

The Farm Modernisation Programme (FMP)

The Farm Modernisation Programme (FMP) will provide financial support for agriculture and horticulture businesses in Northern Ireland, to purchase modernising items of plant, machinery or equipment from a pre-defined list of eligible items. It will offer up to a maximum of £5000 funding per farm business with a financial support rate of up to 40% of the purchase cost of these items up to the maximum amount allowable for each item.

The farm modernisation programme is supported under Axis 1 Measure 3 of the NI Rural Development Programme 2007 – 2013 through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

Only businesses that have a Category One Farm Business Identification Number are eligible to apply to the FMP.

Application forms together with an explanatory booklet, list of eligible items and details of the programme arrangements for receipt of

applications are currently available from the DARD offices listed below or alternatively these documents may be downloaded from the DARD website:

www.dardni.gov.uk/index/grants-and-funding

Completed applications can be posted or hand delivered. Applications will only be accepted from 09.00 am on the 17th February 2009 on a first come first served basis.

Any applications received before this date will not be assessed and will be returned to the applicant.

Postal applications must only be returned to :

Rural Development Division

Farm Modernisation Programme
Glenree House
Carnbane Industrial Estate
NEWRY BT35 6EF
Telephone: (028) 30253200

Hand delivered applications can be returned to one of the following 8 DARD offices:

Kilpatrick House
38-54 High Street
BALLYMENA BT43 6DT
Telephone: (028) 25662862

Crown Buildings
Thomas Street
DUNGANNON BT70 1HR
Telephone: (028) 87754777

Inishkeen House
Killyhevlin Industrial Estate
ENNISKILLEN BT74 4EJ
Telephone: (028) 66325004

Rathkeltair House,
Market St,
DOWNPATRICK BT30 6LZ
Telephone: (028) 44618000

Glenree House
Carnbane Industrial Estate
NEWRY BT35 6EF
Telephone: (028) 30253200

Sperrin House
Sedan Avenue
OMAGH BT79 7AQ
Telephone: (028) 82251020

Crown Buildings
Artillery Rd
COLERAINE BT79 7AQ
Telephone: (028) 70341111

2 Newry Road,
ARMAGH BT60 1EN
Telephone: (028) 37515600

Grow Your Business

Crops & Horticulture Development Branch, CAFRE are currently delivering a 'Grow Your Business' programme which is designed to develop the skills of growers and their families to grow their business. Workshops delivered to date have covered;

(A) Marketing - which assisted with the development of a marketing plan; the fuel that powers a business.

(B) Finance - interpretation of financial accounts, credit control, business administration and knowing and controlling costs using financial ratios, and

(C) Information Communication Technology (ICT) familiarise businesses with core ICT functions, website design and utilize I.C.T. to market their business and trade online.

The remaining three workshops are;

Innovative Selling - Nicki Bury, Haybury Marketing on **Wednesday, 11 February 2009**

Creating a clear strategy on how to sell yourself, your product and your business is critical to successfully nurturing your business. Nicki will explore different sales approaches, consider the factors that could affect your sales success, and understand how your customers have a key role in developing the future direction of your business.

Production Layout - Christine Haydock, Senior Food Technologist, CAFRE, **Thursday 19th February**

Good layout and procedures impact greatly on the efficiency of any business. Limiting factors associated with stock control, production capacity, quality management and health and safety will be identified. Possible solutions will be then provided to help you gain more from finite resources. This module is particularly relevant for horticultural businesses wishing to supply to the retail trade.

Time Management - Gareth Wadsworth, Rural Enterprise Lecturer, CAFRE, **Thursday 19th February**

This unit will help you and your staff to get more from the working week by means of task diaries and task priorities, positive time skills and creative planning.

Employment Issues – Tom McComb, Labour Relations Agency, **Wednesday 25th February**

This module will help you to give due consideration to legislation and quality control for employment purposes. The presentation will address minimum wage, working time, contracts, leave, pensions and work permits.

The workshops will take place in Portadown Rugby Club commencing at 7.30 p.m sharp.

If you or a family member is interested in attending any of the above workshops, please contact Kieran Lavelle on Tel No. 028 37 515651 or Mobile Telephone No. 07990 575 893 to reserve a place.

Spent Mushroom Compost (SMC) a valuable resource for farmers

There are many potential benefits from using SMC. Regular addition of organic matter to soils will improve both condition and structure – positively aerating heavy soils and increasing water-holding capacity in lighter soils. SMC is also a good source of many trace elements and may have a beneficial effect on the microbiological activity of the soil that in turn will improve nutrient uptake and plant growth.

Numerous queries have been received lately from farmers on the application of spent mushroom compost on land. Farmers are seeking information on the nutrient value of SMC and its implications for their business with respect to the Nitrates Action Programme (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2006 and the Phosphorous (Use in Agriculture) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2006.

Recommendations on the use of lime, fertilisers and organic manures for field crops and grassland to comply with the above regulations are based on the booklet "Fertiliser Recommendations for

Agricultural and Horticultural Crops (RB 209)'. This booklet describes the principals of crop nutrition and crop requirement with the aim of maximizing the economic return from the use of fertilisers.

The booklet, which is available on-line at

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/farm/environment/RB209> gives the nutrient value of a range of organic manures. However, the nutrient value of Spent Mushroom Compost (SMC) is not included in RB209.

