Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

The European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas

Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) Business Support

FARMING and FORESTRY IMPROVEMENT SCHEME (FFIS)

APPLICANT HANDBOOK

Round Three

04 February 2014 – 04 April 2014

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You can only apply under FFIS Round Three for items listed as eligible in this handbook. Guidance given for Rounds One and Two of FFIS should not be used for this round of FFIS.

Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE)

RDPE is a seven year Programme (2007 – 2013) funded jointly by the EU, through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the UK Government.

RDPE consists of three separate elements, referred to as Axes

Axis 1

Improving the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors

Axis 2

Improving the environment and the countryside

Axis 3

Quality of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy

Farming and Forestry Improvement Scheme (FFIS)

FFIS is a grant scheme within RDPE, aimed at helping farmers, foresters, farming contractors, woodland owners and horticultural businesses in England to **improve competitiveness** through investment that meets one or more of the following objectives:

- Reduce energy usage
- Improve the management of manures/farm nutrients
- Improve water resource management
- Improve animal health and welfare
- Improve the use of forestry resources

If your project falls into one of the themes below you may be able to apply for a FFIS grant and should refer to the following sections in this handbook for eligibility details:

- Energy Efficiency
- Nutrient Management
- Water Resource Management
- Animal Health and Welfare
- Forestry

Who can apply?

The types of rural businesses and organisations in England (micro small or medium sized enterprises only[1]) who may be eligible under FFIS include:

- Farmers (dairy cow, suckler beef, beef finishing, sheep, goats, pigs, poultry and arable)
- Foresters
- Farming contractors
- Woodland owners
- Horticultural businesses

Exchequer supported businesses, such as farms owned and run by local authorities and other public bodies (including National Park Authorities) may not be eligible to apply for a FFIS grant. The only exceptions are where the applicant can show that the match funding has not been derived from exchequer or other public sources.

Crown and Non departmental Public Bodies are not eligible for the grant scheme.

If you belong to a Producer Organisation under the Fresh Fruit & Vegetables Aid Scheme, please note that you cannot receive a FFIS grant towards any items also funded by that Producer Organisation.

1 The applicant must be classified as a small or medium sized enterprise (SME) in line with Annex 1 of Commission regulation (EC) 70/2001 (as amended). In summary, a SME:
- has fewer than 250 employees; and
- has either an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million Euros, or a balance sheet total not exceeding 43 million Euros

The criteria must be applied to the company as a whole (including subsidiaries located in other Member States and outside the EU).

North West applicants

If you are located in the North West (Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire) there may still be funding available to access a subsidized technical plan through the North West Livestock Programme relevant to the items on which you are seeking grant aid.

Please contact the following for futher details:

- SAC on Tel: 0845 6040535 for Animal Health & Welfare planning, and
- Promar on Tel: 01270 616 800 for Nutrient management planning and Resource Efficiency auditing of energy, water etc.

However, please note that the opportunity to access the Programme is time limited and you are advised to contact the above as soon as possible.

How much grant funding is available?

What is the grant rate?

For applicants in **non-upland** areas (where less than 50% of the land is within a Severely Disadvantaged Area (SDA)) the **maximum** grant rate available from FFIS is up to 40% of eligible costs.

For hill farming businesses that operate in **upland** areas (where 50% or more of the land is within a SDA, or forestry/contracting businesses based within a SDA), the **maximum** grant rate available from FFIS is up to 50% of eligible costs.

Please note the grant rate for PigSAFE farrowing systems (as per design criteria) is up to 15% of eligible costs, regardless of SDA status.

Is there a maximum amount of grant?

Yes, the maximum amount of grant which can be applied for is **£35,000** per farm business (as identified by a farm's Single Business Identifier (SBI)). It should be noted that this limit applies to only Round Three. Any grant funding you may have received in Round One or Two of FFIS does not count against this limit. However, during the appraisal process, priority will be given to applicants who have not already been offered or received grant funding under either Round One or Round Two of FFIS.

Is there a minimum amount of grant?

Yes, the minimum amount of grant which can be applied for is £2,500. For example, this equates to minimum eligible costs of £6,250 where the 40% rate applies (£5,000 where the 50% rate applies).

What is eligible?

FFIS grant is for capital expenditure and associated supplier installation costs only; the use of own labour or benefits in-kind to install or construct any aspect of the proposed equipment is **not** eligible for funding under this scheme.

FFIS **cannot** be used to fund project items that are:

- Direct replacements,
- Standard agricultural equipment,
- A legislative requirement, or
- An industry obligation (e.g. Standard Management Requirement for Single Farm Payment).

How do I apply?

The opening date for applications for Round Three is 04 February 2014

The closing date for the receipt of applications for Round Three is 04 April 2014

Your completed electronic Application Form, signed hard copy Declaration and supporting documentation must be received by **04 April 2014**. Applications received after this date will not be processed and will be returned to you.

To assist you to submit a complete application, please use the **Application Requirements and Supporting Documentation section on pages 37-39** to ensure that you have enclosed all the relevant information with your application. Please note that applications will only be considered once all the required supporting documentation has been received.

How will applications be assessed?

The selection process for FFIS is competitive. This means that there is no guarantee of success and not all projects which are eligible will be awarded grant, or at the amount of grant requested.

You are strongly advised to submit your application as soon as possible following the opening date of 04 February 2014. Complete applications will be considered first. If you have submitted an incomplete application, it will not be considered until all required supporting documentation has been received. You therefore risk funds being already allocated if you submit an incomplete application.

When can I start my project?

You must **not** start work, commit to buying, ordering or making a deposit on any project item which is included in your grant application until you have received a Grant Offer Letter from Defra with an **official start date**. Failure to adhere to this requirement will invalidate your grant application.

What is the deadline for projects to be completed?

RDPE 2007-2013 is drawing to a close and all approved projects with a Grant Offer Letter issued **must** be completed and any grant claimed in full by **31 January 2015**. There will be no extension to this deadline.

You therefore need to consider the timing of your project so that you can meet this date. If your application is successful, we recommend that you check the availability of your items with your supplier or manufacturer to enable them to be supplied, installed and operational prior to submitting a claim by this date. If you do not complete your project and submit your claim by this date we may not be able to pay your grant.

Themes

Energy efficiency

OBJECTIVE: Investment in technologies that recover or reduce energy consumption on the farm resulting in a reduction of farm energy bills and the farm's carbon footprint.

Eligible items must achieve the above objective and:

- Be over and above standard farm practice,
- Not be a legislative requirement or an industry obligation

The following items are **not** eligible for grant funding under FFIS:

- Bulk milk tank
- Dairy vacuum pumps which are not associated with a variable speed drive
- Variable speed controllers which the main purpose is to vary the water flow
- Computer to run software programmes
- On-going costs such as annual software subscription
- Ground source heat pumps

The following activities may be considered for grant aid.

Energy Efficiency
If you are applying for items related to energy efficiency you **MUST** complete the Supplementary Information section of the Application Form on Energy Efficiency. The form will carry out calculations on your behalf and will provide Defra with an indication of your proposed savings. To help us appraise your project, you will need to provide evidence of your current energy usage within the business (energy bills for the last twelve months). You will also need to provide supporting calculations showing the energy saving you will be able to achieve. Most equipment manufacturers will be able to supply you with these calculations. Please note that it will be a condition of the grant award that the recovered energy and the energy saving device must be used within the applicant business and not in the farm house. Please ensure that quotes for items within this category are sufficiently detailed and fully describe the item on which you are seeking grant. We recommend that you have an energy audit carried out to satisfy yourself that the proposed investment will achieve the greatest benefit.

Heat Recovery System	
Ice builders	
Gel coolers	
Heat exchangers in connection with cooling milk	Plate coolers can be included but the coolant water must not run to waste and must be used within the applicant business. You must describe in the application how you will use this water.
Heat pumps for heat recovery	Heat pumps used for the capture and reuse of waste heat within the applicant business are eligible e.g. heat recovery in pig buildings from cooling slurry. Ground source heat pumps are **not** eligible under this scheme.
Heat exchangers in pig and poultry buildings	The captured energy must be used within the business and not to heat domestic properties or ancillary domestic facilities.
Electricity efficiency devices	
Vacuum on demand systems for milking parlours including variable speed motors	It is recognised that the pumps for some vacuum systems in parlours are not suitable to run at varying speeds to accommodate the vacuum on demand systems. In these instances grant will be paid on the replacement of the pump as part of the system. However you will need to confirm that the existing pump is not suitable and list the current type of pump you have in your dairy. Please be prepared to provide evidence of this if required.
Automatic variable speed controllers for water and vacuum pumps	These are electronic devices which automatically vary the speed of the electric motors in response to the load placed on the motor. These are energy saving devices. Although there are other forms of variable speed controllers under this scheme we are only interested in those which are specifically designed for energy saving. Systems where the main purpose is to vary the water flow are **not** eligible for grant funding.
Voltage optimisers	Can include inverters or optimisers for grain drying.
Computer software for use on existing computers specifically aimed to assist energy efficiency	It is recognised there are now computer programmes which can assist in managing energy usage within the business. This scheme will support the funding of these programmes as part of a wider energy saving scheme. The scheme will **not** support the purchase of the computer to run the programme or on-going costs such as annual software subscription.
Thermal screens for glasshouses/poly tunnels	
Heat pumps (pigs)	Heat pumps for heat recovery from cooling slurry.

