



professional farming services

# agrogate



[www.agrovista.co.uk](http://www.agrovista.co.uk)

## .... providing solutions and support for farmers

**agrogate** offers a range of professional business services to farmers and growers across the UK.

**agrogate** have a team of dedicated consultants providing comprehensive independent and confidential business advice, covering all aspects of modern farm management.

Within this brochure are details of some of the most widely used services that we offer.

Our team are not only trained to BASIS, FACTS and Biodiversity and Environmental Training for Advisors (BETA) standards, but also have practical hands-on farming knowledge. They will take time to discuss and understand your specific needs in order to find a workable, tailor-made solution for your business.

All **agrogate** staff are qualified to deal with agri-environment schemes, cross-compliance, single payment issues and contract farming agreements.



The **agrogate** team has a broad base of experience in areas such as waste legislation and management, the Voluntary Initiative, The Campaign for the Farmed Environment, Health & Safety and other demands placed upon modern farming.

**agrogate** consultants are uniquely placed to assist farmers with the increasing burden of bureaucracy and paperwork demands placed upon them in these changing times.

## Stewardship Schemes and Cross Compliance Advice

### Entry-Level Stewardship Scheme

This scheme is designed as the starter for the government environmental schemes. It gives you a fixed income per hectare from a variety of options designed to improve the biodiversity and environment on your farm. The income is £30 per hectare (£12 per acre). This may not seem significant, but when converted into crop values, for example, it equates to £3 - £4 per tonne extra on wheat, or £0.06 per litre on milk prices.

agrogate can offer as much or as little help as required - from undertaking the application process, including activities as such land assessment, to verification that the various application and entitlement forms and been completed correctly.

Entry Level Stewardship Scheme forms can now be completed online, therefore, turn around time from the initial meeting to the application being granted can be a matter of hours. Originally this could have taken between 4 to 6 weeks. The rules of the scheme have changed and these rules will need careful consideration for both renewals and new entrants especially in light of the Campaign for the Farmed Environment.

*For example: a 200 hectare (500 acre) farmer could receive £6000 per annum, split into two payments. Over the course of 5 years this will earn £30,000 - equivalent to an extra £3.50 per tonne for wheat, £8 per tonne for oilseed rape or £0.06 per litre on milk production. 20,000 agreements are due for renewal in 2010 alone and DEFRA are yet to meet the 70% take up target for farms in some form of environmental stewardship.*

*Potentially 120,000 agreements exist, to date only 20,000 have been applied for.*

### Management Plans

agrogate have developed a specialist program to deliver the management plans that comply with the requirements of Cross Compliance. These are designed to be a useful management tool for the farmer, providing a complete business solution for all nutrient and manure recording and planning.

The charge for producing the plans vary from farm to farm and is dependent upon the complexity and the amount of fields, but rates are highly competitive - please contact your local Agrovista agronomist for further details.



## Higher-Level Stewardship Scheme

Entry into higher level stewardship now has a much better defined and simplified process than in the early days. [agrogate](#) staff have all the skills, contacts and knowledge to submit successful applications, which are sympathetic to both the farm business and the environment. The Higher Level Stewardship Scheme can offer farmers security, increased profitability, and a knowledge that they are contributing to an improved environment and enhanced landscape for the benefit of themselves and others.

HLS options such as grass margins, field corners, pollen and nectar mixes and wild bird cover which pay in excess of £400 per hectare give you the equivalent income of a wheat crop at £90 per tonne based on a 9 tonne yield.

*For example: a 400 acre farm that [agrogate](#) has helped to get into the scheme, HLS will be providing £15,000 per annum. From a field yielding a wheat crop at 9 tonne per hectare less variable costs (agrochemicals, seed and fertiliser) and fixed costs (labour and diesel), the profit could potentially be in the region of £120 per hectare.*

Therefore, if 10-15% of your arable land is taken out and put into environmental crops, it is equivalent to securing £90 per tonne for wheat on a sixth of your farm for the next 10 years. As a risk management tool it is very useful.



Your local [agrogate](#) consultant is BETA trained and fully qualified to prepare the required Farm Environment Plan (FEP) which is the first step towards a successful application. The cost of the FEP is largely DEFRA funded and allows your [agrogate](#) consultant to show you the most appropriate and cost effective way of entering the scheme.

## CAP Single Payment Scheme

Since the recent introduction of the Single Payment forms, [agrogate](#) have been involved in assisting a large number of clients to ensure they are receiving the full payment to which they are entitled under the scheme. We are fortunate to have access to information provided by Simon Ward of Increment, an acknowledged authority on these issues.

