Agroforestry

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Aim

Agroforestry can be described as an integrated approach to land management, where trees and agriculture co-exist to provide multiple benefits.

This option provides grant support to help you create small scale woodlands within sheep grazing pasture. These trees can:

- provide shelter for livestock
- provide timber
- increase biodiversity
- enhance the landscape

Grant support

This grant has two payment types:

- a capital grant for initial establishment
- an annual maintenance grant that is paid for five years

The rate of capital grant you can claim depends on the number of trees that you plant per hectare. Two stocking levels and grant rates are available:

Planting density	Initial payment	Annual maintenance
400 trees/hectare	£3600/hectare	£84/ha/year
200 trees/hectare	£1860/hectare	£48/ha/year

The rate per hectare has been set to cover:

- purchase of trees and stakes
- purchase or construction of appropriate protection
- planning, site assessment, supervision, ground preparation, and planting

A contribution is also included to the cost of beating up and weeding.

Please note that this grant will not be available until 2016.

Application eligibility criteria

Your application and proposed work must comply with the UK Forestry Standard.

Land ownership

To be eligible for this grant you must own or lease the land the woodland will be created on.

If you are a tenant or contractual licensee, you must:

- discuss the proposed application with your landlord to make sure it does not break the conditions of your tenancy or licence
- submit a Landlord's Notification Form with your proposal

If you have a tenancy or a licence with less than five years to run you must

- complete a Landlord's Declaration Form
- ask your landlord or the landowner to sign the declaration on that form

Landlord's Declaration / Notification Form (MS Word, Size: 356.2 kB)
doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/Landlords-Declaration-Form---FINAL.docx

Eligible land

The minimum eligible area is 0.25 hectares with a maximum area of five hectares per farm business unit.

The land you intend to plant with trees, the eligible area, must be permanent grassland pasture (Land Capability for Agriculture – Class 3.1 to 4.2 inclusive).

It must have appropriate soils for productive broadleaved species. You must have declared this eligible land as permanent grass (PGRS) on last year's Single Application Form.

The eligible area can only be used for grazing sheep. You must not introduce cattle or other grazing animals on to the site for the life of the contract.

You must protect all planted trees from grazing by domestic and wild animals.

The land must be available for grazing for the duration of the contract (20 years).

The woodland must be comprised of suitable productive broadleaf trees appropriate for the site, such as:

- oak
- sycamore
- cherry
- beech

You must maintain the initial stocking density for the duration of the contract and the trees must be evenly distributed within the application area.

Other eligibility criteria

Areas of open ground or shrubs are not eligible for this grant.

The minimum requirement for protection will be:

- a vole guard or rabbit spiral attached to the base of the tree and inserted a minimum of five centimetres into the ground
- a 1.5 metre (minimum) high net cage made from 50 millimetre square weldmesh or similar with a 'cage' diameter of no less than 45 centimetres, supported by two stakes of minimum diameter / cross section of 7.5 centimetres

Expected maintenance regime

You must commit to 10 years of maintenance to establish the trees.

You must carry out suitable tree pruning and management until the trees are established.

This includes singling of leaders from the second year. Maintaining management, including pruning, will enable both tree establishment and pasture sward to thrive together. The aim of pruning is to get a minimum of four metres of clean stem.

Supporting information

We need supporting information to help us assess your application. You must give the details listed below using the operational plan template provided.

Operational template

You must provide details on the following:

- potential impacts
- soils and topography
- ground preparation
- species choice
- protection
- maintenance schedule

Please provide a map that clearly shows the perimeter of the Agroforestry boundary, suitably labelled with the claim year(s) and planting density.

General mapping guidance for the Forestry Grant Scheme

Scoring criteria

We have set agreed financial budgets for each of the options under the Forestry Grant Scheme. In order to ensure that we make the most cost effective use of the money available and to meet Scottish Government objectives, we will assess each application using scoring criteria.

These criteria will be written as appropriate to each Forestry Grant Scheme option. We will set a minimum score that an application for any particular option must achieve to be considered for approval.

Threshold score = 2 points

Each option within your application must meet the threshold score to be considered for approval. In achieving the threshold score, your option must score against each criterion except for additional benefit.

The scores will then be used as the basis for allocating funding on a competitive basis through the Forestry Grant Scheme clearing process.

Delivery of option benefits

1 POINT – for applications that meet the eligibility requirements but do not deliver any of the benefits detailed below.

3 POINTS – for applications that provide one or more of the following in addition to meeting the eligibility requirements:

- applications that clearly demonstrate silvicultural appropriateness. You should thoroughly assess site conditions and propose the most appropriate management techniques to minimise

the impacts to the environment. You should submit an operational plan that indicates ground preparation methods, identifies existing watercourses, detailing any new drainage networks

5 POINTS – for applications that meet one of the three-point criteria above and the criteria below:

- applications that propose productive broadleaved trees which are appropriate and identified as 'very suitable' to the site. Refer to the Ecological Site Classification process to support your decision

Or

- applications which clearly demonstrate in the Farm Environment Assessment that the proposed new agroforestry woodland integrates well with the whole farm unit and will help towards the diversity of the farm and enhance the farmed landscape. Refer to the Forestry Commission Scotland booklet – The creation of small woodlands on farms

Supplementary point – additional benefit

1 POINT – will be awarded, as an additional point, where:

- applications include a grazing management plan which clearly outlines how the proposed area will be grazed. The plan should include details such as livestock type and numbers, seasonality of grazing or otherwise, specification of tree protection and management (particularly pruning), commensurate with the grazing regime proposed

How to claim

You can claim the grant for planting once this has been satisfactorily carried out. You must do this within the claim year you have approved in your contract.

You will be required to keep a diary of time and dates for all maintenance activities. Please retain the diary for checking by our woodland officers.

You can claim the annual maintenance payments on the Single Application Form.

You should also submit a map to show where the planting has taken place to verify the exact boundaries of the work.

Technical guidance

- General mapping guidance for the Forestry Grant Scheme
- UK Forestry Standard
- Creation of Small Woodlands on Farms
- Existing agroforestry sites contain useful information and examples and can recommend best practice: Glensaugh
- EURAF – European Agroforestry Federation
- UK Farm Woodland Forum

Recent changes

Section	Change	Previous text	New text
Supporting information	Amendment to the information required on the operational plan template	You must provide details of the operations including: · ground preparation · species choice · protection · maintenance schedule	You must provide details of the following: · potential impacts · soils and topography · ground preparation · species choice · protection · maintenance schedule

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