If you would like to apply for energy efficiency equipment, you will need to complete the FFIS Main Application Form, then click on the appropriate tab at the bottom of the screen (Energy) and complete the relevant Supplementary Information section for your project type.

If you are applying for more than one project type within your single application, you will need to complete the appropriate Supplementary Information sections in the Application Form for each of your projects.

Nutrient management

OBJECTIVE: The investment in, and the adoption of practices that improve the nutrient management of slurries and manures leading to improvements in soil and land management practices, reduced reliance on artificial fertiliser and reductions in the costs of production.

Eligible items must achieve the above objective and:

- Be over and above standard farm practice,
- Not be a legislative requirement or an industry obligation, and
- Fit with your current farm nutrient management plan.

The following items are **not** eligible for grant funding under FFIS:

- Slurry/manure stores
- Dirty water storage
- Additional rings on existing slurry or dirty water stores
- Slurry handling systems in livestock housing, automatic scraper systems, slurry and dirty water pumps associated with storage of un-separated slurry
- Slurry tankers
- Manure spreaders
- Umbilical distribution system
- Tractors, combine harvesters, farm implements and any equipment required for standard crop production (such as fertiliser spreaders, sprayers) to which equipment will be fitted
- Variable rate fertiliser applicators
- Soil aerators
- GPS equipment for combine harvesters
- GPS – Charges for connection to network/licence fees/annual software or maintenance subscriptions
- N sensors
- Cost of soil sampling and/or analysis
- Consultant costs to undertake soil mapping

The following activities may be considered for grant aid.

Nutrient Management
If you are applying for any of the items listed below relating to nutrient management you **MUST** complete the Supplementary Information section of the Application Form on Nutrient Management. The form will carry out calculations on your behalf and will provide Defra with an indication of your proposed savings. If your application concerns a slurry separator or covering/roofing a silage, manure or slurry store you are advised to consult with the Environment Agency to ensure that the design of the facility complies with current legislation. You should be prepared to provide us with a copy of any correspondence with the Environment Agency if requested. Farmer applicants will need to confirm that they have a Nutrient Management Plan in place and be prepared to provide a copy if requested. In the case of contractors applying for grant funding towards slurry application equipment, you must submit letters confirming demand for your contracting service using proposed kit and identifying quantity of slurry for which spreading is required. For roofs or covers, you must submit a plan(s) or drawings sufficient in scale and detail to show the location of the project site along with the size and location of the proposed areas to be covered, and provide photographs of the proposed structures to be covered.

Management of stored manures	
Slurry separator	The installation of a slurry separator may require planning permission. You are expected to either provide a copy of the planning permission, the application reference number or a letter/email from the local planning authority confirming permission is not required when submitting your application. (See Permissions and Consents section on page 35 for further details).
Manure analysis equipment at farm level	If you are applying for this type of equipment you will need to explain within your application how this will contribute to your nutrient management planning for the farm and how it interacts with other changes you have made to the farm or are intending to make as part of this application to improve nutrient management.
Soil mapping and soil analysis software	Funding is available for software programmes but **not** for consultants to undertake this work or the cost of soil sampling and/or analysis.

GPS equipment for precision farming, including base stations (where this will also benefit other farmers), auto-steer systems, controllers fitted to the tractor to link the GPS signal to the application equipment, including actuators to operate sections of the application equipment or vary the rate of application	It is recognised that modern GPS systems can improve the accuracy of applications of manures, fertilisers and sprays thereby assisting in nutrient management on the farm. To provide this benefit as widely as possible funding will be limited to the purchase and installation of a GPS system to **one** tractor per business in Round Three of FFIS.
Slurry application equipment	
Funding is only available for the application equipment and **not** for the slurry tanker or any form of distribution pipe work. If the equipment is being purchased with a new slurry tanker or umbilical system the quotes you provide will need to show a breakdown of the cost separating the tanker or umbilical system from the application equipment.	
Dribble bars for slurry tankers or umbilical system	If you are applying for any of these items you will need to explain in your application your current slurry application method and why you wish to purchase this particular system.
Shallow injection system for slurry tankers or umbilical system	
Trailing shoe system for existing slurry tankers or umbilical system	
Macerators as part of the slurry distribution system	
Slurry aerator as part of the slurry distribution system	

Roofs for slurry and silage stores (including self-feed silage stores), lagoons and manure stores		
For these items we will pay for capital items based on 40% (or 50% in upland areas) of the actual cost of agreed capital works up to the **maximum guide price** shown below.		
Roofing of existing silage stores to exclude rainwater	This item will be funded as part of a nutrient management programme to reduce the amount of effluent produced on the farm. You will need to explain in your application the amount of effluent reduction you will achieve by covering the silage store. You will also need to explain how you will dispose of the resulting roof water. Including a water harvesting element in the project will result in a higher score on appraisal. The covering of a silage store may require planning permission. You will therefore be expected to either provide a copy of the planning permission, the application reference number or a letter or email from the local planning authority confirming permission is not required with your application. (See Permissions and Consents section on page 35 for further details).	£84.00 per m²
Roofing of existing middens/manure stores, slurry stores and dirty water lagoons	This item will be funded as part of a nutrient management programme to reduce the amount of effluent produced on the farm. You will need to explain in your application the amount of effluent reduction you will achieve by covering the manure store. You will also need to explain how you will dispose of the resulting roof water. Including a water harvesting element in the project will result in a higher score on appraisal. The covering of the store may require planning permission. You will therefore be expected to either provide a copy of the planning permission, the application reference number or a letter or email from the local planning authority confirming permission is not required with your application. (See Permissions and Consents section on page 35 for further details).	£84.00 per m²

If you are applying for any of the three following items you will need to explain in your application the type and size of store you are proposing to use the cover on and how you propose to handle the rainwater landing on the cover. You will also need to state the volume of water you expect to prevent entering the store and the percentage of the farm's storage this represents. Applicants are reminded that scheme rules dictate any item grant funded must be in use for at least five years after the grant has been paid. Failure to meet this may require repayment of grant. Applicants are therefore advised to carefully consider the type of cover chosen and its life expectancy.		
Impermeable self-supporting covers for existing circular above ground slurry stores slurry and dirty water stores		£34.00 per m²
Impermeable floating covers for above ground slurry stores		£12.00 per m²
Impermeable floating covers for lagoons		£7.00 per m²

If you would like to apply for nutrient management equipment, you will need to complete the FFIS Main Application Form, then click on the appropriate tab (Nutrient) at the bottom of the screen and complete the relevant Supplementary Information section for your project type.

If you are applying for more than one project type within your single application, you will need to complete the appropriate Supplementary Information sections in the Application Form for each of your projects.

Water resource management

OBJECTIVE: To reduce the reliance of farm and horticultural businesses on mains water or bore hole water through the harvesting, recycling and re-use of rainwater.

Eligible items must achieve the above objective and:

- Be over and above standard farm practice,
- Not be a legislative requirement or an industry obligation

The following items are **not** eligible for grant funding under FFIS:

- Boreholes
- Guttering

The following activities may be considered for grant aid.

Water Management

If you are applying for any of the items listed below relating to water management you **MUST** complete the Supplementary Information section of the Application Form on Water Management. The form will carry out calculations on your behalf and will provide Defra with an indication of your proposed savings.

To help us appraise your project, you will need to provide evidence of your current water usage within the business (water bills for the last twelve months).

The collected water must be used within the business and not used for domestic purposes.

If you are a dairy farmer and the harvested water will be used within the dairy enterprise you are advised to speak to your milk buyer before proceeding. Some contracts do not permit the use of harvested rainwater/grey water within the dairy complex.

Projects are **not** eligible where the project will simply divert water to a water course. The project must contribute to the capture and reuse of water in order to reduce the business demand on mains or abstracted water.

If your application concerns a water storage tank, pond or reservoir you are advised to consult with the Environment Agency to ensure that the design of the facility complies with current legislation. You should be prepared to provide us with a copy of any correspondence with the Environment Agency if requested.

You will also need to submit a plan(s) or drawing sufficient in scale and detail to show the location of the project site along with the size and location of the buildings and horticultural beds from which water will be collected, the location of any pipes (both above and underground), tanks, pumps and site(s) of water take off/usage points.

Rainwater harvesting	
Pipe work specifically to intercept and divert roof water to a water storage facility	If you are considering applying for these items you will need to explain in your application where and how the diverted water will be stored. You must also provide details of the size of store. Projects that make a significant contribution towards savings in annual water usage will be given priority.
Pumps as part of a rain water harvesting system	
Filters as part of a rain water harvesting system (incl. UV filters)	
Storage tanks, storage ponds and reservoirs specifically for the storage of harvested water	Storage facilities on which you are seeking grant funding cannot be used for the storage of fresh mains water or water abstracted from a borehole. Eligible expenditure can include the installation of a concrete base to the tank (subject to three quotations) and must be proportionate with the size of the tank. Reservoirs must be used to capture rain water for reuse and not to store river or borehole abstraction. Larger storage facilities may require planning permission. You will therefore be expected to either provide a copy of the planning permission, the application reference number or a letter or email from the local planning authority confirming permission is not required with your application. (See Permissions and Consents section on page 35 for further details).
Water recycling in horticulture	
Pipework specifically to intercept and divert water (rain or waste irrigation water) from horticultural containerised growing beds to a storage facility	If you are considering applying for these items you will need to explain where and how the water will be stored in your application. You must also provide details of the size of store. Projects that make a significant contribution towards savings in annual water usage will be given priority. Please note that parts of the water recycling system may be sourced from different suppliers but all individual components must still have three quotations.
Pumps as part of a water recycling system to aid the transfer to the storage facility	
Filters as part of a water recycling system (incl. UV Filters)	

Storage tanks, storage ponds and reservoirs specifically for the storage of recycled water	Larger storage facilities may require planning permission. You will therefore be expected to either provide a copy of the planning permission, the application reference number or a letter or email from the local planning authority confirming permission is not required with your application. (See Permissions and Consents section on page 35 for further details). Storage facilities on which you are seeking grant funding cannot be used for the storage of fresh mains water or water abstracted from a borehole.

