will continue to operate from its existing site at East Malling in Kent.

AHDB Professional Manager Development Scheme 2016/17:

The AHDB Professional Manager Development Scheme (PMDS), run in conjunction with Cedar Associates, has been designed to challenge and develop the skill base of managers with staff management responsibilities to meet the industry's needs and has three key objectives:

- Develop the skills and abilities of managers.
- Improve understanding and communication within and across the industry.
- Raise the level of professionalism throughout the industry.

Over the course of the 16 month programme, which looks very interesting and useful, participants will broaden their staff management skills. Each of the 10 sessions will consist of an evening discussion with external speakers, followed by a day of management training. Full details are here, but note that the closing date is THIS MONDAY, 15 February (sorry, we've only just been told about it!) More info [here](#)

Tree Health Conference:

The Forestry Commission has organised a day's tree health conference at RHS Wisley for Friday 11 March to provide some of the latest information on tree health issues of relevance to the forestry (rural and urban) sector. An excellent range of expert speakers have been set up including:

- Introduction by Alison Field
- Helen Carter – Sweet Chestnut Gall Wasp
- Jon Stokes – key messages from the Chalara non-woodland management plan
- Jake Morris & Andrew Hoppit – Oak Processionary Moth – current extent, control plans and Evaluation findings
- Keith Sacre – London iTREE Report – the ecosystem service and economic cost of pests & diseases
- James Roberts – biosecurity in the arboricultural sector
- RHS work on tree health: Andrew Salisbury – pests; Rebekah Robinson- diseases
- Ana Perez-Sierra – revised Tree Alert website
- Joan Webber – other existing P&Ds in SE&L area; horizon scanning and analysis of potential pests of the future
- Nick Hazlitt – tree health risks from wood packaging
- Option for delegates to attend a:

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- Workshop on developing Chalara local action plans (led by Jon Stokes) then opportunity to walk round the gardens
- Tour of Wisley Gardens by RHS staff

The event is free of charge and we are taking bookings on a first come first served basis. If you are interested in attending, please email Jeanette.hawkins@forestry.gsi.gov.uk.

Dairy placement sought by vet student:

We've been contacted by a vet student who is looking for two weeks work experience within a working dairy farm. She lives in London so somewhere she could commute to, or who would offer accommodation would be best as she doesn't drive. She already has an animal science degree with Aberystwyth University and a good scientific and biological understanding of domestic animals ranging from canines to cattle. Please contact Ariel Ward on 07950 100573 or arielward@hotmail.co.uk

Farmer for Action march on London:

Farmers for Action are planning a march to London on 23 March. Further details at www.farmersforaction.org

Berks, Bucks & Oxon - County Adviser – tom.cackett@nfu.org.uk

Hampshire and Surrey – County Adviser sandra.nichols@nfu.org.uk - [twitter](#)

Your County Adviser is on leave from 12 February returning to work on 29 February. If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact the NFU regional office on 01730 711950.

New Forest Leader grant scheme open for business:

New Forest Leader has £1.43 million to invest, over a four year period (2016 - 2020), in projects that directly support the rural economy of the New Forest including parts of southern Test Valley and southern Wiltshire. Outline applications, the first stage in the grant application process, are now being invited. They will aim to support at least 60 projects over the next four years in order to create new jobs and growth in the following priority areas:

- Support for increasing farm productivity
- Support for increasing forestry productivity
- Support for micro and small enterprises (under 50 employees) in rural areas and farm diversification
- Support for rural tourism
- Support for cultural and heritage activity
- Support for the provision of rural services

See the website for further information - <http://www.newforestleader.org.uk/>

Loddon and Test Leader grant scheme:

The next deadline for outline applications to the Loddon and Test LEADER Programme is Friday 4 March.

