

Agricultural Transition Plan Update

February 2024



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Farming reforms in England

What are we doing

- Removing area-based subsidies
- Bringing in targeted payments, primarily for the environment
- Maintaining total budget

Why are we doing it

- Maintain food production
- Restore nature
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Increase productivity, and support thriving and subsidy free sector

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Agricultural Transition Plan Update

- SoS at Oxford Farming Conference
- Announced biggest upgrade to farming schemes since the start of the agricultural transition
- The Agricultural Transition Plan update sets out:
 - Overall strategy
 - Progress made
 - New policy to go live in 2024



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Agricultural Transition Plan Update

We need:

- Productivity and innovation
- Scale
- Ambition



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Productivity and innovation

- Confirm what grants we will offer in the rest of 2024
- More for livestock sectors
- Grants aimed at improving water quality, water resilience, animal health, productivity and net-zero
- More farmer focussed innovation (new fund)



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Getting scale: making it easier for farmers to improve the environment

- Single application process
- Price increase
- Increased flexibility and fit within businesses
- Changes so looking after habitat more attractive
- Set out when and how we'll change our offer



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Enabling greater ambition: incentivising farmers to do more

- Introducing premium payments
- More advice and support
- Help farmers learn from each other
- Adding 50 more actions. Over 180 in total
- Set a target for 2x more farmers doing more complex, locally tailored options



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Removing barriers

- An 'advise and prevent' approach to regulation – providing support if things go wrong
- Expanded permitted development rights - making it easier for farmers to adapt their business to become more sustainable and productive.



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Flood and drought resilience actions

Action	Description	Annual payment
Manage grassland for flood and drought resilience and water quality	Grassland is managed to reduce runoff from rainwater, and store more surface and groundwater through changes such as creating topographical features that will retain water after periods of high rainfall	£938 per ha
Manage features on arable land for flood and drought resilience and water quality	Features on arable land, such as sediment traps, bunds, swales and the area surrounding them, are managed to reduce runoff from rainwater and store more surface and groundwater	£1,241 per ha
Flood mitigation on arable reversion to grassland	There is dense grass sward connected to a watercourse to store water from streams and rivers during flood events, and allow flood water to spread across a floodplain and naturally subside	£740 per ha
Flood mitigation on permanent grassland		£330 per ha
Supplement: Enhanced floodplain storage	Floodwater storage within floodplains is increased so that they hold more water for longer by managing features such as swales (channels) and temporary ponds or depressions	£366 per ha

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Ditches and buffer strip actions

Action	Description	Annual payment
Simple ditch management	Ditches are managed so there is varied bank-side and aquatic vegetation, and wildlife habitat	£4 per 100m – both side
Manage ditches of high environmental value	Ditches are managed that either support target species of plants, birds, mammals and invertebrates or are important for delivering habitats such as wet grassland, wetland, lowland peat and floodplain meadow	£38 per 100m – both sides
6m to 24m 3-dimensional (3D) waterbody buffer strip	There is a 6m to 24m wide buffer with raised ridges covered in vegetation next to a waterbody or field boundary	£1,182 per ha
Habitat strip next to waterbodies	There is a 6m to 12m wide habitat strip next to a waterbody, with a mosaic of tussocky grasses and naturally colonised or planted tree and scrub with an open canopy	£742 per ha

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Lowland peat actions

Action	Description	Annual payment
Raise water levels in cropped or arable peat soils to near the land surface	The water level on cropped or arable land with lowland peat soils is raised to between 10 to 30cm below the field surface and maintained throughout the year	£1,409 per ha
Raise water levels in cropped or arable peat soils	The water level on cropped or arable land with lowland peat soils is raised to between 31 to 50cm below the field surface and maintained throughout the year	£892 per ha
Raise water levels in permanent grassland peat soils to near the land surface	The water level on permanent grassland peat soils is raised to between 10 to 30cm below the field surface and maintained throughout the year	£1,381 per ha
Raise water levels in permanent grassland peat soils	The water level on permanent grassland peat soils is raised to between 31 to 50cm below the field surface and maintained throughout the year	£840 per ha

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Any questions?



To follow the story

<https://defrafarming.blog.gov.uk/>

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