

Small Farms Association Newsletter



Summer 2009

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Traditional ploughing at Treloan Coastal Heritage Farm, Portscatho, Cornwall

New NVQs course available at member's farm

SFA member, Victor Barry, has formed a partnership with Cornish Horse Power (CHP), and is able to offer new equine training courses from this September in preparation for the new style NVQ (QCF) qualifications. These new courses are facilitated through Duchy College programmes; and are due to start when the new QCF format is adopted next year.

Victor's contribution to developing the courses relates to the 'Old Working Horse and Pony Heritage' modules in this new qualification, where previously there was nothing to cover this element of equine training. The courses will cover: Basic Working Horse and Pony Management; In the Field Operations for Ploughing, Cultivations, Seeding, Harvesting and Crop storage.

Further information can be obtained by contacting Victor Barry on: Tel: 01872 580888; Mobile 07855187769; or by Emailing Victor at: victor@treloancoastalheritagefm.orangehome.co.uk
The postal address is: The Farm Office, Treloan Coastal Heritage Farm, Portscatho, The Roseland, Truro, TR2 5EF.

Since taking over Treloan in 1998, Victor and his family have built up a traditional organic working farm from the 1930/1940s, using part horses and part early machinery to work this unique "Farm of the Elms", which is the meaning of Treloan. Treloan is also a successful visitor attraction, showing visitors what is involved in running the farm throughout the 'farming year'. Treloan has strong links to the 'Transition Movement' throughout the Westcountry. This farm is well worth a visit.

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Any news?

We would like to let members know what is happening around the SFA network, and would be delighted to receive and print news that you wish to share.

Contact the Office at:
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Dear Members,

Hardly a day goes by without some misleading information being given by Government advisors; be it about Bovine Tuberculosis in cattle or the food we produce. The latest advice comes from Professor Bruce Traill, Professor of Food Management and Marketing at the University of Reading where he is also Head of the Centre of Food Economics Research (CeFER), advising consumers to cut back on the consumption of meat and milk! Professor Traill was leader of the EU research project *Structural Change in the European Food Industries*; and his research interests include European integration and globalisation, as well as marketing strategies for food companies.

Beef raised on grains, such as in American lots, contain more saturated fats and lower levels of omega 3 than pasture raised beef. In contrast, cattle fed on clover-rich, permanent grass, which is rich in a powerful cancer-fighting compound known as conjugated linoleic acid (cla), benefit, and pass on this benefit to the consumer. By comparison, grain fed beef contains almost none of this compound. The same goes for grass fed dairy cows. Why is it that Professor Traill cannot acknowledge these facts and give a more balanced view of beef and milk, especially as the University of Exeter's research project *Eating for Biodiversity* revealed the benefits of eating naturally reared livestock both to the health of the consumer and the benefit of the environment? (Buller, Henry et al (2007). *Eating Biodiversity: An Investigation of the Links between Quality Food Production and Biodiversity Protection*)

Since the disbanding of the Milk Marketing Board milk producers have been at the mercy of 'the market' – particularly the supermarkets. The latest victims are the Dairy Farmers of Britain (DFB), the co-operative that went into receivership in the past few weeks. The co-operative's 1800 members will not be paid for the milk they produced and sold to DFB in May. Although other potential buyers, such as Milk Link and other milk processors have expressed an interest in acquiring some of the DFB plants, many of the dairy farmers in remote locations will have difficulty in finding a buyer for their produce. Aside from these issues, many of the DFB members will also lose the money they invested in the venture.

Generally the future does not look rosy for milk. According to the latest survey carried out by DairyCo, milk production is set to fall another 5% this milk year as dairy farmer confidence drains away, which in crude terms means the UK is now producing less milk than in the 1970s and has to rely on imports to service the market.

Hilary Benn MP, Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is hoping to soften the rules governing the controversial electronic tagging of sheep due to be introduced after 31 December 2009 by requesting a change in the rules from the European

Commission and other Member States. Under the proposed regulations, all sheep born after 31 December 2009 and not intended for slaughter within 12 months will have to be double-tagged with an electronic identification tag and a visual tag. The intention of these regulations, which will apply across all European Union Member States, is to provide greater traceability; but sheep farmers fear that the costs will far outweigh the benefits of the scheme.

The Secretary of State is proposing the following softening of the rules to assist UK farmers; and has the support of the devolved administrations in his endeavours: the new proposal would allow farmers to delay tagging their sheep until they leave the birth holding. This proposal would also address the issue of replacing lost ear tags; but will require the support of the EU Commission and other Member States. Lastly, we have responded on your behalf to the Consultation about the proposed Independent Body for animal health, which would oversee the responsibilities and cost sharing for notifiable diseases.