Examples encountered:

### Staffordshire Family Dairy Farm

- Last IACS payment £3500.00
- Business merged for purposes of SP - awarded no Historic Elements
- [agrogate](#) recovered in excess of £25,000 for next 7 years

### Derbyshire Sheep and Arable Farm

- Some of the land not registered on RLR
- IACS 22 form submitted; land entered into Moorland category in error by RPA
- Resulted in short payment of £4000 per year - [agrogate](#) recovered full payment

### Somerset validated statement did not match entitlements SP5 2005

- RPA assumed an over-claim of some £27,000, and withheld that amount
- After [agrogate](#) intervened, the RPA agreed to award the correct amount

### Some 2005 SP5A forms were not filled in professionally and crop areas proved to be inaccurate

- Until form checked/amended by [agrogate](#), the client accepted the award
- Some of these discrepancies could be significant and potentially financially damaging
- Recent mapping issues have also been a cause for concern

*Conclusion: In the majority of cases we have proved that investing in assistance with checking and validation issues has been financially worthwhile.*

## Contract Farming Agreements

In contract farming agreements, the landowner remains the farmer. He supplies capital, manages the finances of the arrangement and agrees policy (e.g. cropping and marketing). The landowner also employs a contractor to supply day-to-day management, labour and machinery for growing the crop.

The contractor receives payment at cost, which is usually paid half yearly in arrears. This provides a secure payment to the contractor reducing risk compared with a tenancy. The payment is for all operations from land preparation to loading dried grain following sale.

The first share of profit after any costs associated with growing the crop - including interest on all inputs - is paid to the landowner. SPS and other environmental schemes can be ring fenced to the farmer.



The balance of profit is shared between the two parties usually with the contracting party taking the larger share at least up to a pre-agreed limit. This helps to ensure a base level of income to the farmer and the incentive to the contractor means that the quality of farming is maintained. It is common for a second, more equal tier, to be introduced for those years when profit is exceptional.

[agrogate](#) can assist you with your contract farming agreements, providing you with some of the following financial benefits:

- Secure income
- Free up accommodation and buildings to let, and allow investment in diversification
- The farmer is still seen to be farming - no negative SPS or taxation implications
- Farm is kept in GAEC and allows maximisation of agri-environment schemes

Benefits for the contractor:

- Opportunities to maximise fixed costs of equipment and staff
- Increases critical mass of business and improves viability
- Allows planned regular income for contracting services
- Profit share over and above primary contracting charges

## Waste Management Licences and Exemptions

Before certain wastes and composts can be applied to agricultural land, farmers, contractors, or manufacturers must complete complex waste exemption forms known as form WMX7, paragraph 7a. This is termed 'land treatment for agricultural benefit or ecological improvement'.

The legislation enables farmers to apply waste to farmland from papermaking, non-meat food manufacture, commercial dairies and other sources. The spreading of sewage sludge, composting of biodegradable waste or the storage of compost is covered by different legislation.

**agrogate are successful in advising and enabling farmers to be compliant with these regulations and gain a Waste Exemption Licence.**

The elements of a successful licence application include:

- Licence Application - accompanied by maps and field numbers
- A sample of the waste to an Environment Agency approved standard
- Soil samples - which are more complex than the usual agricultural analyses
- Pollution Risk Assessment compiled by a qualified person
- Manure and Nutrient Plans - may already be in place for ELS, assurance schemes etc
- Agricultural Benefits Certificate produced by a FACTS qualified person
- Dialogue between [agrogate](#) and the local Environment Agency Officer and waste producer - ensures smooth processing of licence applications

	<b>Example 1</b>	<b>Example 2</b>
Licence Application	£535.00	£535.00
Sampling of waste	£90.00	£210.00
Sampling of soil (each)	£23.10	£115.50
Pollution Risk Assessment	£100.00	£250.00
Manure and Nutrient Plans	£150.00	£300.00
Agricultural Benefits Certificate	£100.00	£100.00
Administration and Dialogue	£50.00	£150.00
<b>Total cost excluding licence</b>	<b>£423.10</b>	<b>£1125.50</b>
<b>Total cost including licence</b>	<b>£958.10</b>	<b>£1650.50</b>

In *Example 1*, a simple licence application for dairy waste to permanent pasture, the contractor is receiving £15,000 per annum from the dairy for dealing with their waste.

In *Example 2*, the farmer is receiving £56,000 per annum for applying vegetable waste to arable land on a large dairy farm and the manufacturer is saving landfill charges of in excess of £200,000.

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**agrogate**

*... providing farm business solutions for*

**Cross Compliance Audits**  
**Entry Level Stewardship Schemes**  
**Management Plans**  
**Higher Level Scheme Stewardship Schemes**  
**Single Payment Forms/Verification**  
**Contract Farming Agreements and Tenders**  
**Waste Application Licences**  
**Farm Waste Audits**  
**Game Cover and Shoot Management**  
**Grant Applications**  
**On Farm Renewable Energy Projects**



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