



MARCH 2016



Exmoor Hill Farming Network Funding 2016-2018

Following our recent funding success with The Prince's Countryside Fund we have further good news. We are delighted to inform you that our bid of £25,000 was accepted by the Exmoor National Park Authority members earlier this month. They have also agreed an underpinning reserve of a £10,000 top up fund to help give us some surety whilst we gain sponsorship, remaining grant funding and also some small contributions from network participants. If you are a business, or know of a business who may be interested in sponsoring the Network, do let us know. This is excellent news for the network and gives us enough to guarantee the next two years activities.

Thank you to many of you who took the time to respond to our email circulated in early February with regards to the sustainability of the network. Part of the agreement with our two funders (who are contributing £85,000 in total over the next two years) is that we also raise a small amount of income from our Network activities. We will continue to use our Network negotiation powers to secure discounts on training delivery costs, having calculated that with a small admin fee included in your training course price, will still give you cheaper training than elsewhere and also with the benefit of local delivery, which is hopefully pleasing to all. In addition, after consulting and receiving feedback from yourselves, the steering group have decided to introduce a 'pay as go' contribution for the peer support group and open events at £5pp, unless they are directly sponsored and will therefore be classed as FREE. Wherever possible we work with other partners such as AHDB and other industry partners to either access funding to deliver events for free, secure specialist time for free or gain specific event sponsorship. This decision has not been taken lightly, in addition to the organisation and marketing of these, we also very often need to pay a hosting/venue fee plus refreshments. I hope you will agree the £5 contribution per meeting attendance at specified events/peer support groups is great value for money, we know from the results collated you very much value the work of the network. We will be transparent in stating whether an event is free or if there is a small contribution. These will be introduced as of 1st April 2016. If anyone has any questions please do contact either Janet or Katherine.

Safe Use of Rodenticides

From June 2016 the regulations affecting the use of rodenticides will mean that only people who hold certificates of competence in rodent control will be able to buy more than 1.5Kg of rodenticides at a time for professional use. There is, however, a derogation until December 2017 for those in farm assurance schemes with a rodent control requirement. For further information please visit <http://www.hse.gov.uk/biocides/eu-bpr/rodenticides.htm> The network will be co-ordinating delivery of the above training and further details to follow in our next agri update.

EHFN FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Post Mortem Day – Save the Date - Thursday 12th May 2016 at Dulverton Farmers Hunt Kennels, East Anstey - FREE

Due to the overwhelming response to our last event held in November. We are delighted to work with AHDB and Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) to bring together another session on the role of post mortems and the benefit they have to farm business, what can we learn from them and how can they be used as part of the health plan, followed by a practical session. Please express your interest to attend our half day session now. Further details to follow next month.

Exmoor Women in Farming Group – Royal Welsh Show 18th -20th July 2016 – PRICE TO BE CONFIRMED

We are delighted to arrange another trip to the above show in July. Join us for a two day study trip working in conjunction with NFU Powys. We hope to visit a welsh upland farm with an evening meal and guest speaker. Staying in Crickhowell at a B&B and visiting the show for two days on the Tuesday and Wednesday. A £100 deposit is required by Monday 4th April. Please email jherniman@northdevonplus.co.uk for further information and a booking form.

The calendar of forthcoming activities is coming together. To give you a flavour we are arranging Social Media and Basic Introduction to iPad training in May (details to follow once dates and venues are confirmed) plus a 'Show Preparation Evening' for the Micro Farming Group and a whole host of other events, plus visits across the peer groups and some new work for the next generation.

OTHER FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Exmoor Society Spring Conference at Dulverton Town Hall at 10am –3.30pm - Friday 22nd April see poster attached

Join the Exmoor Society at their annual conference with Robert Deane and his recommendations from the updated Moorland at a Crossroads. Other speakers include NFU Head of Policy, Andrea Graham, James Diamond, Director, Natural England and RSPB Director of Operation, Dr Sean Thomas. Stanley Johnson will chair an open session to give everyone an opportunity to question the speakers and express their own views on Exmoor's landscapes. Tickets £20 (to include refreshments). Booking forms available from info@exmoorsociety.com or call 01398 323335.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Headwaters of the Exe Project

Thank you to those of you who were able to join us at Hawkridge Village Hall in January for the launch of the Headwaters of the Exe project. We were delighted by the fantastic response to the invitation, with over 85 people attending the event. The project was formally launched by Stanley Johnson – former MEP, author, journalist, environmentalist and local landowner. Presentations were heard from a variety of organisations including Exmoor National Park Authority, South West Water, FWAG SW and Westcountry Rivers Trust.

The 5 year Headwaters of the Exe project will comprise:

- specialist advice to farmers and foresters;
- a capital grant fund to support implementation of necessary works to enable better management of water and improve management of soil to help protect water quality;
- training events, site visits and demonstrations to promote good practice in forestry and land management;
- increased rights of way maintenance to reduce erosion and run-off in high risk areas;
- monitoring of the quality of water in the rivers;
- support for the control of invasive species through support to treatment programmes.

If you were not able to join us for the event but you would like to be involved with the project or would like to hear more about what the project is trying to achieve please contact Bea Davis project officer on 01398 323665(bdavis@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk) or visit <http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/living-and-working/headwaters-of-the-exe-project> . A second visit to Pynes Water Treatment Works is planned for October 2016 and a soil husbandry workshop is planned for September 2016. If you would like to attend either event please contact Bea.

FWAG SouthWest – Farm Plastic Recycling Scheme

FWAG SouthWest (Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group SouthWest), a regional charity, is operating its popular Farm Plastic Recycling Scheme again this spring. Farmers are invited to deliver their waste plastic to Cutcombe Market on Monday 23rd May and Blackmoor Gate Market on Wednesday 25th May 2016 or to one of its other 13 sites. FWAG SouthWest can accept silage wrap, clamp sheet, small feed bags, fertiliser inners, netting, string, woven plastic, chemical containers and mineral buckets. This scheme is run annually for one day only at each site. There are no extra charges or membership fees - you just pay for what you bring (a minimum charge applies).

For more details and to book your slot please contact the FWAG SouthWest office in Wellington on 01823 660684.

EHFN Staff Holiday

The office will be closed from Tuesday 15th March and re open on Wednesday 6th April except Cutcombe market days where it will be manned. If you wish to make contact whilst Katherine is on holiday please contact Janet Herniman (EHFN Programme Manager) at North Devon+ on 01237 426 426 or 07989 553984 email:

JHerniman@northdevonplus.co.uk.

We wish you a successful lambing season and may the dry weather continue.