I hope to see you at our summer barbeque on Saturday, 18 July, starting at 7 p.m. at Ley Coombe.

Philip Hosking

Findings of the Project: *Eating for Biodiversity*, (Buller, Henry et al (2007)

The project sought to assess whether or not the meat and dairy products coming from animals grazed upon quality, biodiverse grasslands is identifiably different from that available from more standard, intensive systems. Following detailed laboratory analysis, the findings were that differences in pasture biodiversity **can** positively affect meat quality, chiefly as a result of the impact of plant species upon the rumen process.

These are findings that confirm research that has been undertaken elsewhere. There are a number of elements to this. First, the research reveals that, when controlling for breed, lamb meat produced on biodiverse rich grassland (particularly heather pasture systems) displays higher levels of Vitamin E (a natural anti-oxidant affecting shelf life) than control meat. Second, lamb meat from biodiverse rich grasslands recorded generally lower skatole levels (a product of rumen fermentation which adversely affects meat taste, particularly when grilled) than control meat. Third, lamb meat from biodiverse rich grassland recorded higher levels of a number of nutritionally healthy fatty acids (notably n-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids and conjugated linoleic acid (cla) than control meat. Fourth, beef breeds (such as Longhorn) were shown to be more suited to biodiverse pastures and generally yield higher meat quality.

The research has provided evidence that there are indeed added product qualities to be created through the linking of the protection and maintenance of species rich grazing pastures with quality food products.

Forthcoming Events



SFA Summer Barbeque

Saturday, 12th July 2009, starting at 7 p.m.

Ley Coombe Farm, Modbury, PL21 0TU

kindly hosted by Philip Hosking

Tickets: £10.00 per adult, £5.00 per child (under 12)
Food and drink **are** included in the ticket price
Food will include meat as well as sausages and burgers

**PLEASE CONFIRM YOUR ATTENDANCE BY PHONE OR POST
TEL: 01548 830302**

***If any members play a musical instrument, we would be delighted
if they wish to bring it along (provided it's portable)***

Also cover available if weather proves inclement

Funding & Grants

South Devon Coastal Local Action Group

The South Devon Coastal Local Action Group was set up to provide a way of bringing new money into the South Devon area. They aim to support a broad range of projects and activities across the geographical area of the South Devon Coastal area and across the themes of the local development strategy.

The overall programme totals £1.8 million over five years and they are now up and running and can accept applications for projects. For full details on what can be funded and how to apply, please read the guidance notes. These are available on: <http://www.ruraldevon.org/localaction/> - scroll down to South Devon Coastal Local Action Group.

Support is **ONLY** available within the South Devon Coastal Local Action Group area.

If you would like to talk through your ideas or have any other queries about South Devon Coastal LAG, please contact our local project officer, Cathy Heath.

Contact: Cathy Heath **Email:** cathy@ruraldevon.org **Phone:** 07860 773 969

Greater Dartmoor Local Enterprise Action Fund (GDLEAF) has been set up to invest in environmental and community based projects that encourage innovation and promote the prosperity of the Greater Dartmoor area.

Help is available for: • community groups • local businesses • environmental projects • registered charities and not-for-profit organisations

To obtain more information, including eligibility criteria, please contact **Greater Dartmoor LEAF**, c/o Devon Renaissance, Unit 7c Cranmere Road, Exeter Road Industrial Estate, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 1UE.

Email: info@greaterdartmoorLEAF.org; **Phone:** 01837 658643; **Website:** www.greaterdartmoorLEAF.org

Livestock identification, animal welfare, record keeping and cross compliance: Important reminder for farmers

Figures from the Rural Payments Agency, published in April, show that livestock record-keeping is still one of the biggest areas of cross compliance failure for farmers in England.

The figures, available on the RPA website show that in 2008 statutory management requirements (SMR) 7 and 8 (cattle identification) were responsible for 1286 cross compliance failures, out of a total of 2026 failures found on English farms. SMRs 8a (animal identification and registration – sheep and goats) and 18 (welfare of farmed animals) were the cause of the next highest failure figures, at 218 and 204 respectively.

Importantly, these figures show no significant difference in either failure numbers, or types, from the 2007 failures and they indicate that more needs to be done to ensure that farm businesses and livestock keepers fully understand their obligations under cross compliance.

Do remember that while these issues are the main causes of cross compliance failure, most of them are quite straightforward to rectify and once done so will reduce the chances of a single payment system reduction (SPS penalty) considerably.

