



New grants for new woodlands

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CALU's subject areas:

- Horticulture
- Bio-energy
- Arable crops
- Non-food crops
- Alternative livestock

Woodlands are an important part of the environment. They provide multiple benefits, from timber and fuel, to shelter for livestock. They also help prevent flooding by moderating the flow of water, and can help to lock up carbon. Woodlands also provide one of the best loved spaces for recreational activities, be it walking, horse-riding, mountain biking or any of the other activities enjoyed throughout the woodlands of Wales. At the same time, woodlands provide an important habitat for multitudes of wildlife.

In recognition of the importance of woodlands, the Welsh Assembly Government has launched a new woodland creation grant scheme as part of Glastir. The grants are specifically to encourage the creation of new woodlands.

A map of Wales has been created showing the areas that are considered suitable for the establishment of new woodlands. Within these areas, parcels of land as small as 0.25ha could be eligible for the new woodland creation grants.

Within the eligible areas, grants can help towards the costs of establishing the woodland, plus help towards fencing, and an on-going maintenance payment for 15 years.

Grants will be paid at differing rates depending on the type of woodland that is being established. The lowest rates is for what is classed as a "small, simple woodland". For this, an establishment grant would be paid of £500/ha

in the first year, with payments of £150/ha for each of years two and three.

The highest level of grant is for woodlands classed as "native woodlands – carbon". These woodlands will be established at a density of 2,500 stems per hectare, using site native stock, with up to 20% woody shrubs allowed. The primary purpose of these woodlands is to store carbon. For this type of woodland, the year one grant will be £3,500, followed by grants of £500 for years two and three.

To help landowners work out what kind of woodlands are best suited to their land, a network of approved Project Officers has been established. These advisors can explain the scheme and help with developing a grant application. There is no charge to the landowner for this service.

To make the scheme particularly attractive to farmers, the on-going maintenance payment is higher for farmers than non-farmers. There have also been changes to the Single Payment rules, meaning that Single Payment can still be claimed on areas that are put into woodland under the Glastir scheme.

To see whether your land is in an area suitable for woodland creation and to learn more about the scheme, call 0300 068 0300 or email bww.ts@forestry.gsi.gov.uk or visit www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-6j2GXD

Price rise predicted for cashmere

DID YOU KNOW...

Angora comes from the angora rabbit. The angora goat produces mohair.

Experts are predicting a steep increase in the price of cashmere this year. Cashmere is the fine under-wool that many goats have. Mainly, it is harvested from the Cashmere subspecies of goats; hence the name. Cashmere can be obtained by combing out the fibres, or by shearing. Cashmere is predominantly produced in Asia. There are a few specialist producers in the UK, but nowhere near enough to even begin to make a dent in the huge volumes of cashmere we use each year. Therefore, we are reliant on imports for this fibre.

The reason a steep hike in the price of cashmere is expected is due to the very harsh winter the production areas have experienced. Many goats have perished and many others have been eaten as other sources of food for their keepers have been hard to come by.

In the UK, the main fibre produced from goats is mohair, which, confusingly, comes from the angora goat. Angora fibre comes from the angora rabbit. Although cashmere is nothing to do with mohair, the price rise is likely to lift the price of mohair too, which is good news for producers

New reports on the future of food production published

DID YOU KNOW...

The start of the year is often a time for the release of policy shaping documents and this year is no different. Two reports have focused on the future of food and farming, but providing quite different perspectives and suggestions.

The UK Government Office for Science published a Foresight report on “The Future of Food and Farming : Challenges and choices for global sustainability” - available at <http://www.bis.gov.uk/foresight/our-work/projects/current-projects/global-food-and-farming-futures/reports-and-publications> .

Meanwhile, the Worldwatch Institute published “State of the World 2011: Innovations that Nourish the Planet” - available, in part, at <http://www.worldwatch.org/sow11> .

Whatever your perspective, one thing is clear— food production is finally getting the importance that it deserves.

Polytunnels & planning: Court of Appeal decision

A complex legal case involving polytunnels for soft fruit production has just been settled at the Court of Appeal. The case related to a Herefordshire producer who had been granted planning permission to erect polytunnels.

However, a local action group lodged a legal challenge against the planning approval, on the basis that the land concerned was part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and therefore classed as “semi-natural”, meaning that an Environmental Impact Assessment should have been carried out prior to planning being approved.

The appeal case hinged on the fact that the land had been used for arable and horticultural production for many years, and was not “semi-natural”.

The NFU supported the appeal. They said that there seems to be more common sense being applied to polytunnel planning applications these days.

Do you know your notifiable plant pests?

