

# Giles Wheeler-Bennett

CHARTERED SURVEYORS & LAND AGENTS

## Rural Development Programme for England Key Points and Dates

### **RDPE COUNTRYSIDE PRODUCTIVITY SCHEME**

The RDPE Countryside Productivity Scheme provides funding for projects in England which improve productivity in the farming and forestry sectors and help create jobs and growth in the rural economy. These competitive grants are funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and administered by the RPA and are assessed under national priorities. Under the RDPE Countryside Productivity Scheme, there are grants for:

- adding value to agri-food
- improving farm productivity
- water resource management and reservoirs
- improving forestry productivity

### **Adding Value to Agri-Food**

This grant scheme is for processors of primary agricultural or horticultural products which includes food and drink businesses and farmers (including livestock, dairy, arable and horticultural sectors) in rural or urban areas. These grants are to improve the processing of primary agricultural products to shorten supply chains and deliver benefits to primary producers. Projects must be for the processing of specific products only (Annex 1) including meat, milk, grain, fruit and vegetables but excluding fishery products. Grant funding can help pay for equipment and machinery as well as constructing or improving buildings associated with all aspects of processing. Smaller projects may be able to apply for grant support through LEADER.

Apply from:	31 July 2017
Last date to order forms:	N/A as forms downloaded from internet
Closing date:	29 June 2018 by email only
Projects to be completed, paid for and grant claimed by:	31 December 2020



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Grant level: Minimum £35,000  
If both your raw materials and end products are on the Annex 1 list, you can apply for a grant of up to 40% of your eligible costs. There is no maximum grant amount.  
If your raw materials are on the Annex 1 list, but your end-products are not, you can apply for a grant of up to 40% of your eligible costs subject to grants being awarded under the industrial *de minimis* level with a maximum grant per project of €200,000 (approximately £170,000 at current exchange rates) NB. Different rules apply in Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly and other State Aid rules may be imposed depending on a business circumstance.

Examples: Milk processing, meat processing, investment in grading and packing equipment, egg processing, investment in collaborative grain processing.

### Improving Farm Productivity

This grant scheme is for farmers (including the livestock, dairy, arable and horticultural sectors and including new businesses) to improve farm productivity through:

- the use of robotic equipment to aid crop and livestock production
- increasing the use of renewable energy produced on farm by improving energy storage and distribution
- the use of LED wavelength controlled lighting to aid crop production
- more efficient use of livestock slurries and manures, and digestate

Grant funding can help pay for buying and installing machinery and equipment. Smaller projects may be able to apply for grant support through LEADER.

Apply from: 31 July 2017  
Last date to order forms: N/A as forms downloaded from internet  
Closing date: 3 December 2018 by email only  
Projects to be completed,  
paid for and grant claimed by: 31 December 2020  
Grant level: Minimum £35,000  
The grant will normally cover up to 40% of the project's total eligible costs.  
Maximum per project is £1,000,000

Examples: Robotic milking parlour, robotic weeder for vegetable growers, nutrient sensors for slurry applications, digestate processing systems, renewable heat on farms, use of renewable electricity.

### Water Resource Management & Reservoirs

This grant scheme is only for arable and horticultural businesses growing, or intending to grow, irrigated crops (new businesses can also apply). These grants are to improve farm productivity through more efficient use of water for irrigation and to secure water supplies for crop irrigation by the construction of on-farm reservoirs. Grant funding can help pay for:

- construction of a water storage reservoir (above or below ground) filled by either peak flow surface water abstraction, borehole or rainwater harvested from buildings
- abstraction point, pump and pipework to fill the reservoir
- irrigation pump, controls, underground water distribution main
- water metering equipment
- best practice application equipment such as boom or trickle irrigation
- software and sensors to optimise water application

To receive a grant, water metering needs to be in place to monitor water consumption which can be either as part of the project or through your existing metering system. If your project increases the area of land irrigated, then either the water body must be classified as being in 'Good' or 'High' condition, or the 'Reason for Not Attaining Good' status does not relate to the quantity of water available.

Apply from: 31 July 2017  
Last date to order forms: N/A as forms downloaded from internet  
Closing date: 29 June 2018 by email only  
Projects to be completed,  
paid for and grant claimed by: 31 March 2019  
Grant level: Minimum £35,000  
The grant will normally cover up to 40% of the project's total eligible costs.  
Maximum per project is £1,000,000



### *Improving Forestry Productivity*

This grant scheme is for private forest holders managing at least 10 ha of forest and micro, small, or medium-sized forestry contractor businesses. These grants are to improve forestry productivity through felling, extraction and adding value by primary processing of timber products. Grant funding can help pay for increasing economic return through more efficient felling and extraction processes and adding value to felled timber by primary processing.