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Projects will come under the same priority headings as above and full details are available [here](#)

AHDB Cereals and Oilseeds Monitor Farm Meeting:

The next meeting will be on cover crops with David Miller – the impact on soil, crop nutrition, fixed costs and rotation margin. The meeting will start indoors but finish outside so bring wellies/coats etc. Meet at The Warren Centre, Micheldever Station SO21 3AR - Tuesday 1st March at 10.30am concluding 2pm after lunch. Anyone is welcome to attend, just book in with Philip Dolbear, AHDB Cereals and Oilseeds Regional Manager 07964 255614 or philip.dolbear@ahdb.org.uk

Surrey Hills North Downs bid to Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund:

There is a proposal to work with landowners and farmers covering the scarp slope of the North Downs between Guildford and Dorking. The bid is to the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund, which offers 100% funding for farmer led initiatives covering a target area of over 2000 hectares. The proposal involves reviewing the existing agri-environment agreements and implementing a monitoring framework to measure the conservation outcomes. A workshop for farmers and landowners is being organised for early March with a view to submitting a bid by the end of March.

Land for model aircraft club:

Esher & District Model Flying club are located near Leatherhead in Surrey. They are affiliated to the British Model Flying Association which is the overseeing body for the hobby/sport in the UK. They are looking for pasture/farmland to fly from in Surrey and would be happy to hear from anyone who can help. Please contact Mark Stonard on 07834984523 or mark201270@yahoo.co.uk

Kent

Your County Adviser, Catherine Joules, is currently on maternity leave. Any issues that can't be dealt with either by your Group Secretary or NFU CallFirst on 0370 845 8458, will be covered by us in the regional office on 01730 711950.

Kent RABI – forthcoming events:

Please support as many of these events as possible, bringing friends and guests where appropriate.

Date	Status	Event details	Contact / Results
17th February 2016 Wednesday	Firm	Farmhouse Breakfast. 8.30am £12.50 The Stock Pot, Ashford Market, TN24 0HB	Chris Older 01233 720395 Richard Beaugie 01233 732580
18th February 2016 Thursday	Firm	Farmhouse Breakfast 8.30am £12.50 Dog & Duck, Plucks Gutter, Canterbury CT3 1JB	Robert Pickard 01227 832045

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25th February 2016 Thursday	Firm	Farmhouse Breakfast. 8.30am Manor Farm Barn, Southfleet, DA13 9PU	£12.50	Karen Smeed, Meopham 01474 444589	NFU
26th February 2016 Friday	Firm	Farmhouse Breakfast. 8.30am The Alma, Painter Forstal, Faversham.ME13 0DU	£12.50	Charles Tassell 858733 Tish Neaves 356294	01622 07875
10th March 2016 Thursday	Firm	Kent RABI AGM & Committee Meeting 2pm Kent County Showground, Detling			
22nd April 2016 Friday	Firm	Clay Pigeon Shoot at West Kent Shooting School Brenchley, TN12 7DG. £75 per gun. Arrival time, TBC. Joint RABI & Hospice in the Weald fund raising event.		Charles Tassell 858733 Sally Field, Amanda Harman, Michelle Nudds.	01622
22nd May 2016 Sunday	Firm	Tour of Elmley Bird Sanctuary BBQ, timings to follow.		Robert Pickard 832045	01227
11th June 2016 Saturday	Firm	Open Garden 12pm to 6pm Wyckhurst, Mill Road, Aldington, TN25 7AJ		Chris Older 720395	01233
21st June 2016 Tuesday	Firm	Midsummer Tour of Biddenden Vineyard. Tour with tastings and ploughman supper.		Charles Tassell 858733 Sheila Adams 831429	01622 01622

Sussex and Isle of Wight – County Adviser james.osman@nfu.org.uk - [twitter](#)

I am a cider drinker!:

Wow, The Wurzels! The Wurzels are playing live at Brickfields, Newnham Rd, Ryde (by kind permission of Reynolds & Read) on Saturday 21 May - doors open at 7pm, Wurzels at approx 9pm - support band Rattle Shakin' Daddies. Tickets £20 with bar and refreshments available. ADMISSION BY TICKET ONLY from:

- NFU Mutual, 2 Langley Court, Pyle St., NEWPORT PO30 1LA
- Pets with Hart, Holyrood Street, NEWPORT PO30 5AU
- Windmill Farm, Upton Rd., RYDE PO33 3LA T: 812951
- Julie at County Fencing, Brighstone T: 07837 805474
- online at www.thewurzelsiw.co.uk or info@thewurzelsiw.co.uk

In aid of the IOW Branch of R.A.B.I. and The Leverets (IWFB Supporters Club)

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