

Preparing for the future of agricultural support

Soil Sampling

Agricultural support in Scotland is changing. From 2025, new conditionality will start to be introduced to agricultural payments, targeted towards biodiversity gain and a drive to low carbon approaches.

Scottish Government is helping farmers and crofters prepare for these changes, to identify recommendations that can lower emissions and increase efficiencies. This includes financial support for land managers (arable land & improved grassland) to claim support towards the cost of soil analysis.

Why conduct soil analysis?

Soil analysis provides information to improve nutrient management planning and helps farmers target nutrient applications to where they are needed most, improving efficiency of fertiliser use. Scottish Government recommends soil sampling at least 20% of arable land and improved grassland annually.

Who is eligible for support?

Businesses in Scotland claiming Region 1 land on their annual SAF form, and have completed an eligible carbon audit in the previous three years will be able to claim actual cost up to a calculated maximum value for their soil sampling. With the first claim they will additionally be paid £250 to cover personal development.

The soil analysis data must contain information on pH level, Phosphate (P), Potash (K) and soil Carbon.

How will my allowance be calculated?

To calculate your allowance; refer to your Region 1 BPS claimed area on your SAF or farm map on LPIS to calculate the Region 1 area. Divide the area by 5 (20%).

The maximum allowance is determined by multiplying the resultant area by £30.

Is it easy to claim?

The online claims process is quick and easy to use and can be accessed through the Preparing for Sustainable Farming Guidance page at www.ruralpayments.org. You simply need to provide; the date of completion, the name of your business, the FBAASS adviser, registration number and the carbon emissions result of the carbon audit measured in Kilos or Tonnes of CO₂e. Uploading a copy of your analysis, invoice and proof of payment provides the supporting documentation that we require to allow a payment to be made.

Where can I find more information

You can find more information in the Preparing for Sustainable Farming guidance at www.ruralpayments.org. Scan the QR code below to go straight to the guidance. For more assistance please contact your local Area Office.

Neil and Debbie McGowan, Incheoch Farm



“The soil sampling support has helped us to gain more insight into the farm, allowing us to tailor the nutrients better. I’d recommend that others go ahead and do it – it is probably the easiest form I’ve filled in.”

Incheoch farm in Perthshire is an upland grass unit with cows and sheep, holiday lets and an on-farm annual sheep and cattle sale. Sheep farmers of the year 2020. Visit incheochfarm.co.uk