In obtaining quotes for the work, you are advised to make your contractor aware of the possible need for compliance with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999, and the Code of Practice in respect of Rainwater harvesting systems as described in BS 8515:2009.

If you would like to apply for a water resource management grant, you will need to complete the FFIS Main Application Form, then click on the appropriate tab (Water) at the bottom of the screen and complete the relevant Supplementary Information section for your project type.

If you are applying for more than one project type within your single application, you will need to complete the appropriate Supplementary Information sections in the Application Form for each of your projects.

Animal health and welfare

OBJECTIVE: Improve the health and welfare of farm animals.

Eligible items must achieve the above objective and:

- Be over and above standard farm practice,
- Not be a legislative requirement or an industry obligation

Any application for equipment related to animal health and welfare must be identified as a priority in your current Farm or Animal Health Plan, which is not more than 12 months old and has been supported by your vet. The Health Plan should set out the Animal Health and Welfare issues on your farm that the project is designed to address. You will need to confirm that you have a plan in place and that this will be made available for inspection if required.

You must submit with your application a copy of the summary/action page from your Health Plan which has your vet's practice name, your signature and signature of your vet. If the item(s) are not listed in the summary/action page from your Health Plan, you will need to submit a letter from your vet explaining how the item(s) are a priority for the farm.

Please note that not all items which may be recommended by vets will be eligible under FFIS.

The following items are **not** eligible for grant funding under FFIS:

- Upgrading of cubicles in existing dairy accommodation
- Installation of new cubicles
- Automatic (in or out of parlour) feeders and associated collars
- Automatic cluster removers (ACRs)
- Standard milking and dairy equipment (units, jars, milk pumps, bulk tanks)
- Cow tracks
- Works intended to improve ventilation in intensive/semi intensive livestock buildings (such as for young stock, pigs and poultry)
- Solid rubber cubicle mats (i.e. solid rubber mats)
- Livestock trailers
- Feed wagons/trailers
- Foot baths – basic systems/troughs
- Feed mangers and troughs (except those proved to be badger proof)
- New buildings such as parlour and livestock housing
- Concreting of yards or buildings
- Computers, Wi-Fi set up or apps for phones
- Ongoing costs such as annual software subscription
- Static livestock handling systems (races, pens, gates and hurdles)

- Hand held sprayer teat cleaning or hand held disinfection systems
- Water softeners and purification systems for installation after header tanks in individual buildings
- Installation of new or replacement drinkers (except nipple drinkers in broiler units) or any extra pipe work as part of a water monitoring EID sheep tags
- EID cattle tags
- EID sheep tags
- Repairs to concrete or the laying of new concrete

The following activities may be considered for grant aid.

Animal Health and Welfare

If you are applying for any of the items listed below relating to animal health and welfare you **MUST** complete the Supplementary Information section of the Application Form on Animal Health and Welfare.

As stated above you can only apply for items listed under this section if they are identified as a priority in your current Farm or Animal Health Plan, which is not more than 12 months old and has been supported by your vet.

You must submit with your application a copy of the summary/action page from your Health Plan which has your vet's practice name, your signature and signature of your vet. If the item(s) are not listed in the summary/action page from your Health Plan, you will need to submit a letter from your vet explaining how the item(s) are a priority for the farm.

You can only apply under FFIS Round Three for items listed as eligible in **this** handbook.

If you are applying for grant to install rubber matting in your parlour, you will need to provide a plan (hand drawn dimensioned plan/map will be acceptable) of the areas which will be covered by the rubber matting.

It should be remembered it is a requirement that any person keeping animals has appropriate handling facilities and has facilities to restrain individual animals. This scheme is designed to provide grant funding towards the upgrade from a basic system to one which allows a wider range of tasks to be undertaken by the applicant or their vet in a safe way for both the animal and the operator. The scheme provides support towards the purchase of specific handling equipment. It does not provide support for all aspects of a livestock handling system.

Sheep and Goats	
Sheep weigh crates with electronic weighing system linked to EID system	If you are applying for funding for this item the system must be linked to an EID computer system and must form part of a health monitoring system to assist in improving the health status of your flock. Please note we will only provide grant support for the weigh crate, electronic weigh cells/load bars and digital reader. Grant is **not** available on static handling systems for additional hurdles gates or penning which may be needed to accommodate the installation of the weighing system.
Automatic shedding/ drafting gate linked to EID system and electronic weighing system	Funding is available for electrically, hydraulic or pneumatically controlled automatic drafting gate. It is recognised weight loss in lambs and sheep is an indicator to a health problem in the flock. Regular weighing can identify weight loss in individuals. Using an automatic drafting gate can greatly assist quickly separating individual animals for closer examination. If you are applying for funding for this item the system must be linked to an EID computer system and electronic weigh system. It also must form part of a health monitoring system to assist in improving the health status of your flock. Please note we will only provide grant support for the automatic drafting gate. Grant is **not** available on a static system for additional hurdles, gates or penning which may be needed to accommodate the installation of the drafting gate.
Sheep weigh crates with electronic segregation system	It is recognised that some manufacturers now provide equipment combining the electronic weighing system and automatic drafting gate. These combined systems are eligible for grant support. Please note we will only provide grant support for the automatic drafting gate and electronic weigh crate. Grant is **not** available on a static system for additional hurdles, gates or penning which may be needed to accommodate the installation of the system.
Turning crates for sheep	If you are applying for funding for this item you must demonstrate it forms part of a health monitoring system to assist in improving the health status of your flock. Given this item is used in a number of animal health procedures you will need to provide evidence that you or someone working on the farm has undertaken appropriate training or have appropriate skills to use the equipment before we will pay your grant claim. You should consult your local vet as a subsidised training course may be available in your area. (See note on Training on page 30).
EID readers (handheld or panel readers)	To assist in improving the monitoring of the health of flocks EID readers are eligible for grant funding. Handheld readers are eligible as well as panel/race (walk by) readers. The readers must be able to read HDX and FBX electronic tags and comply with ISO 11785. Funding is available for the reader, software to down load information to a computer and chargers. Funding is **not** available for a computer, printer or additional software or the purchase of ear tags.

Mobile sheep handling system	Mobile handling facilities have been included to aid the safe handling of sheep on off lying land where permanent facilities are not available. For the purposes of this grant scheme a mobile handling system is defined as one which includes **all** the following features: • A race with facility to hold/isolate individual animals in the race for examination/treatment. • It is supplied with hurdles/gates to form holding pen proportionate with size of flock which are stored on the trailer for transporting and when not in use. • The facility comes with or has a built in trailer with wheels which can easily be raised or lowered to the ground either manually or hydraulically using tractor's hydraulics. • The unit must be fully road legal with full road lighting and fitted with a braking system where required. Although grant funding is **not** available for the purchase of basic footbaths it is recognised that some manufacturers of mobile sheep handling systems do have a footbath as an integral part of the race or trailer and in such circumstances Defra is not requesting the element be removed from the cost of the mobile facility. The chosen system should have flexibility to be used with EID systems and the capability to be expanded to accommodate electronic weighing, segregation and turnover crates.
Installation of specialist slatted floor to existing buildings for indoor lambing	Indoor lambing facilities can assist in the reduction of lamb mortality. Where such facilities offer a slatted floor system rather than traditional straw bedding they provide an alternative clean, dry surface that can support general animal health and help to avoid problems with pneumonia and foot rot. Outside of the main lambing season the slats can be used to accommodate animals receiving treatments and provide a covered handling area to allow operations such as dosing and clipping to be carried out even in wet weather. Reasonable costs associated with the internal alteration of existing buildings to accommodate the fitting of the slats may be considered for funding.

Cattle	
Upgrade of cattle crush Please note we will only fund the uplift from a standard cattle crush system which we have set at £500 (excl VAT) based on the cost of a basic crush. This amount will be deducted by Defra staff from the eligible costs before the grant amount is calculated. You should provide three quotes for the eligible equipment.	It is a requirement that any person keeping animals has appropriate handling facilities and has facilities to restrain individual animals. Modern cattle crushes are designed to allow safe handling of stock to undertake a range of animal health tasks. This scheme is designed to provide grant funding towards the upgrade from a basic crush to allow a wider range of tasks to be undertaken by the applicant or their vet in a safe way for both the animal and the operator. The scheme does **not** provide funding towards the cost of the basic crush. If the proposed crush includes foot trimming facilities you will need to provide evidence that you or someone working on the farm has undertaken appropriate training or have appropriate skills to undertake cattle foot trimming before we will pay your grant claim. You should consult your local vet as a subsidised training course may be available in your area. (See note on Training on page 30).
Cattle foot trimming facilities	This can be part of a cattle crush (see above) or purchased as additional items to attach to an existing crush. In either case you will need to provide evidence that you or someone working on the farm has undertaken appropriate training or has appropriate skills to undertake cattle foot trimming before we will pay your grant claim. You should consult your local vet as a subsidised training course may be available in your area. (See note on Training on page 30).

