

Countryside Productivity Fund – Rural Development Funding

There are now 4 large grant funds available under the Countryside Productivity Fund.

All funds overlap with LEADER either partially or fully.

- **Improving Forestry Productivity** (launched 31 July, deadline 03 Apr 2018) min £35k. Grants are to improve forestry productivity through felling, extraction and adding value by primary processing of timber products. Only private forest holders managing at least 10 ha of forest and micro, small or medium-sized forestry contractors can apply for grants for improving forestry productivity.
- **Water Resource Management** (launched 31 July, deadline 03 Apr 2018) min £35k. Grants are to improve farm productivity through more efficient use of water for irrigation, and to secure water supplies for crop irrigation by the construction of on-farm reservoirs. Only arable and horticultural businesses growing, or intending to grow, irrigated crops can apply for the water resource management grants.
- **Adding value to Agri-food products** (launched 30 Oct, **deadline 29 June 2018**) min £35k. Grants to fund projects that improve the processing of primary agricultural products (i.e. Annex I products), benefiting the Agri-food supply chain which will in turn improve farm productivity.

Processors of primary agricultural or horticultural products can apply for the grants. This includes food and drink businesses and farmers (including livestock, dairy, arable and horticultural sectors). Projects can be located in rural or urban areas as long as they match the priorities for funding.

Grain processing and storage project - Only cooperatives, farmer controlled businesses and private businesses can apply for a grain processing and storage project, if the project will store and process grain for a number of farmers. An individual farmer only processing their own grain can't apply.

Examples:

- Milk Processing (to build an extension, buy new processing equipment and install extra refrigerated storage)
 - Meat processing (to expand its facilities and processing equipment to meet growing demand for its products)
 - Investment in grading and packing equipment (The farm will invest in potato grading and packing equipment including optical grading)
 - Egg processing (established egg processing business is creating a facility to process eggs to supply the growing market for liquid egg. The business has secured forward orders from producers of pre-packed ready-meals and bakery goods)
 - Investment in collaborative grain processing (a farmer controlled grain storage and trading business is investing in grain cleaning equipment, including an optical grader to remove ergot).
- **Improving Farm Productivity** (launched 30 Oct, **deadline 03 Dec 2018**) min £35k. Grants to fund projects that improve farm productivity through the use of robotic equipment and systems to aid crop and livestock production; increasing the use of renewable energy produced on farm; the use of LED wavelength controlled lighting to aid crop production; more efficient use of livestock slurries and manures, and digestate.

Farmers (including livestock, dairy, arable and horticultural sectors).

Examples:

- Improving efficiency (A dairy business will invest in 2 milking robots, and a robotic silage pusher. The milking robots include sensors to collect data on the health of each cow including milk composition. The new robots will improve monitoring of cow health, labour efficiency, and yield which will improve overall farm efficiency and productivity.)
- Introducing innovation (A horticultural business is investing in a robotic weeder to carry out intra-row weeding. The machine uses camera images to distinguish vegetable plants from

weeds, then calculates the position of plants and accurately guides hoes to remove the weeds. This reduces the need for chemical treatment and for manual hoeing.)

- Improving slurry application (A large-scale dairy farmer will purchase slurry application equipment including inline, real-time nutrient sensor, flow meters and a trailing shoe application system to fit to an existing slurry tanker. This will deliver significant savings on fertiliser, reduce ammonia emissions and mean that cattle can graze treated grassland earlier than with previous, low-trajectory splash plate.)
- Introducing Innovative technology (A large-scale pig farmer with an anaerobic digester will install an advanced digestate processing system, including a separator, pumps, centrifuges and filters. This will deliver the ability to separate the fibre fraction and produce a concentrated liquid fertiliser, reducing the need to purchase fertiliser and improving productivity)
- Making better use of renewable heat generated on farm (A poultry farmer will install a heat distribution main, heat exchangers and an innovative ventilation system. This will distribute renewable heat from boilers powered by poultry litter. The project will deliver cost savings by reducing liquid petroleum gas usage by over 50% and will also improve animal health and welfare.)