

# Farm Advisory Service

## One-to-one advice and funding Stakeholder pack:

### March 2021



**Farm  
Advisory  
Service**



# Farming business support in challenging times



Welcome to the March 2021 edition of the Farm Advisory Service (FAS) stakeholder pack.

With lockdown restrictions set to ease over the next few months, planning for the future is more important than ever for farming businesses. In this month's stakeholder pack, we highlight the latest changes made by the Scottish Government to specialist advice support and resources available to Scottish farmers and crofters, aimed at helping farming businesses remain profitable and more resilient.

We also bring you two new podcasts from business owners who have received specialist advice, sharing their thoughts on the experience of applying for funding and how the support has benefitted their farming businesses.

**Please share content in this pack with your networks and contacts!**

# 1. Text for your newsletter: (Funding support information)



## Scottish Government lifts restrictions on succession planning funding

As the saying goes – tomorrow is not promised. As such, it is important to plan ahead to make sure you get to where you want to be. Whether you're starting a new business or planning to retire, succession planning is vital to protecting the future of your farming business and moving you in the right direction.

The Scottish Government recently announced changes to funding requirements for succession planning. This means farming businesses can now access **up to £1,000 in funding** through the [Farm Advisory Service \(FAS\)](#) for specialist advice on succession planning – without the need for a prior Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP).

The average age of farmers in Scotland is over 50 and it's estimated that less than 50% of farm businesses have established a succession plan. Succession can be a tricky subject to broach for many as it may involve awkward conversations among family members or colleagues. However, if handled correctly and at the right time, succession planning can provide certainty for the longer term.

Yet, doing this alone can be daunting. Enlisting the help of a professional adviser to lead discussions can remove the anxiety from those initial tricky conversations about your business vision and growth plans. This is where FAS can help. Our advisers are here to help build your confidence when looking at business viability, profitability and technical efficiency; and to provide an independent and objective viewpoint to help guide discussions.

It is recommended that succession plans are reviewed regularly, particularly when there is a change in family circumstances, or to your tenancies or land occupation. Succession planning funding support through FAS is open to all farming and crofting businesses in Scotland at any stage.

To apply for a **succession plan** of up to **£1,000** or for more information, please visit <https://www.fas.scot/specialist-advice>. Alternatively, call **0300 323 0161** (up to 30 minutes of free advice available) or email **advice@fas.scot**

## 2. Text for your newsletter: (Funding support information)

### Optimise the ability of your farming business to align with evolving Scottish agri policy

Optimising land use is a key priority set out in the Scottish Government's [Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018 – 2032](#). The goal is to move beyond just farming and food production, by transitioning to multifaceted land use that incorporates forestry, peatland restoration and management, and biomass production.

To better align with evolving agricultural policy in Scotland, many farming businesses will need to understand how they are performing now and what opportunities are available to enable them to adopt more sustainable practices in the future.

A business resilience plan provided through the [Farm Advisory Service \(FAS\)](#) can help Scottish farmers, crofters and land managers develop greater flexibility, and build capacity to adapt to changing market conditions and policy developments.

FAS can help farming businesses access **up to £1,000 worth of funding** to secure the help of a FAS approved adviser to develop a business resilience plan, which will assess the ability of your business to deal with changes in the supply chain and/or wider market variation.

The approved adviser will work with a participating business to:

- establish key performance indicators for financial resilience and analyse enterprise exposure;
- analyse business exposure to risk;
- assess profitability and cash flow;
- review the 'health' of the balance sheet.

To gain maximum value from the business resilience plan, farming businesses can also opt to apply for a follow-on [Integrated Land Management Plan \(ILMP\)](#). This will provide business owners with a step-by-step guide on how to address the issues highlighted in the resilience plan.

For more information or to apply for business resilience support, please visit [www.fas.scot/specialist-advice/](http://www.fas.scot/specialist-advice/)

To receive a hardcopy application pack, please contact FAS by calling **0300 323 0161** or emailing [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot)

### 3. Text for your newsletter: (Funding support information)

#### How a carbon audit can help your farming business stay competitive

As part of its 2018-2032 Climate Change Plan, the Scottish Government has committed to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across Scotland by 75% by 2030. Reducing GHG emissions in the agricultural sector is a key factor in achieving this goal. A good starting point to help Scottish farming businesses remain competitive over the next 10 years and play their part in reducing GHG emissions is to undertake a carbon audit. Not only can a carbon audit help your farming business to be more environmentally sustainable, it can also help you identify where performance improvements can be made, helping you to compete better with similar enterprises.

A carbon audit can help you identify the quantity and source of GHG emissions – carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, and where you can make processes more carbon and cost-effective in your business. Having a low carbon footprint will enable you to position yourself favourably against your competitors and appeal to buyers who are actively looking to buy from low carbon suppliers.

Over the last year, the [Farm Advisory Service \(FAS\)](#) has helped 540 farmers and crofters access funding for carbon audits, enabling them to identify a range of opportunities to reduce GHG emissions, and make efficiency improvements and cost savings.

Do you know how well your business compares to its nearest low carbon competitor?

Don't find yourself behind the curve. Act now to improve business efficiency and sustainability. FAS can help you access up to **£500 in grant funding** to commission a qualified farm adviser to conduct an audit of your farming business. All you need to do is [apply](#).