Mobile cattle handling system Please note we will only fund the uplift from a standard cattle crush system which we have set at £500 (excl VAT) based on the cost of a basic crush. This amount will be deducted by Defra staff from the eligible costs before the grant amount is calculated. You should provide three quotes for the eligible equipment.	Mobile handling facilities have been included to aid the safe handling of cattle on off lying land where permanent facilities are not available. They have also been included to help with the control measures currently in force for the control of Bovine TB. For the purposes of this grant scheme a mobile handling system is defined as one which includes **all** of the following features: • Crush with fully automatic head yoke and side access doors on both side of crush. • Personnel access at rear of crush with sliding gates incorporated into the unit to assist operator/veterinary safety during examination of animals. • Supplied with hurdles/gates to form holding pen which are stored on the crush/race for transport and when not in use. • The facility has built in wheels which can easily be raised or lowered to the ground either manually or hydraulically using tractor's hydraulics. • The unit must be fully road legal with full road lighting and fitted with a braking system where required. The scheme does **not** provide funding towards the cost of the basic crush.
Head scoop for cattle crush	This can be as part of the cattle crush or purchased as an additional item to aid safe handling of cattle on an existing crush.
Automatic footbaths	Although basic footbaths are **not** eligible, automatic footbaths which automatically empty and refill liquid to maintain effective concentration of active ingredient are eligible. If you are applying for this item you will need to explain in your application how the installation of an automatic footbath will improve your herd's health. You will need to ensure that the waste chemicals will be disposed of safely and the method of disposal conforms to current control of pollution guidelines.
Automatic foot spraying	If you are applying for this item you need to explain in your application how the installation of the foot spray will improve your herd's health. You will need to ensure that the waste chemicals will be disposed of safely and the method of disposal conforms to current control of pollution guidelines.

EID readers (handheld or panel readers)	To assist in improving the monitoring of the health of cattle, EID readers are eligible for grant funding. Handheld readers are eligible as well as panel/race (walk by) readers. The readers must be able to read HDX and FBX electronic tags and comply with ISO 11785. Funding is available for the reader, software to down load information to a computer and chargers. Funding is **not** available for a computer, printer or additional management software or the purchase of ear tags. If you are applying for this item you need to explain in your application how the equipment will assist you in the management of the health of your cattle.
Electronic weigh cells for cattle crushes	This can be purchased as part of a cattle crush or purchased as an additional item to add to an existing crush. If you are applying for funding for this item the system must be linked to an EID computer system and must form part of a health monitoring system to assist in improving the health status of your herd. Please note we will only provide grant support for the electronic weigh cells/load bars and digital reader. Grant is **not** available for additional gates or penning which may be needed to accommodate the installation of the weighing system on a static handling system.
Cow mattresses	To be eligible, the product needs to demonstrate a superior nature by design and improved cushioning. Standard solid rubber cubicle mats are **not** available under this scheme.
Locking yokes	It is recognised that it is not always possible to use a handling system for some breeds of cattle and locking yokes are a more appropriate system to restrain animals.
Automatic shedding/ drafting gate linked to EID system and electronic weighing system	Grant funding is available for electrically, hydraulic or pneumatically controlled automatic drafting gate. It is recognised weight loss in cattle can be an indicator to a health problem in the herd. Regular weighing can identify weight loss in individuals. Using an automatic drafting gate can greatly assist quickly separating individual animals for closer examination. If you are applying for grant funding for this item the system must be linked to an EID computer system and electronic weigh system. Please note we will only provide grant support for the automatic drafting gate. Grant funding is **not** available for additional gates or penning which may be needed to accommodate the installation of the drafting gate in static handling systems.

Equipment to assist in the control of Bovine TB	
The following items have been included to assist **all farmers** in the control of Bovine TB. If funds become limited priority for these items will be given to farmers in the High Risk and Edge areas. The South West TB Farm Advisory Service in conjunction with Bicton College has carried out field trials of different types of troughs and feeders to determine those which deter badgers from accessing the feed. For further advice and guidance see: http://www.southwest-tbadvice.co.uk/biosecurity/bicton-college-biosecurity-project	
Badger proof in field feed troughs	Based on the South West TB Farm Advisory Service research, the troughs need to be fitted with free running rollers fitted around all the top edges of the troughs and raised above the ground to prevent badger access. To ensure the equipment assists in the control of Bovine TB we will only provide grant on this item where it can be shown the design has undergone successful field trials. For further advice and guidance see: http://www.southwest-tbadvice.co.uk/biosecurity/bicton-college-biosecurity-project
Badger proof mineral lick holders	To ensure the equipment assists in the control of Bovine TB we will only provide grant on this item where it can be shown the design has undergone successful field trials. For further advice and guidance see: http://www.southwest-tbadvice.co.uk/biosecurity/bicton-college-biosecurity-project
Dairy	
Rotating cow brushes	
Cluster flushing system	This item is included to help prevent the transmission of mastitis between cows. If you are applying for this item you will need to provide details of the number of confirmed cases you have had in your herd in the last two years in your Application Form, along with evidence from your vet (in a letter or in your farm's Health Plan summary/action page) that you have taken all other appropriate measures to reduce transmission.
Heat detection systems based on motion detectors (either collar or pedometer based)	It has been found that heat detection systems based on motion detectors offer wider health detection benefits. When providing quotes you will need to provide a breakdown of the cost of the equipment separating out the cost of the motion detectors (collars or pedometers) from the recording equipment. The quotes must list the number of collars or pedometers you are looking to buy. These must be new or additional and **not** replacements for existing equipment.

Automatic electronic segregation gates for the parlour	These are eligible where linked to a heat detection system to assist in the isolation of animals from the herd for further veterinary investigation.	
Resurfacing of parlour floor and collecting yard with rubber matting including areas specified in your animal health summary/action page	This item has been included to assist in the reduction of lameness in cows. The areas to be resurfaced must be where most attention is needed and will provide the greatest benefit as identified and agreed by your vet. If you are resurfacing areas within the parlour it is advised you speak to your Dairy Hygiene Inspector to check the proposed resurfacing will not create any hygiene issues. Foreign material can collect around the edge and under some types of floor covering creating hygiene issues. **Please provide a plan (hand drawn dimensioned plan/map will be acceptable) of the areas which will be covered by rubber matting.**	
Grooving of **existing** concrete floor in the parlour and collecting yard including areas identified in your animal health summary/action page	This item has been included to assist in the reduction of lameness and leg injury to cows. The areas to be grooved must be where most attention is needed and will provide the greatest benefit as identified and agreed by your vet. This can be applied to new or old concrete but the cost of any repairs to the concrete or the laying of new concrete is **not** eligible.	For this item the grant rate is 40% (or 50% in uplands areas) of the eligible cost of quoted capital works up to a **maximum guide price** of £2.50 per m²
Cow mattresses	To be eligible, the product needs to demonstrate a superior nature by design and improved cushioning. Standard rubber cubicle mats are **not** available under this item.	
Milk pasteuriser for use with colostrum and whole milk for feeding to calves specific to the control of Johne's disease	This item is included to help prevent the transmission of Johne's disease. If you are applying for this item you will need to demonstrate you are actively involved in a nationally recognised Johne's Control Programme including regular testing of the cattle on your holding and provide details of the number of confirmed cases you have had in your herd in the last two years in your Application Form.	
Static force plates for lameness detection in dairy cows	Specialist computer package associated with lameness detection can also be supported.	

Pigs and Poultry	
Static force plates for lameness detection in pigs	Specialist computer packages associated with lameness can also be supported.
Electronic weigh cells (pigs)	
Real time monitoring of water consumption. Eligible items are water meters and data logging devices	Real time continuous monitoring of water consumption has been found to aid detection of diseases in pigs and poultry at a sub clinical level allowing prompt treatment to be administered. The water consumption of diseased pigs and birds has been found to deviate from the drinking pattern of healthy pigs and birds. Grant funding is therefore available for the installation of water meters and data logging devices to individual pig houses and poultry sheds. In order to provide this benefit as widely as possible we will provide funding for a minimum of one meter per house up to a maximum of one meter per 100 pigs or 2,000 birds (i.e. no less than 100 pigs per meter or 2,000 birds per meter). (So for example with 750 pigs on a site the maximum number of meters allowed for grant funding is seven or with 7,500 birds on a site the maximum number of meters allowed for grant funding is three.) Grant funding is **not** available for the installation of new or replacement drinkers (except nipple drinkers in broiler units) or any extra pipe work as part of a water monitoring project or the purchase of a new computer.
PigSAFE non-crate systems for indoor farrowing accommodation **Maximum grant rate is 15% of the eligible cost**	The PigSAFE project is a project funded by Defra and carried out by the University of Newcastle and the Scottish Agricultural College (SAC) in consultation with welfare (RSPCA) and industry groups (BPEX, QMS). All projects must: • Fully meet the recommended dimensions and details for building PigSAFE pens; and • Commit to staff training to ensure smooth transition in the management requirements related to the installation of the new system.