Due to the inherent variation in the original compost, farmers are advised to take a representative sample of SMC for nutrient analysis on a regular basis and use these results in their calculations to ensure compliance with the Nitrates Action Programme. The following table shows average analysis figures for the nutrient value of Spent Mushroom Compost (originally sourced from both Phase II and III suppliers) from the research unit at AFBI, Loughgall.

| | Total Nitrogen (kg)/tonne of fresh weight SMC | Available N (kg)/tonne of fresh weight SMC From 1 Jan 2009 (35% available)* | Available N (kg)/tonne of fresh weight SMC From 1 Jan 2010 (40% available)* | Available P (kg P2O5/t) (100% available)* | Available K (kg K2O/t) |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|------------------------|
| Spent Mushroom Compost | 6.6 | 2.31 | 2.64 | 5.8 | 11.7 |

* Availability dictated by the Nitrates Action Programme

SMC like farmyard manure can be stored in a field or midden. If field stored, the following applies;

- Stored in a compact heap
- Only stored in the field where the application will take place
- Applied within 180 days of placement in the field
- Not in the same location year after year
- 250m from a public borehole
- 50m from lakes, borehole and limestone features
- 20m from other waterways

There is no closed spreading period for spreading SMC, however it may only be applied when conditions are favourable. When applying SMC, it should not be applied within;

- 20m of lakes
- 10m of any other waterway
- 50m from borehole
- 250m from public water
- 15m limestone features

A farmer wishing to apply spent mushroom compost to land is required to register an exemption from waste management licensing. The appropriate exemption is 47F: Treating agricultural land with spent mushroom compost for agricultural benefit or ecological improvement. The key conditions are that:

- Waste must consist of spent mushroom compost only
- Treatment must be for agricultural benefit or ecological improvement
- Treatment must be in accordance with the Nitrates Action Programme Regulations (NI) 2006
- A maximum of 200 tonnes of spent mushroom compost can be stored in secure storage.

The key limits are that:

- A maximum of 50 tonnes/hectare of spent mushroom compost can be incorporated into the soil in a 12 month period. 47F is one of the 21 simple agricultural waste exemptions, which could have been registered on the 2008 IACS/Single Application Form. If a farmer wishes to apply spent mushroom compost to land and they did not register the exemption on the 2008 IACS/Single Application Form, they can request a separate application form, by contacting the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) on Tel: 02890 569360.



The Green Challenge Conference

"Sustainability in Horticulture"



CAFRE in partnership with Horticultural Trade Association are organising a conference entitled 'The Green Challenge'. This conference will focus on sustainability issues in commercial horticulture.

The conference takes place on **Thursday 5 February** from 10.30 am to 4.30 pm at Greenmount Campus and will address sustainable resource use in horticulture focusing on energy, waste and renewable technologies.

Invited speakers include;

- Dr Alan Knight, OBE, U.K. Sustainability Development Commission (SDC) who will outline his vision on the major challenges of sustainability facing UK horticulture over the next decade.
- Ms Sharon Russell-Verma of Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP) who will explain the uses and benefits of composts from recycled materials, with reference to recent case studies on fruit, salad and tree crops.
- Mr. Tim Pratt of Farm Energy Centre who will outline the choices available to improve energy efficiency in horticulture, including cost control for heating and refrigeration, as well as opportunities for renewable energy adoption.

Renewable technologies (biomass boiler, solar panels and wind turbine), and recycling technologies (in-vessel composting, biodegradable pots and rain water harvesting) will be demonstrated at the Horticulture Development Centre (HDC).

There will be an opportunity for participants to view trade exhibits working in the area of sustainability in horticulture.

If you or a family member is interested in attending the Green Challenge conference, please contact Kieran Lavelle on Tel No. 028 37 515651 or Mobile Telephone No. 07990 575 893 to reserve a place.

The Green Challenge Conference

Focusing on sustainability in Horticulture

| | | |
|---------------|--|--|
| 10.00 - 10.30 | Registration Tea/Coffee and view trade exhibits | |
| 10.30 - 10.35 | Welcome | John Fay, Director, CAFRE |
| 10.35 - 10.50 | Setting the Scene | Martin McKendry Crops & Horticulture Branch, CAFRE |
| 10.50 - 11.35 | Horticulture 2018 | Dr Alan Knight Sustainable Development Commission and Single Plant Living, UK |
| 11.35 - 12.05 | Energy saving opportunities in horticulture | Tim Pratt Technical Director Farm Energy Centre Warwickshire |
| 12.05 - 12.35 | The role of composting and recycling in horticulture | Sharon Russell - Verma Implementation Manager England Wales & Northern Ireland, Waste & Resources Action Programme, Kent |
| 12.35 - 13.00 | Sustainable practice in ornamental horticulture in the Southern Hemisphere | Teresa Maguire, Horticultural Technologist CAFRE |
| 13.00 - 14.30 | Buffet Lunch and view trade exhibits | |

Afternoon Session

Presentations on sustainability at Horticulture Development Centre, Greenmount Campus

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|---------------|--|--|
| 14.30 - 15.30 | Renewables Technologies | Nigel Moore, Senior Renewable Energy Technologist, CAFRE |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable Energy Unit Biomass boiler and Solar Panels | |
| | Composting Technologies | Teresa Maguire, Horticultural Technologist CAFRE |
| 15.30 - 16.30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-vessel composting to produce peat reduced growing medium | |
| | Recycling Technologies | Cathal Ellis, Horticultural Technologist CAFRE |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling of materials at HDC • Rain water collection and reuse | |
| 15.30 - 16.30 | Tea/Coffee and view trade exhibits | |

Contact:

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