Following a FAS carbon audit, Finzean Estate's Andrew Farquharson said, 'Not only would I recommend it [a carbon audit], I think it's going to come to a stage of being compulsory.' / 'I think farmers, if they haven't done so already, need to be following up with a carbon audit.'

It is recommended that carbon audits are repeated annually to monitor performance and identify the impact of the changes made over the course of the year. FAS carbon audits are open to all farming and crofting businesses, provided they are registered in Scotland with the [Integrated Administration and Control System](#) (IACS). Whether you've already had a carbon audit or if you are looking to change the efficiency across your farming business, FAS is here to help.

To apply for **carbon audit** funding of up to **£500** or for more information, please visit <http://www.fas.scot/carbon-audits>. Alternatively, please call **0300 323 0161** (up to 30 minutes of free advice available) or email [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot)



## 4. Text and image for your newsletter: (podcast content)

### Lowering carbon emissions to improve business efficiency - how a carbon audit helped Finzean Estate improve competitive advantage

In [this podcast](#) from the [Farm Advisory Service \(FAS\)](#), Andrew Farquharson, Partner at Finzean Estate Partnership in Banchory, shares his experience of applying for a carbon audit to identify efficiencies for the beef and cropping business.

In the recording, Andrew gives his thoughts on the process of applying for support, what he got out of the subsequent report and his aspirations for the future of the business. Of which include reducing the carbon footprint of the farm and estate, and creating a viable and efficient business to hand over to the next generation.

#### Could a carbon audit help you improve your business?

Farms with a low carbon footprint are often the most efficient and profitable. Having a low carbon footprint can also position your business favourably against competition and with buyers that are increasingly looking to buy from 'low carbon' suppliers.

Carbon audits are open to all farming and crofting businesses, provided that they are registered in Scotland with IACS and are funded by the Scottish Government.

Contact [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot), call 0300 323 0161 or visit <https://www.fas.scot/carbon-audits/> to find out how FAS can help.



[Listen now](#)



## 5. Text and image for your newsletter: (podcast content)

### Living off the land: expert help to support self-sufficient croft

Listen to the [latest podcast](#) interview from the [Farm Advisory Service \(FAS\)](#), with Mark Foxwell, a successful crofter based in Sutherland who applied for business development support through FAS to improve his crofting business.

Mark and his wife moved to their croft up in the highlands in 2018 to become more self-sufficient. As part of their crofting business, they manage a smallholding of livestock including cows, sheep, pigs and chickens, run a thriving horticultural business and produce tree planting stock, in addition to fuel for their energy needs.

In [this podcast](#), Mark describes how FAS's expert help with an Integrated Land Management Plan (ILMP), specialist advice, mentoring and a carbon audit are helping him and his wife make worthwhile improvements to their business and invest in future profitability.

### Interested in getting specialist advice but don't know where to start?

Visit the [advice and grants page](#) for details on all FAS one-to-one business support services or contact [advice@fas.scot](mailto:advice@fas.scot) or call 0300 323 0161 to find out how FAS can help.



[Listen now](#)



# Images to use with newsletter text/online





# Suggested Tweets to share



A business resilience plan provided through @FASScot can help #Scottishfarmers, #crofters and land managers develop greater flexibility, and adapt to changing market conditions and policy developments. See how here <http://ow.ly/mTgK50DNBoh> #farmingadvice



Did you know, Integrated Land Management Plans are open to all #farming and #crofting businesses? You can access expert consultancy support with funding from @scotgov here <http://ow.ly/jR9V50DNBqg> #Scottishfarming #newfarmers



Keen to know more about the potential strengths and opportunities of your #farmingbusiness? Specialist advice is available through @FASScot with funding available of up to £1,000 <http://ow.ly/mTgK50DNBoh> #Scottishfarming



Do you know the size of your #CarbonFootprint? Performance improvements and savings can be made on your #farm or #croft through a fully funded #carbonaudit, find out more <http://ow.ly/dUB950DNBuW> #ScottishFarming



Considering becoming a #farmer or #crofter, or have set up a #farming business in the last 5 years? Take advantage of free mentoring support to grow your business through @FASScot here <http://ow.ly/BuIB50DNBx7> #ScottishFarming



Are you new to #farming and looking for advice that covers a wide variety of topics? @FASScot can provide you with one-to-one expert business development advice worth up to a total of £3,700 <http://ow.ly/PcGx50DNBz4> #farmingadvice #Scottishfarming

# Posts to share on LinkedIn and Facebook



## **Scottish Government lifts restrictions on succession planning funding**

Succession planning is vital to protecting the future of your #farming business. You can now access up to £1,000 in funding for #specialistadvice on #successionplanning through @FASScot - without the need for a prior Integrated Land Management Plan [www.fas.scot/specialist-advice](http://www.fas.scot/specialist-advice)



## **Free business development advice and funding for farming businesses**

Over 2,500 farmers and crofters have benefitted from support through @FASScot, ranging from specialist advice to carbon audits, funded by @scotgov. Find out how FAS could benefit your farming business. For information on the one-to-one services we provide, visit: <http://ow.ly/HGwV50DKF4E>



## **New FAS Podcast: Expert help to support self-sufficient croft**

Listen to the latest podcast from @FASScot, featuring interview with Mark Foxwell, a successful crofter based in Sutherland. In the podcast, Mark describes how expert help with an integrated land management plan (ILMP), specialist advice, mentoring and a carbon audit, is helping him make business improvements and invest in future profitability. Listen now: <http://ow.ly/JvGD50DKPTB>

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