Replacement of bell with nipple drinkers (broiler production only)	These are advantageous in broiler production because they can reduce spillage resulting in drier litter, decrease ammonia volatilisation and reduce incidence of breast blisters. Applications should detail the welfare benefits of the chosen system over the current system and be supported by the flock veterinary surgeon. The application should give information on the routine management of the system to ensure correct function and use. Only applications for replacement systems will be eligible. (It is a statutory requirement to provide watering systems in new buildings for broiler production.)
Water softeners and purification systems to address gut health issues	These items can improve the health and welfare of pigs and poultry. If you are applying for grant funding for this item you will need to explain in your application how you ensure that the water supply at the site to which the application refers is clean and contaminant free. To be eligible the proposed system must address a recognised issue, not arising from the potability of the supply. One system per site associated with the main water supply will be eligible. Applications for water softeners and purification systems for installation after header tanks in individual buildings will **not** be eligible.
Interventions to help control/ prevent injurious feather pecking (egg production only) This could include: variable intensity lighting in broiler units e.g. dusk, dimmer lights and/or verandas and 'Wintergardens' for laying hens and broilers	Applications for innovative interventions which are shown to control or prevent injurious feather pecking will be considered. Interventions must be regarded as above standard industry practice and not a statutory requirement of egg production. If you are applying for grant funding for these items you will need to explain in your application what the health and welfare benefits of the proposed intervention are compared to the current production system and give details of any training requirement to implement the intervention. Applications must be supported by the flock veterinary surgeon. For birds kept indoors without access to a range, the provision of a veranda or 'wintergarden' will enrich the environment, increase bird activity and can assist with a reduction in injurious pecking. For free range birds, access to a veranda during the rearing phase and/or the laying phase can encourage birds to access the range when available as well as reduce impacts of wet weather on the indoor litter condition. Any veranda/wintergarden must provide enough space for a number of birds to use at the same time whilst minimising the risk of smothering. It is therefore recommended that the area, including access points, should be at least 2 metres wide.

Duck showers and associated drainage for commercial duck units	Ducks are unable to use water from sources such as nipple drinkers to perform natural preening behaviours and to perform social bathing which has both health and welfare benefits. Whilst troughs and baths may cause difficulties with maintaining hygiene in some commercial rearing environments, showers have been shown to provide for both social bathing needs and to facilitate preening which has positive benefits for eye and nostril health and feather condition.
Computer software for use on existing computers specifically aimed to assist in the monitoring of animal health (pigs and poultry)	It is recognised there are now computer programmes which can assist in managing animal health. This scheme will support the funding of these programmes as part of a wider animal health improvement project. The scheme will **not** support the purchase of the computer to run the programme, Wi-Fi set up or apps for mobile phones.
Incinerators and digesters for carcass disposal	Carcass disposal has been recognised as a problem for farmers. If you are considering applying for grant funding for this item you will need to provide a letter from your vet confirming the need for an incinerator or digester on your farm. There is considerable legislative control on the installation and use of incinerators and digesters for on farm disposal of dead stock. You will need to provide written approval from the Local Authority and Environment Agency that the proposed facility will comply with all current legislative requirements with your application.

Training – If you are unable to access a course relating to the relevant training requirements above, you will need to provide a letter from your vet confirming that you have the necessary experience or have undertaken training in the past.

Further details about training courses funded through RDPE are available on the RDPE Network website: http://rdpenetwork.defra.gov.uk/funding-sources

If you would like to apply for animal health and welfare equipment, you will need to complete the FFIS Main Application Form, then click on the appropriate tab (Animal Health) at the bottom of the screen and complete the relevant Supplementary Information section for your project type.

If you are applying for more than one project type within your single application, you will need to complete the appropriate Supplementary Information sections in the Application Form for each of your projects.

Forestry

OBJECTIVE: To improve the economic value of forests through the efficiencies of improved processing and adding value.

The following items are **not** eligible for funding under FFIS:

- Chainsaws
- Forestry tractors
- Briquetting machines
- Pelleting machines
- Tipping trailers
- Flatbed trailers
- Box trailers

The following activities may be considered for grant aid.

Forestry
If you are applying for any of the items listed below relating to forestry you **MUST** complete the Supplementary Information section of the Application Form on Forestry. The items listed in the in-forest activities are only available to woodland owners or forestry contractors. The wood you are processing as a result of your project **must** be sourced from woods and forests and **must not** be from waste wood products e.g. sawmill waste or arboriculture arisings. Haulage contractors are **not** eligible to apply for FFIS. If you are a woodland owner you must confirm that you have a current woodland management plan for the woodlands you own otherwise your project will be deemed ineligible. You must be able to produce the plan for inspection if so required. Further guidance on woodland management plans can be found at: http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestry.nsf/byunique/infd-6dccn3 In the case of forestry contractors or if applying for an item listed under the forestry yard based activity, you must demonstrate you are classed as a rural micro business (i.e. have less than 10 FTE employees and a turnover or balance sheet less than €2m). You should also provide letters of support from your clients for the product or service you are providing. If you are applying for any of the forestry items listed which are self-propelled e.g. forwarder, self-propelled chipper you must demonstrate either you or a member of your staff have or will undertake the relevant training before we will pay your grant claim.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Firewood processing is defined as the grading, cutting and splitting of logs for the firewood/log market. The drying and seasoning of logs falls outside the scope of this scheme.

For a number of items you are required to explain in your application that you have access to a sufficient amount of wood for that equipment and that you have access to a market for your products or service. Defra may request that you substantiate this if necessary.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">In-forest activities</td></tr>
<tr><td>Timber processor/ harvesting heads for primary processing of felled trees</td><td>If you are considering applying for grant funding for these items, the cost of the felling blade and its drive mechanism will be deducted from the preferred quote as FFIS cannot be used to support the costs associated with the actual felling of the tree. This has been set at £2,500 (excluding VAT).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Forwarders</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Tractor mounted forestry grabs/tongs</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Forestry trailers and cranes</td><td>Only trailers specifically designed for hauling timber/logs are eligible.

Only cranes designed specifically to extract timber from woodland are eligible.

You can either purchase these as a combined unit or separately in the case of the crane to fit an existing forestry trailer.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Tractor mounted wood chippers</td><td rowspan="3">If you are considering applying for grant funding on either of these items you will need to explain in the Supplementary Information section:
That you have access to a sufficient amount of wood for the size of machine you are requesting.
That you have access to a market for the wood fuel you are intending to produce.
A number of bio mass heating systems have been found to have problems with wood chip quality mainly due to inconsistent chip size. To avoid this problem the proposed chipper must produce high quality woodchips which meet current European standards on chip size used in biomass heating systems. Further information can be found at: http://www.biomassenergycentre.org.uk/
Priority for grant funding will be given to those applicants who can demonstrate collaborative or shared use of the equipment.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Self-propelled wood chippers</td></tr>
<tr><td></td></tr>
</table>

Tractor mounted firewood processors	If you are considering applying for grant funding on this item you will need to explain in the Supplementary Information section: • That you have access to a sufficient amount of wood for the size of machine you are requesting. • That you have access to a market for the wood fuel you are intending to produce. Priority for grant funding will be given to those applicants who can demonstrate collaborative or shared use of the equipment.
Associated processing equipment for firewood processors	It is recognised the addition of log decks, racks, log conveyors, log lifters and bagging shoots can improve efficiency and safety. These can be purchased as part of a firewood processor or can be purchased separately to add to existing equipment.
Mobile saw bench/ saw mill	If you are considering applying for grant funding on this item you will need to explain that you have access to market for the timber you will produce or service you may offer.
Trommel or other types of chip screening equipment	To improve the quality of chips produced by existing wood chippers the purchase of screening devices are eligible under FFIS for grant support. However the resulting screened material must meet current European standards on chip size used in biomass heating systems.
Firewood and cone splitters	
Winches	Please explain in the Supplementary Information section why you need the winch. Funding will be limited to the purchase of one winch per applicant.
Forestry yard based activities	
If you are considering applying for grant funding on any of these items you will need to explain in your application that you have access to a sufficient amount of wood for that equipment and that you have access to a market for your products or service. Defra may request that you substantiate this if necessary.	
Static chippers	
Static firewood processors	A number of biomass heating systems have been found to have problems with wood chip quality mainly due to inconsistent chip size. To avoid this problem the proposed chipper must produce high quality woodchips which meet current European standards on chip size used in biomass heating systems.
Trommel or other types of chip screening equipment	To improve the quality of chips produced by existing wood chippers the purchase of screening devices are eligible under FFIS for grant support. However the resulting screened material must meet current European standards on chip size used in biomass heating systems.
Firewood and cone splitters	

Kindling machines	
Static saw bench	If you are considering applying for grant funding on this item you will need to explain in the Supplementary Information section that you have access to a market for the timber you will produce or service you may offer.

If you would like to apply for forestry equipment, you will need to complete the FFIS Main Application Form, then click on the appropriate tab (Forestry) at the bottom of the screen and complete the relevant Supplementary Information section for your project type.

If you are applying for more than one project type within your single application, you will need to complete the appropriate Supplementary Information sections in the Application Form for each of your projects.