Apply from: 31 July 2017  
Last date to order forms: N/A as forms downloaded from internet  
Closing date: 3 April 2018 by email only  
Projects to be completed,  
paid for and grant claimed by: 31 March 2019  
Grant level: Minimum £35,000  
The grant will normally cover up to 40% of the project's total eligible costs.  
Maximum per project is £1,000,000

## **RDPE GROWTH PROGRAMME**

These grants are funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) which is part of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF). The RPA delivers the grants, working with ESIF sub-committees in **Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) areas**. The RPA's role is to assess applications for grants with advice from the ESIF sub-committees. The LEPs are partnerships between public bodies and businesses and their role is to decide the amount of grant available and local priorities for the grants (ie. where money should be directed to give the most benefit locally). Your farm therefore may or may not be within a LEP area.

The Growth Programme offers funding for projects in England which create jobs and growth in the rural economy and there are three competitive schemes on offer:

- Business Development
- Food Processing
- Rural Tourism Infrastructure

### **Business Development**

This grant scheme is for small rural businesses (either new or existing) and including farmers who want to diversify into non-agricultural activities and is to help rural businesses grow and create more jobs. Grant funding can help pay for constructing or improving buildings or buying new equipment and machinery.

Apply from:	31 July 2017
Last date to order forms:	N/A as forms downloaded from internet
Closing date:	Midnight 31 May 2018 by email only
Projects to be completed, paid for and grant claimed by:	31 December 2020
Grant level:	Minimum £35,000 depending on LEP area The business development grants will normally cover up to 40% of the project's total eligible costs. Maximum per project is €200,000 (approximately £170,000 at current exchange rates).
Examples:	New precision equipment, farm diversification, new businesses.



### Food Processing

This grant scheme is for food and drink businesses that process agricultural and horticultural products and is to help businesses grow and create more jobs. Grant funding can help pay for constructing or improving buildings or buying new equipment and machinery.

Apply from: 31 July 2017  
Last date to order forms: N/A as forms downloaded from internet  
Closing date: Midnight 31 May 2018 by email only  
Projects to be completed,  
paid for and grant claimed by: 31 December 2020  
Grant level: Minimum £35,000 depending on LEP area  
The food processing grants will normally cover up to 40% of the project's total eligible costs.  
Maximum per project depends on the LEP area.

Examples: Meat cutting and packing facilities to produce a different range of products, milk processing to produce a different range of products, soft fruit processing to produce smoothies, purees and juices.

### Rural Tourism Infrastructure

This grant scheme will help fund the costs of capital expenditure on tourism infrastructure. The aim is to support projects that will encourage more tourists to come, to stay longer and to spend more money in rural areas. Grant funding can help pay for constructing or improving buildings or buying new equipment and machinery.

Apply from: 31 July 2017  
Last date to order forms: N/A as forms downloaded from internet  
Closing date: Midnight 31 May 2018 by email only  
Projects to be completed,  
paid for and grant claimed by: 31 December 2020  
Grant level: Minimum £35,000 depending on LEP area  
The rural tourism infrastructure grants will normally cover up to 40% of the project's total eligible costs if it is a commercial project but higher percentage grants may be applicable if there is little or no income generated (eg: a cycle path).  
Maximum per project depends on the LEP area.

Examples: New access infrastructure (footpaths, cycle paths, bridleways), extend local visitor facilities, visitor attractions, cafés, accommodation.

### LEADER PROGRAMME

The LEADER scheme is part of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) and is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). Under LEADER, money from the programme is awarded to Local Action Groups (LAGs), which are made up of local public, private and civil society representatives, which can in turn then allocate grant funding to local businesses and organisations to help them carry out projects which create jobs, help the business to grow and which benefit the rural economy.

The Rural Payments Agency manages the LEADER scheme nationally on behalf of DEFRA and makes the payments to successful applicants. The LAG operating throughout Winchester, East Hampshire and Eastleigh has secured £1.6m to run the current LEADER Programme between 2015 and 2020.



As with the national grants, all RDPE projects approved before the point at which the UK departs the EU will be funded subject to two conditions being that the projects provide good value for money and are in line with domestic priorities.

There are 6 priority areas for investment: farming productivity, micro and small businesses (including farm diversification), tourism and the visitor economy, forestry productivity, rural services and culture & heritage.

The amount of grant funding is determined by the Priority within which the project fits. The grant range is £2,500 – £50,000 and this forms 40% to 100% of the total eligible project costs. Applicants can apply at any time and a panel meets every four to six weeks to consider proposals. However, this is a time limited fund and projects will be appraised in order of receipt.

The Winchester LEADER programme aims to support at least 155 projects and to create a minimum of 95 new jobs and all projects applying for funds need to be able to demonstrate how they will add value to the local economy and support the creation of new jobs.

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