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## Common Agricultural Policy Reform

The EU Agriculture Commissioner Dacian Ciolos has announced **proposals** for the Common Agricultural Policy (**CAP**) post 2012. This has kicked off many months and quite possibly years of negotiation within the EU and between member states. We have prepared a [briefing](#) note of the key points and how they may **specifically** affect you.

### Renewable Energy

After much delay the **£860million** Renewable Heat **Incentive** (RHI) scheme, finally **opened** on the 28<sup>th</sup> November. **Phase 1** will provide 20 years tariff support to **generators** that meet the **eligibility** criteria. Fingers crossed that the Government's **sums** are better than their **Feed in Tariff** calculations which has caused **Solar PV** up take to **stall**. Those with suitable sites or looking to **invest** could do worse than turning their attention to **Anaerobic Digestion** and **Wind** projects both of which can provide **serious returns**.



### Public Rights of Way

A recent case in East Sussex highlighted the **importance** of drawing a line in the sand. Depositing a Statement and Plan with the **relevant** County Council, followed by a statutory **declaration**, under Section 31(6) of the Highways Act 1980, acknowledging those rights of way that exist on your land can help to **prevent** new Public Rights of Way being established. The East Sussex land owner's position was not sufficiently **protected** with only the Statement and Plan being lodged. The **absence** of the Statutory Declaration contributed to a new right of way being **created**.

### Countryside Stewardship & Environmentally Sensitive Areas

If your CSS or ESA (aka "**Classic**") agreement is expiring in 2013 or indeed has already expired and you are considering HLS you **MUST** get your farm onto Natural England's "**pipeline**" budget. We will be **promoting** client farms in this situation to NE during January 2012. Please let us know if you would like us to **represent** you.



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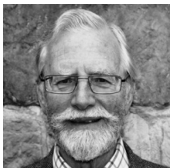
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## Soil Protection Review and Nitrate Vulnerable Zones

All Single Payment Scheme (SPS) claimants **must** complete their Soil Protection Review **update** by the 31<sup>st</sup> December each year. If your farm is within an NVZ you need to ensure that you have updated your Nutrient **Plan** and records. We are already doing this for **many** of you.

## Midterm Higher Level Stewardship

Early adopters of **HLS** will shortly be arriving at their 5 year break clause. Agreement holders are able to **withdraw** from HLS without penalty at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> year providing **at least** 1 month's notice is given. Much has changed in the last five years and it is worth **reviewing** your scheme well in advance of the break clause period.

## Entry Level Stewardship

Many farmers with **ELS** are coming to the end of their 5 year agreements. Several management options have **changed** in the meantime and there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the ELS handbook. Even with the demise of management plan **points** and others it is still perfectly possible to score sufficient ELS points without significant **impact** on your farming.

## Farming and Forestry Improvement Scheme (FFIS)

**£20million** has been allocated to help farming, forestry and horticultural businesses become more efficient at using resources. The fund will provide capital **grants** of between £2,500 and **£25,000** per farm. Eligible activities must fall within one of the following categories: Nutrient Management (eg **GPS**), Energy Efficiency (eg Heat exchangers), Water Resource Management (eg rainwater **harvesting**), Animal Health and Welfare, Forestry (eg extraction and **processing** equipment).

## Catchment Sensitive Farming

Operating in 60 "**Priority Catchments**" and including a £12.5m capital grants programme to assist with farm infrastructure **improvements** that will have a direct improvement on **water** quality. Up to £10k per holding per year is available. The next Capital Grant Scheme **annual** window will be 01 March-30 April 2012. Farmers are advised to have engagement with the **project**, and have an existing agri-environment agreement, to give themselves the best chance of **success** in their applications.

## Seasons Greetings

With all these interesting challenges and **opportunities** ahead and a superlative team to help our clients through them all that remains is for us to wish you a **Merry Christmas** and a Peaceful and Prosperous **New Year**.



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