Permissions and Consents

A number of eligible items may require planning permission:

- Slurry separators
- Silage store covers
- Roofing of existing middens/manure stores/silage store pits
- Water storage tanks, ponds or reservoirs
- Incinerators and digesters for carcass disposal
- Verandas (poultry)

Planning permission is required for the carrying out of any building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land, (section 55 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended). The construction of ponds, reservoirs and water storage tanks are considered as engineering operations. However some operations are deemed as permitted development and prior consent is not required from the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

If your project involves any of the above eligible items you **must** contact your LPA. They will advise you whether planning permission is required.

Where permission is not required you must obtain a letter or email from the LPA stating permission is not required or is considered as permitted development and further consent is not required. This must be obtained and submitted with your FFIS Application.

Where permission is required, we recognise it can take time to receive approval. To avoid unnecessary delays, if you have not already obtained planning permission by the time you submit your grant application and are awaiting a decision from the LPA, you must provide the planning application reference number in Question 9 of the Application Form. If your grant application is successful, you must then submit a copy of the permission to the RDPE Delivery Team prior to claiming grant.

Where permission is required and you have not submitted a planning application and obtained an LPA reference number, your application for grant funding will be considered incomplete and may not be processed.

Environment Agency (EA) Approval

The eligible items set out above may also require approval or consent from the EA. In these cases, you are advised to consult with the EA to ensure that the design of the facility complies with current legislation. We do not need a copy of the consent or approval from the EA submitting with your application but you should be prepared to provide this if requested.

Tenant Farmers

For tenant farmers you must confirm that you have at least six years of your tenancy remaining and provide details in the Application Form. For the following projects, in addition to this you will also need to provide written consent from your landlord in a letter or email:

- Roofing of existing middens/manure, silage or slurry stores/dirty water lagoons
- Below ground water storage
- Slurry separator
- Permanent covers for slurry lagoons
- Permanent covers for silage clamps
- Verandas for poultry houses
- Installation of specialist slatted floor to existing buildings for indoor lambing
- Grooving of **existing** concrete floors
- PigSAFE non-crate systems for indoor farrowing accommodation

Application requirements and supporting documentation

Please remember that you can only apply under FFIS Round Three for items listed as eligible in this Handbook. Guidance given for Rounds One and Two of FFIS should not be used for this round of FFIS.

In order for your application to be processed, you will need to provide:

1. An electronic version of the Main Application Form
2. A signed hard copy of the Declaration Form
3. Completed Supplementary Information section(s)
4. Supporting documents as detailed below and on the Application Form

General supporting documentation requirements

All applications **must** be accompanied by the following supporting documentation:

Accounts: Copies of the latest full trading accounts covering two consecutive financial years for the applicant's business. Accounts **must** contain the **balance sheet, profit and loss,** and **full notes** to the accounts. We will not be returning documents to you so please do **NOT** send originals of your accounts.

Quotes: Three quotes for each item of expenditure (unless you are applying for an item where a maximum guide price applies). The quotes must:

- Be independent of each other (i.e. from different suppliers that trade as standalone business entities that are not linked through shared ownership)
- Be independent of the applicant
- Be comparable (e.g. of same or similar specification (quality), size, quantity, units)
- Be dated (within the last six months)
- Be addressed to the grant applicant business at the address shown on the Application Form
- Show the supplier's address, telephone number and contact details
- Give the VAT number (if the supplier is VAT registered and VAT is charged on the quote)
- Show the supplier's company registration number (if they are a limited company)

We will **not** accept internet printouts or listings based on catalogue prices (recommended retail prices) in lieu of a formal quote that meets the requirements set out above.

If you do not select the cheapest quote you must fully explain the reason why on the Supplementary Information tab relating to your project. We do not consider reasons such as location of the supplier, having used a particular supplier in the past or inclusion of service or maintenance as acceptable justification for not choosing the lowest quote. **Whilst you can opt for a more expensive quote from your preferred supplier, we reserve the right to reduce any offer of grant to the lowest quote and you will be expected to cover any price difference from your own funds.**

The only exceptions to providing three quotes will be for those specific items which are listed in the nutrient management section where we will pay 40% (or 50% in upland areas) of the agreed capital costs up to the maximum guide price quoted. For these specific items there will be no requirement to obtain more than one full quote.

NB. Please note that it will be a condition of grant that where second hand equipment is to be purchased, evidence will be required that it:

- Meets current Health and Safety legislation,
- Has not previously been purchased using public funds,
- Is fit for purpose, and
- Has at least five years life expectancy remaining.

Permissions and consents: Copies of these must be provided as set out on page 35.

Project specific supporting documentation requirements

You will need to provide the supporting documentation listed below for each theme that you are applying for:

Energy Efficiency

- Copies of the last 12 months' energy bills (e.g. gas, electric, oil, LPG etc).
- Fully completed Supplementary Information Energy section of the Application Form including details of current energy usage and expected savings.
- Supporting calculations to demonstrate level of expected savings.

Nutrient Management

- For slurry separator or covering/roofing a silage, manure or slurry store, please provide copies of relevant consents if required (see Permissions and Consents at page 35 for further details).
- For roofs or covers, plan(s) or drawings sufficient in scale and detail to show the location of the project site along with the size and location of the proposed areas to be covered.
- For roofs or covers, photographs of the proposed structures to be covered.
- Fully completed Supplementary Information Nutrient section of the Application Form including details regarding current fertiliser usage and expected savings.
- Supporting calculations to demonstrate level of expected savings.

Farmer applicants:

- Confirm on the Applicant's Declaration that you have a current nutrient management plan and that the proposal will improve the nutrient management of the farm's slurries and manures, and improve the farm's soil and land management practices. You must be able to produce the plan for inspection if so required.

If you are located in a Nutrient Vulnerable Zone you should already have a nutrient management plan. Any applicant who does not have a current management plan may find the following link helpful http://www.nutrientmanagement.org/The-Plan/The-Plan/

Contractor applicants:

- Confirm on the Applicant's Declaration that you will only operate in accordance with current legislative and industry requirements in the carrying out of activities funded by the FFIS.
- Letters confirming demand for contracting service using proposed kit and identifying quantity of slurry for which spreading is required.

Water Management

- For water storage tanks, ponds or reservoirs please provide copies of relevant consents if required (see Permissions and Consents at page 35 for further details).
- Copies of the last 12 months of water bills.
- Plan(s) or drawings sufficient in scale and detail to show the location of the project site along with the size and location of the buildings and horticultural beds from which water will be collected, the location of any pipes (both above and underground), tanks, pumps and site(s) of water take off/usage points.
- Fully completed Supplementary Information Water section of the Application Form including details of current annual water consumption.
- Supporting calculations to demonstrate level of expected savings.

Animal Health and Welfare

- A copy of the summary/action page from your current Health Plan signed by you and your farm vet **and**
- A letter from your farm vet confirming that the items you wish to install are a priority for the farm if they are not listed in the summary/action page of your Health Plan.
- For the installation of rubber matting in parlours, plans (hand drawn dimensioned plan/map will be acceptable) of the areas which will be covered by the rubber matting.
- Fully completed Supplementary Information Animal Health section of the Application Form.

Forestry

- Fully completed Supplementary Information Forestry section of the Application Form including details of any savings and additional income.

Woodland owner:

- Confirm on the Applicant's Declaration that you have a current woodland management plan for the woodlands you own. You must be able to produce the plan for inspection if so required.

Forestry Contractor or if applying for an item listed under the forestry yard based activity:

- Evidence that you are classed as a rural micro business (i.e. have less than 10 FTE employees and a turnover or balance sheet less than €2m).
- Letters of support from your clients.

Completing the Application Form

You **MUST** download the FFIS Round Three Application Form from the Defra RDPE Network website at: http://rdpenetwork.defra.gov.uk/funding-sources/farm-and-forestry-improvement-scheme and **save a copy on your computer before you start to complete the application**. Save the Application Form using the same naming format as the title of your email (i.e. FFIS Application – *your business name*) – **see page 46 for further details**.

WE WILL NOT ACCEPT APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED ON FFIS ROUND ONE OR ROUND TWO APPLICATION FORMS

The Application Form is not an online application; if you open it on the website and try to complete it, it will not save and you will lose all the information you have entered. You are strongly advised to save the form at regular intervals so you don't lose any information as you complete the form. The following notes are intended to assist applicants in completing their application, and to explain why we need certain pieces of information. The same numbers are used as in the Application Form for ease of reference. **Please complete all the required and relevant sections of the form**.

Introduction

Qu.1

Asking how you learnt about the scheme helps us to understand the key sources of information used by applicants in finding out about the FFIS. This can help us improve or establish new sources of information to reach those potential applicants who otherwise would not be aware of the grant funding opportunities.

Section 1 Applicant Details

Qu. 2 Applicant's name and address

- **Name:** This is a named individual within the applicant business who we would contract with if the application is approved. This must be one of the owners of the business, or one Director in the case of limited companies as shown in the Business Accounts.
- **Role in Business:** The business job title and position of the named individual.
- **Name of business/organisation requesting grant:** The proper legal name of the applicant business should be supplied. This will normally be the same name as on your business trading accounts.
- **RPA SBI and Vendor No:** The RPA SBI (**S**ingle **B**usinesses **I**dentifier) can usually be found on any RPA payment correspondence. The RPA can provide you with your vendor number if you are unsure. Their Customer Service Centre number is Tel: 0845 603 7777.
- **Type of business/organisation (sole trader, partnership, limited company, etc):** Again this should be the legal status of the business and will correspond with the business accounts.
- **Address (for correspondence):** You must ensure that you complete the 'County' box (select from the list on the Application Form).
- **Telephone numbers:** This is required in case we need to contact you regarding your application.