Control of pests and diseases is an everyday task for all primary producers. Because of their potential to seriously undermine production systems, certain pests have “notifiable” status. This means that if you spot, or suspect the best, you have an obligation to report it to Defra.

Fera, the Food and Environment Research Agency, has a section on its website that lists the pests and provides useful information to help with identification. There are currently 29 entries on the pest list – some of these are for individual species (for example the Tobacco Whitefly, *Bemisia tabaci*), whilst others

cover several species within a genus. To learn more about these pests, visit <http://www.fera.defra.gov.uk/plants/publications/plantPestDiseaseFactsheets.cfm>

Fera also produce regular newsletters updating farmers and growers with useful information to help protect their crops and profit. These are freely available on the Fera website at <http://www.fera.defra.gov.uk/plants/publications/plantClinicNews.cfm>. You can register to receive notification of when a newsletter is published by emailing marketing@fera.gsi.gov.uk

Demand for blueberries continues to rise

Latest figures show that Britain’s love of blueberries continues to grow. Although strawberries remain our favourite fruit, blueberries have now overtaken raspberries to be the second most popular soft fruit on a volume basis. 12,759 tonnes of blueberries were purchased in the UK last year; an increase of 11.4% on 2009. By contrast, sales of raspberries fell by 12.9% in 2010 compared with 2009, with 12,315 tonnes being sold in the UK.

Upcoming events

We have a packed schedule of excellent practical workshops and informative seminars coming up.

Through funding from the Welsh Assembly Government’s Farming Connect Programme, we are able to offer this unique training opportunities free of charge.

These events are led by some of the most respected experts in their sector. They provide an opportunity for producers to gain knowledge and experience in a way that is not available

anywhere else.

They’re also a great way to meet people interested or involved in your line of business.

The events are very friendly and although the content is first class in terms of best practice, it is put across in a way that is easily understood. Workshops and seminars are interactive and attendees are encouraged to ask questions and get involved to ensure they take away as much as possible from the day.

Some of the programme is

shown on the back page of this newsletter, but for the most up to date information, please call us—01248 680450—or check our website—www.calu.bangor.ac.uk

If you have any suggestions for other topics we should be covering, either as a seminar or a workshop, please let us know. We’re also always on the look out for new and interesting venues; again, please let us know if you have any suggestions for that.

DID YOU KNOW...

A single snowdrop (*Galanthus plicatus*) bulb has, apparently, sold on ebay for £357.

DID YOU KNOW...

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Supporting sustainable land use in Wales



Forthcoming CALU Events

For more information about any of CALU's events, please contact us. More events are on our website—www.calu.bangor.ac.uk. These events are funded through Farming Connect. All events are FREE OF CHARGE. Please book early—our events are becoming increasingly popular and quickly become fully subscribed.

Always double check that the event is going ahead before travelling.

16th February—Workshop: Soils the key to productivity, Henfaes Research Centre, Abergwyngregyn, LL33 0LB

17th February—Multipurpose Woodland Management, Car-reglwyd, Anglesey, LL65 4NY

20th February—Workshop: First Time Pig Keeping, Green-meadows Community Centre, Cwmbran, NP44 5AJ

23rd February—Workshop: Integrated Pest Management in Horticultural Systems, Seiont Nurseries, nr Caernarfon, LL55 2BB

24th February—Workshop: Winter Pruning in Apple Orchards, Llanerchaeron, SA48 8DG

28th February—Seminar: Slugs—their biology and control, Picton Castle, Haverfordwest, SA62 4AS

1st March—Workshop: Propagation and Growing Media, Aberglasney, Llanrthne, SA32 8QH

8th March—Seminar: Slugs—their biology and control, Henfaes Research Centre, Abergwyngregyn, LL33 0LB

15th March—Workshop: Restoration and rejuvenation of neglected orchards, Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog, LL41 3YU

24th March—Workshop: Blueberry & Apple Orchard Management, Bettisfield Hall, Whitchurch, SY12 2LB

About CALU

CALU delivers the Farming Connect Knowledge Transfer Development Programme for Land Management. The programme provides information to any business in Wales that is interested in:

- Horticulture
- Bio-energy
- Alternative Livestock
- Arable Crops
- Non-food Crops

CALU has three dedicated members of staff and a network of associate specialists covering all the topics within CALU's remit.

CALU ACTIVITIES:

- Open days
- Demonstration events
- Factsheets
- Training days
- Press articles
- Crop information sheets
- Project reports
- Talks
- Producer groups
- Agricultural shows
- Information booklets

CALU PARTNERS:

- Bangor University
- Glyndŵr University
- ADAS
- Coed Cymru
- Coleg Llysfasi

