

Filling the BPS funding gap

Preparing for the loss of the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) payments was the topic of a recent Women in Dairy Webinar. Rachael Madeley-Davies from Kite Consulting explained some of the alternative sources of income that could be available to dairy farmers.

Farmers are being advised to get ready now for the removal of the Basic Payment Scheme by budgeting for the possible loss in income as well as looking for ways to add to their revenue stream.

Speaking during the recent WID Webinar, Rachael Madeley-Davies from Kite Consulting said that it is important that farmers budget for 2024. This is when payments from the Basic Payment Scheme will be halved and replaced with the Environment Land Management Scheme (ELMS).

Planning important

She said that many people may be 'shocked' by the loss in income when they get to 2024, which is why planning now is important.

"Look at how you can add to your income stream to plug the gap. The level of changes in the next 10 years cannot be underestimated—they will be colossal," she warned.

Mrs Madeley-Davies told delegates to be shrewd and encouraged them to sign up for the ELMS trial to help inform and feed back on how it may work.

"The government is seeking 5,500 farmers to be involved in the ELMS pilot. This is our opportunity to make it farmer led. They need all sorts of farmers to be involved in the pilot scheme, so don't moan if you don't get involved and direct how it may work."

Farmers could start preparing for change and adding to their



Rachael Madeley-Davies.

income stream by signing up for schemes already available, such as the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

"The schemes won't be there forever, so don't hold off. They are there to help farmers during this transition phase and get them ready for 2028, when there will be no more subsidies."

She encouraged farmers to seek specialist advice on some of the schemes with support available through many local land agents, FWAG advisers and catchment sensitive area officers.

Some examples of current and upcoming schemes relevant for dairy farmers include:

Countryside Stewardship Capital Grants

Relevant for those who farm in high priority water catchment areas within England. Farmers can check if they fall into that area at <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

A new round of grant funding is open until the April 30th, 2021 and includes the opportunity to obtain support for an array of capital works, including hedge and tree planting, roofing over livestock yards, concrete yard renewal and rainwater collection.

Mid and Higher Tier Schemes

Available across England, the Mid-Tier and Higher Tier Schemes have just opened for applications—with the deadline to request an online

application pack being:

- Higher Tier—31 March 2021
- Mid-Tier—30 June 2021.

The Mid-Tier scheme, in particular, can work really well providing useful capital grants and annual income over a five-year agreement period.

Slurry Investment Scheme

This scheme opens in 2022, and the government has said that it will 'offer a significant proportion' of the cost of new manure stores. It will aid farmers in covering slurry stores and making sure that they have six months' storage.

Farming Transformation Fund

This could be something relevant for dairy farmers who are looking to make a large investment in their farm, such as installing a new rotary parlour. This opens in autumn 2021.

Farming Investment Fund

Also opening in autumn 2021, this fund will offer grants for equipment, technology and infrastructure. It is similar to the Countryside Productivity Scheme.

Welsh grant schemes

In Wales, there are also several grant schemes opening soon, including the Sustainable Production Grant, Farm Business Grants and Glastir Small Grants. A full list can be found on the Welsh government website.

- The grant funding session was the latest monthly Women in Dairy webinar. Others will be taking place throughout 2021. The webinars are free to attend.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive information about upcoming sessions—which take place on the last Wednesday of every month—contact womenindairy@rabdf.co.uk

The next session will be focusing on calf health. Other future topics include succession planning and diversification.

STORTH

EXPERTS IN SLURRY MANAGEMENT

SCRAPE IT		PUMP IT	
STORE IT		SEP IT	
MIX IT		APPLY IT	

Tel: 01524 781900

E-Mail: sales@storthmachinery.co.uk

www.storthmachinery.co.uk