As a general rule, the standard reduction for a first time, negligent breach of cross compliance standards is now 3% of the single farm payment and for Pillar 2 schemes such as Environmental Stewardship agreements. EU regulations state that the 3% reduction can be increased or reduced, depending on the assessment of the breach.

Further details of reductions can be found on the RPA website www.rpa.gov.uk/crosscompliance. Follow links from the left hand menu to 'Inspection process' where you will find details of the guidance used by RPA inspectors when conducting cross compliance inspections.

For cattle keepers, information on cattle ID inspections can also be found on the RPA website RPA website Where are the failures and what are the requirements?

The RPA figures break down the SMR failures to show specifically where breaches are occurring. Failures under SMRs 7, 8, 8a and 18 are described below, together with a reminder of farmers' obligations under these SMRs.

SMR 18: Welfare of farmed animals

The most common failures found during the 2008 inspection regime include:

- medicine records are not kept;

- mortality records are not kept;
- sharp edges or protrusions in accommodation or fittings likely to cause injury;
- sick animal has not been cared for appropriately;

The following are the common causes of failures for the bullet points above:

- number of staff available is insufficient to prevent welfare problems occurring;
- stockperson does not have the knowledge and professional skills to look after animals;
- stockperson has failed to seek veterinary advice when the inspector believes that any competent stockperson would have done so;
- livestock have not been inspected frequency enough;
- animals not protected from adverse weather conditions, frequency of inspection insufficient, animals do not have access to a suitable water supply;
- no well-drained lying areas for stock not kept in buildings;
- lack of protection for animals kept outside from risks to their health, (i.e. scrap metal with sharp protruding edges);
- old machinery left in fields posing hazards;
- sharp edges or protrusions in accommodation and fittings likely to cause injury;
- livestock in accommodation exposed to potential injury from sharp metal edges, nails and damaged panels;
- silage netting not completely removed from silage when placed in ring feeders;
- manure heap on a grazing field, lack of protection from health risks;
- feed that is available is not wholesome and/or is inappropriate for the age and species of livestock inspected;
- inadequate lighting and unsuitable flooring for pigs.

There were 204 SMR 18 failures in 2008 and out of these 122 failures attracted a 1% SFP reduction; four failures attracted a 3% reduction, 1 failure attracted a 4% reduction, 44 failures attracted a 5% reduction and 33 failures attracted reductions in excess of 5%. Repeat or intentional breaches incur a higher payment reduction than the standard reduction for a first-time negligent breach, which is now, as a general rule, 3%.

Under SMR 18, farmers must, amongst other things:

- Ensure that you care for ill or injured animals immediately, and if they do not respond to this care then seek veterinary advice;
- If necessary, isolate sick/injured animals in suitable accommodation with dry comfortable bedding;

Make a record of:

- any medicinal treatment given to your animals, and keep these records for at least 3 years from the date of the treatment;
- the number of deaths found when the animals are inspected, and keep these records for at least 3 yrs.

You must not, amongst other things:

Use materials and/or equipment for accommodation purposes that is harmful to your animals.

SMRs 7 and 8: Cattle identification

The most common failures found during the 2008 inspection regime include:

- failure to report movement of an animal;
- failure to report death of an animal;
- movement details not recorded or incorrectly recorded on CTS or in farm records;
- lost tags not replaced, animals not tagged.

Further information on common failures:

Failures were also found in reporting deaths and movements of cattle. Specifically, movements were not correctly recorded in the on-farm records or not recorded at all. Animals were also found with no passport or passports were present with no animals. Animals were found that had never been tagged or which had lost all tags, and missing tags were not replaced within 28 days. For SMR 7 and 8 breaches in 2008, of the 1286 failures 140 failures attracted warning letters, 739 failures attracted a 1% reduction of their single farm payment; 9 failures attracted a 2% reduction and 286 a 3% reduction. 65 failures attracted reductions of over 5% of the SFP. Don't forget that now failures will attract, as a general rule, a 3% SFP reduction for a first-time negligent breach, and that reductions also apply to rural development payments such as ELS, OELS and HLS.

From 2009 SMRs 7 and 8 are now covered under just one statutory management requirement, SMR 7.