- **Email:** Our aim is that most correspondence between Defra and applicants will be conducted electronically to allow the quick exchange of documents and information. You should ensure that you provide a live email address that is checked on a regular basis. If you do not have an email account we will simply correspond by post, but you need to make the selection of this option clear on your Application Form.
- **Age bracket of applicant:** This information will not be used in any way in the assessment of your application. We are however, required to collect these details for EU statistical purposes.
- **Project Description:** Please list each item for which you are applying for grant funding.

Qu. 3 Business size, number of employees

- This should be the number of employees or full time equivalents (FTEs) at the time you submit the application. We need this information to calculate your business size. A FTE is based on a minimum of 30 hour working week. For example, if you have a part-time employee working 20 hours per week, then the FTE will be 20/30 = 0.66FTE. Similarly, if a seasonal worker is working 30 hours per week, but for 3 months per year, then this would be 0.25 FTE. Also three employees working 40 hours per week = 4FTE not 5FTE.

Qu. 4 Business Manager, Adviser or Agent acting on behalf of the owner

- If you wish for us to correspond with someone in addition to the named applicant at Qu 2. please provide their details here. Please note that you do **not** need to appoint an agent to complete this form for you. However, where a business manager, adviser or agent is acting on behalf of the applicant, please provide their details and, unless otherwise instructed on the Application Form, we will correspond with the agent as well as yourself.

Qu. 5 Business activity

- Simply select the most appropriate description of your business from the drop down list. If you feel it would be easier to include the information in a separate document, please use the additional information sheet on the Application Form to do so. Anything that helps us to understand your business better is welcomed, and may reduce any delays in handling your application while we request additional information from you.

Qu. 5a Agriculture, 5b – Horticulture and 5c – Forestry

- These sections simply help us to understand the scale and range of your business activities, and to put into context the project proposal.
- In respect of the tick boxes concerning an approved *woodland management plan*. A woodland management plan is needed if the project involves any in-forest activity. In such cases a woodland management plan is essential as without this a tree felling licence will not have been issued.
- Contractors who operate in woodland owned by others will not have a woodland management plan, but in order to demonstrate their credentials in the industry they will need to provide written evidence of support for their operation from the Forestry Commission if requested.

- In respect of whether the woodland is *certified* or not, the provision of evidence of certification is not required in the application process, but an increasing number of purchasers of woodland products are demanding such certification from suppliers, as it is evidence of a commitment to the sustainable management of woodlands. Confirmation of certification will help in the overall assessment of the application.
- Please confirm whether you are a member of a Producer Organisation (PO) and provide the name of the PO along with details of any funding received from them.

Qu. 5d Contractor

- The time that you have been in business as an agricultural and forestry contractor, and the range of contracting activities you undertake, simply helps us to better understand your business activities and how your project proposal sits within the existing business.

Qu. 6 Is any of your holding located in one of the following

- We need to know whether your holding is located in any of the defined areas as there may be additional issues we need to address in processing your application.

Section 2 Details of proposal

Qu. 7 Location/Address at which the work will take place or equipment will be based

- Not all projects are located at the same address as the applicant business. It is essential therefore that we know the location of all grant funded equipment, etc. for audit/inspection purposes.

Qu. 8 Will the project be located in tenanted land

- For tenant farmers you must confirm that you have at least six years of your tenancy remaining and provide details. For the following projects, in addition to this you will also need to provide written consent from your landlord in the form of a letter or email:
  - Roofing of existing middens/manure, silage or slurry stores/dirty water lagoons
  - Below ground water storage
  - Slurry separator
  - Permanent covers for slurry lagoons
  - Permanent covers for silage clamps
  - Verandas for poultry houses
  - Installation of specialist slatted floor to existing buildings for indoor lambing
  - Grooving of **existing** concrete floors
  - PigSAFE non-crate systems for indoor farrowing accommodation

Qu. 9 To carry out this activity do you require planning permission or any other consents

- This is a critical issue and we will not be able to process your application if you do require planning permission and are not yet in possession of planning approval or a planning reference number. Earlier in the handbook at page 35 we have outlined where planning permission may be required for certain items. If you are applying for these items you must complete both parts of the question.

Qu.10 Other results and benefits

- The answer to this may be zero; this is perfectly acceptable depending on the project type. However, if other businesses will benefit either from sharing a piece of funded equipment, or benefit from a service you provide, your best estimate should be shown here. This should not include suppliers of any project items.
- Jobs created are where new, permanent and paid jobs are created, and should not have existed with the employer before. The jobs should have a life expectancy of at least one year and should be calculated as Full Time Equivalents, (FTEs). For example, if a part-time job is created of 20 hours per week, based on a 30 hour working week, then the FTE will be 20/30 = 0.66FTE. Similarly, if a seasonal job is created for 30 hours per week, but for 3 months per year, then this would be 0.25 FTE. However if a job is created for 40 hours per week it will only count as 1FTE not 1.3FTE
- Jobs safeguarded, are jobs that were known to be at risk over the next 12 months i.e. the job will cease to exist and the current employee will be made redundant if the project does not proceed. You should provide written confirmation that the job is at risk if requested.

Qu. 11 Project time frame

- Please provide a proposed claim date should your application be successful. Projects must be completed and the claim for grant submitted by **31 January 2015**. Please remember that you cannot order anything, start work or commit yourself to any grant applied for expenditure until you have been notified by Defra that your project has been approved and you have been given a **start date** in a formal Grant Offer Letter.

Qu. 12 Supplementary information

- You must complete the Supplementary Information section relevant to your project. These sections are accessible by clicking on the relevant tab at the bottom of the screen. A single application can be for one or more of the five FFIS themes. However, do remember that your application must be for a minimum of £2,500 grant request and that there is a maximum of £35,000 grant for each business. These minimum and maximum grant figures do not apply to each theme, but to each business. When you have completed the relevant Supplementary Information tab for each project type you are applying for, click on the 'APPLICATION' tab at the bottom of the screen to take you back to the main Application Form.

Section 3: Proposal Funding

Qu.13 Summary of grant funding requested

- The table at Question 13 on the Application Form is a summary of the proposed eligible costs on which you are seeking grant funding. This is self-populating based on the information you have provided in the Supplementary Information sections where you must provide details of the item/s that you are seeking grant funding on, listing the quotes you have obtained for each item. Please highlight your preferred quote in the relevant table and make sure that your grant request is net of VAT.

Qu.14 How will you fund your share of the proposed costs?

- You must tell us how you will fund the balance of the project costs and confirm that these funds are available to you. You should be prepared to provide evidence of the funding if requested when your project is being assessed. As grant is paid in arrears, i.e. after approved expenditure has taken place, you need to consider your ability to bankroll the project in advance of claiming the grant.
- The use of HP or lease agreements are **not eligible** for grant funding as ownership of the goods/equipment does not lie with the applicant unless and until the final payment has been made.
- You must tell us what would happen to your proposed project if your application for grant is unsuccessful by selecting one of the drop down options. You should think carefully about whether your project could proceed without support and what impact not receiving the grant would have on your project and business.

Qu. 15 Supporting documentation

- You are advised to check and ensure that all the necessary sections of the Application Form are complete, signed where appropriate and that the supporting documents are enclosed.
- We expect significant numbers of applications for this round of FFIS which will have to be dealt with efficiently. We therefore will process all complete applications first. If any questions have not been completed or required supporting documents have not been included with your application it will be considered incomplete and will be put on hold until the information is supplied. You therefore risk not receiving grant funding as all available grant funding may have been allocated by the time your application is considered complete.

Applicant's Declaration

This is the only part of the Application which **must** be **printed off and signed** by one of the owners of the business, or one Director in the case of limited companies and posted to us. This individual must be listed as an owner or Director in the Business Accounts. You can choose whether to post or email the supporting documentation. All information that is being posted must be posted to us to ensure receipt by **04 April 2014** and sent to the PO Box address shown on page 46.

If you wish an agent or your farm manager to act on your behalf in respect of communication with us over this project, you will need to complete the relevant section on the Declaration and obtain the farm manager's or agent's signature.

Value Added Tax

- VAT is a very complex issue and applicants need to give considerable thought, taking advice where necessary, before completing the VAT Declaration. Please select from the drop down list the most appropriate statement for your business.

Project theme requirements

- Please complete the confirmation boxes if you are applying for items within the Nutrient Management, Animal Health and Welfare or Forestry themes.

Previous/current grant funding

- Please provide details of any previous grant funding that you or your business has received since 2000.

How do I submit my completed application?

Once you have completed all relevant sections of the Application Form, please ensure that you have saved a copy on your computer using the title "FFIS Application – *your business name*".

Please then attach the Application Form to an email. The title of your email should also be "FFIS Application – *your business name*". Please ensure you use this standard wording as it will help us to match your electronically submitted Application Form and supporting documentation with the signed hard copy of your declaration. This will speed up the application assessment process.

Email the completed Application Form to: **FFIS3@defra.gsi.gov.uk** by **04 April 2014.** We will acknowledge receipt of your application by return email.

When sending your email(s) please include in the main body of your email a list of:

- The number of attachments;
- The name of each attachment;
- How many emails you are sending as part of your application.

Please try to keep the size of your email(s) to a minimum. The maximum email size we can receive is 25MB, so if your email will exceed this you will need to split your email up. **Please only send one Application Form per email.**

You should then print off the Applicant's Declaration page (you do not need to print the whole form) and ensure it is signed by one of the business owners. This should be submitted by post to ensure receipt by **04 April 2014.** Scanned copies sent by email or photocopies will not be accepted.

FFIS is now being processed by a central team. Therefore the postal address you **MUST** send your application to is:

FFIS Round 3
PO Box 10383
NOTTINGHAM
NG2 9PT

Your supporting documentation may be scanned and emailed to: **FFIS3@defra.gsi.gov.uk** using the title "FFIS Application – *your business name*" or hard copies may be posted to the PO Box address above.

Please note that local RDPE Delivery Teams will not accept hand delivered applications under any circumstances and will return these to you. Please only post applications and supporting documentation to the PO Box address above.

What happens next?

We will check your application for eligibility and completeness. If your Application Form and signed hard copy Declaration are not received by the Round Three closing date, your application will be returned to you and will not continue through the process.

The Defra RDPE Delivery team will first appraise all complete applications and agree an outcome. We aim to notify you of a decision as soon as we have processed your application.

All complete applications will be processed first. If your application is incomplete, it will be put on hold until all required supporting documents or missing information has been received and you will be contacted to provide these. However, please note that there is a risk that incomplete applications may not be considered for grant funding if all available grant funding has been allocated by the time your missing documentation has been received.

On some occasions a member of the Defra RDPE Delivery Team may contact you for additional information, please be prepared to provide this information quickly.

Project approved

If your project is approved you will be formally notified in writing of a **Start Date** in the form of a Grant Offer Letter. You must sign both copies and return one copy to the RDPE Delivery Team as shown in the Grant Offer Letter.

Grant payment will be made by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) using your SBI number provided in your Application Form. If you are not registered with the RPA, in the first instance please contact their Customer Service Centre on: 0845 603 7777 for guidance.

Project Rejected

If your application for FFIS grant funding is rejected we will send you a formal letter outlining the reasons for the decision and details of the appeals process.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What should I do if I don't have access to a computer or Excel to be able to complete the Application Form?**

If you do not have the IT equipment to enable you to complete the Microsoft Excel spread sheet-based Application Form, please contact the FFIS Helpline on: **0300 060 4761** and we will arrange an alternative way for you to apply for FFIS grant funding.

- **Do I need to use an agent or consultant to complete and submit my forms?**

No, you do not. Whilst *it is entirely your choice whether you use an agent or consultant,* we have tried to make the forms as simple as possible so that all applicants should be able to complete them unaided.

If you have any queries about completing the forms, please do not hesitate to contact the FFIS Helpline on: **0300 060 4761** that will have members of the RDPE FFIS Delivery team on hand to help you understand the questions. However, they are not able to complete the Application Form for you.

- **Where can I get generic business advice?**

If you are seeking more generic advice regarding the development of your business and the impact of resource efficiency measures please contact the Business Link helpline on: 0845 600 9006 or via their website: www.businesslink.gov.uk. Business Link is a free business support service which is available online.

- **The forms are not allowing me to enter the data I need to. What should I do?**

If you experience problems with the Application Form please contact the FFIS Helpline on: **0300 060 4761**. Please note that some boxes on the application are intended to fill automatically using the information entered elsewhere and are locked to avoid accidental over writing.

- **Are tenant farmers eligible to apply?**

For tenant farmers you must confirm that you have at least six years of your tenancy remaining and provide details in the Application Form. For the following projects, in addition to this you will also need to provide written consent from your landlord in the form of a letter or email:

- Roofing over yards
- Below ground water storage
- Slurry separator
- Permanent covers for slurry lagoons
- Permanent covers for silage clamps
- Verandas for poultry houses
- Installation of specialist slatted floor to existing buildings for indoor lambing

- Grooving of **existing** concrete floors
- PigSAFE non-crate systems for indoor farrowing accommodation

- **Why do you need to see my accounts?**

Under RDPE rules, we have to ensure that you are a bona-fide agricultural business, and that your business is not put at risk if the project goes ahead, as this could jeopardise public funds. We will also use the accounts to calculate your business size and use them again to help us prioritise which applicants are in most need of grant assistance. Please send us **COPIES**, not originals, as we will not return accounts to you. You must submit a **full** copy of the accounts, including Profit and Loss, Balance Sheet and any notes to the accounts.

- **I have a relatively new business and do not yet have accounts covering two consecutive trading years. What do I send?**

In this case please provide draft accounts if you have them or an opening statement from your accountant detailing your expected income and expenses from operating the business etc.

- **Why do you need to see my energy or water bills?**

If you are applying for grant funding for an energy efficiency or water management project, we need to be able to appraise the impact the project will have on your business. We will use this information to determine the most deserving projects in the event the scheme is oversubscribed.

- **Can I get grant funding if I have already bought my equipment?**

No, as this is a prior approval scheme. We cannot grant fund anything under RDPE retrospectively.

- **Can I purchase second hand equipment?**

Yes providing you can prove that it complies with current health and safety legislation, it has not been previously grant aided, is fit for purpose and has at least five years' life expectancy remaining.

- **Can I use HP or lease agreements to fund my application?**

No. The use of HP or lease agreements are **not eligible** for grant funding as ownership of the goods/equipment does not lie with the applicant unless and until the final payment has been made.

- **What if I have an existing Health Plan?**

You do **not** need to get another Health Plan if you already have one, as long as the vet has made recommendations for the type of equipment you are seeking FFIS grant for and it is no more than 12 months old at the time of applying.

Please submit a copy of the recommendation page/action page from the plan you have, although we may need to ask you further questions if we need further information on the vet's justification for the need for the equipment.

- **What if I don't have an existing Health Plan?**

We will accept a signed letter from your farm vet dated within the last 12 months confirming that the items you wish to install are a priority for the farm.

If you are located in the North West only, contact the FFIS Helpline on: **0300 060 4761** as there may be a subsidised scheme to help you with the costs of getting a health plan or nutrient management plan completed. If you cannot access this scheme, we will accept a signed letter from your farm vet as detailed above. Please see information on page 5 for further details.

- **Can I apply for something that is not listed in the handbook?**

No. The FFIS budget is limited and the items listed in the handbook have been identified by Defra and other stakeholders as best meeting the objectives of the scheme.

- **Can I send in my application after the Round Three closing date?**

No, you must ensure that your complete application (electronic application form, signed declaration page and all supporting documentation) is received by 04 April 2014.

- **My application from Round One or Round Two was rejected. Can I reapply?**

It depends on the reasons why your application was rejected. Please contact the FFIS Helpline on: **0300 060 4761** to discuss your specific case.

- **I withdrew my application from Round One or Round Two before a decision was reached. Can I reapply in Round Three?**

Yes. You will need to reapply using the latest Application Form for this round. Please ensure that you carefully read the guidance as some changes have been made.

- **If I received a FFIS grant under Rounds One and/or Two, can I apply for a further grant under Round Three?**

Yes. You can apply for a grant of up to a maximum of £35,000 per business (SBI) in this round. Any funding you may have received in Round One or Two will not be counted as part of this limit. However we will give priority to applicants who have not previously received FFIS grant funding.

- **If my application is rejected before the Round Three closing date, can I resubmit my application?**

It depends on the reasons why your application was rejected. Please contact the FFIS Helpline on: **0300 060 4761** to discuss your specific case.

- **What if I have more than one agricultural holding?**

Two or more holdings managed as a single unit, or in a single ownership, or which have:

- Common financial accounts; and/or
- The same vendor number or Single Business Identifier (SBI);

will be classed as one and subject to a grant ceiling of £35,000 for FFIS Round Three.

Contact Details

Details of this grant scheme are also available on the RDPE Website at: www.rdpenetwork.defra.gov.uk/funding-sources/farm-and-forestry-improvement-scheme

If, after looking at the guidance on the website or after reading this handbook, you would like to discuss a potential application, or are seeking further advice on the application process, please contact the FFIS Helpline on: **0300 060 4761** or email us at: **FFIS3@defra.gsi.gov.uk**

This handbook has been designed to help applicants get the most from FFIS. Whilst we have tried to explain and cover all of the essential details, it is not possible to cover everything. If you are unclear on any aspect then you are welcome to contact the FFIS Helpline or email us as shown above.

Useful links

The following are some links to websites which may provide you with useful information when you are planning your project.

Environment Agency – Agricultural waste
http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/sectors/32777.aspx

Farm Waste Regulations
http://www.bpex.org.uk/environment-hub/farm-waste-regulations/

Environment Agency – Nitrate Vulnerable Zones
http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/sectors/54714.aspx

Environment Agency – Rainwater harvesting
http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/pdf/GEMI1109BRGU-e-e.pdf

British Grassland Society fact sheets
http://www.britishgrassland.com/page/fact-sheets

Dairy Co
http://www.dairyco.org.uk/

Nutrient Management Planning
http://www.nutrientmanagement.org/

Rural Development Programme for England
http://rdpenetwork.defra.gov.uk/index

Bicton College Biosecurity Project
http://www.southwest-tbadvice.co.uk/biosecurity/bicton-college-biosecurity-project

Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

PB14063