Under SMR 7, farmers must, amongst other things:

- Replace illegible or lost eartags within 28 days of noticing the loss
- Produce a signed and valid passport for every animal in your care on request;
- Ensure that when cattle are moved off your holding they are accompanied with their valid passport, properly completed and signed;
- Notify BCMS of any movements of cattle on to and off your holding within three days of the movement;
- Notify BCMS of any cattle deaths on your holding within 7 days by these methods:
- for animals under 24 months old – send passport back to BCMS;
- for animals over 24 months old – send passport with the animal when it goes for BSE testing;
- Keep an up-to-date herd register for your holding, which includes the following details for each animal:
 - official eartag number;
 - dam's official eartag number;
 - date of birth;
 - sex;
 - date of movements on and off your holding;
 - details of where the animal has moved to or from;
 - breed;
 - date of death;
- Complete herd register in the following timescales:
 - movements – 36 hours of it taking place;
 - birth of a dairy calf – 7 days;
 - birth of any other calf – 30 days;

- a death – 7 days;
- eartag replacement where the eartag number is changed – 36 hours of the replacement;
- keep the herd register for 10 years from the date of the last entry and make it available on request.

You must not

- Remove or replace eartags without permission from Defra (obtained through BCMS), except when replacing lost or illegible tags;
- Alter, obliterate or deface an eartag;

SMR 8a: Animal identification and registration – sheep and goats

The most common failures found during the 2008 inspection regime were:

- sheep and/or goats' records not maintained in accordance with legal requirements;
- sheep and/or goats not tagged in accordance with legal requirements.

Further information on common failures:

In some cases there was a failure to record an annual inventory of the animals in the farm records. There was also a failure to enter all or some movements of sheep in on-farm records. Problems were discovered where sheep were found not to have been correctly tagged. Out of the 218 cross compliance failures resulting from breaches to SMR 8a in 2008, 38 failures attracted warning letters. 143 failures attracted a 1% reduction of the SFP and 29 attracted a 3% reduction. 7 failures attracted 5% reductions, but only 1 attracted more than this. Cross compliance breaches will now, as a general rule, be met with a 3% payment reduction, which will be reduced or increased – reflecting the principle of proportionality – according to extent, severity and permanence. Intentional and repeat non-compliances attract higher payment reductions. Reductions also apply to rural development payments such as ELS, OELS and HLS.

From 2009 SMR 8a is now known as SMR 8.

Under SMR 8, farmers must:

- identify all sheep and goats with the correct means of identification within 6 months of birth for intensively farmed animals and 9 months for extensively farmed animals, or before they leave the holding of birth, whichever is sooner;
- Double-tag sheep and goats with two identical identification tags for third country or intra-community trade;
- Replace any lost or illegible means of identification within 28 days of noticing their loss or illegibility or before the animal leaves the holding – whichever is the earlier;
- Keep up-to-date on-farm records with the required information, including:
 - an annual inventory of the animals kept at 1 Dec;
 - details of the movement of sheep and goats on and off your holding, including:
 - the date of the movement;
 - the number of animals moved;
 - the destination or origin of animals;
 - the transportation details for animals
 - leaving your holding;
- Ensure that your farm records are available for inspection on demand



The voice of the small farmer

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The Small Farms Association was formed in October 1997 because of the reluctance of major farming organisations to support the needs of small farmers.

Since its inception, the concerns and needs of small farms have been addressed by: ~

- * *Lobbying MPs and other public representatives*
- * *Liaison with DEFRA*
- * *Liaison with other farming organisations*
- * *Contributing to policy development*
- * *Creating our own Constitution and Code of Practice*
- * *Providing advice and support to members*

Please help us to continue the work on your behalf by providing feedback on crucial policy issues and recruiting new members.

Annual Family Membership – £20.00

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is looking for Farmers to take part
in a new series...

Do you suffer from conditions such as **psoriasis, hay fever, or sinusitis?** If you would like to try a **plant based remedy** to help soothe your ailments please get in contact now.

Please e-mail us providing as much information about your ailment as you can at:

therese.byrne@silverriver.tv

Or call us on:

Tel: 0207 907 3469

WANTED

**Border Collie Dog Puppy
Must be from good
working parents**

Tel: 01548 830302

GardenLife Allotments – Land Wanted

Rudi Schogger of **VILLAGELIFE** and **GARDENLIFE** is looking for land that may be suitable for commercial allotments, across the UK. **GARDENLIFE** is a private allotment business, bringing allotments to a wider group of people by working with land-owners to convert small areas of existing agricultural land into privately operated and rented allotments at a rental premium to traditional council owned sites.

They are looking for parcels of 2-5 acres relatively close to towns, with good road access, water source and, where possible, in an area of natural beauty. If you are interested, please contact Rudi at **VILLAGELIFE/GARDENLIFE** and indicate whether the land is available for sale, rent, or whether the you would consider a joint venture.

VILLAGELIFE

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