

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 agroforestry systems within grazing pasture land (silvopastoral system) or on arable land (silvoarable system).

This option supports investment in three main areas: Aim 1 – Broadleaves suitable for timber production. These trees can:

- provide shelter and shade for livestock
- increase productivity
- provide timber
- increase biodiversity
- Sequester carbon
- enhance the landscape
- reduce soil erosion and wind speed
- improve soil infiltration rates
- mitigate flooding
- contribute to Ecological Focus Areas (in specific situations)

Aim 2 – Broadleaves for biodiversity. These trees can:

- provide shelter and shade for livestock
- increase biodiversity
- Sequester carbon
- enhance the landscape
- reduce soil erosion and wind speed
- improve soil infiltration rates
- mitigate flooding
- contribute to Ecological Focus Areas (in specific situations)

Aim 3 – Fruit/nut trees for business diversification. These trees can:

- Increase shelter and shade for livestock
- increase biodiversity
- Sequester carbon
- enhance the landscape
- diversify the farm business by providing an alternative funding stream
- reduce soil erosion and wind speed
- improve soil infiltration rates
- mitigate flooding
- contribute to Ecological Focus Areas (in specific situations)

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
300-400 trees/hectare	£5,400/hectare	£126/hectare/year
150-200 trees/hectare	£2,790/hectare	£72/hectare/year

The rate per hectare has been set to cover:

- purchase of trees
- purchase or construction of appropriate protection
- planning, site assessment, supervision, ground preparation, and planting
- contribution to the cost of beating up and weeding

The minimum stocking densities expected by establishment (year 5) are 300 per hectare for the higher payment rate and 150 per hectare for the lower payment rate. These minimum densities must be maintained as such until the end of the contract period.

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 agroforestry system 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 \(MS Word, Size: 346.1 kB\)](https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/0003---landlords_declaration_form---SF-3.docx)

doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/0003---landlords_declaration_form---SF-3.docx

Eligible land

The minimum eligible area is 0.5 hectares with a maximum area of fifteen hectares per farm business unit.

The land you intend to plant with trees, the eligible area, must be permanent grassland pasture, temporary grassland or arable land (Land Capability for Agriculture – Class 1.1 to 4.2 inclusive). Rotational use between temporary grassland and arable use is also eligible.

Exceptionally, land in Classes 5.1-5.3 may be considered where the soils and local climate conditions are suitable for growing your chosen species.

The land must be of suitable quality and have appropriate soils for your chosen species of broadleaved trees.

You must have declared the area of eligible land which you intend to enter into this scheme on your previous Single Application Form.

If the application is on grazed land, then livestock and poultry (excluding game birds) can be used for grazing. This is done at the applicant's risk. Certain livestock, for example cattle, can pose a higher risk to trees. If trees are damaged or killed during the contract period, you will be responsible for their replacement. This may have long-term financial implications.

If the application is on arable land then cropping between the rows using any arable crop which is listed in the IACS booklet relevant to the year of claim can be grown. This area of land may also be eligible for EFA Agroforestry (EFSAF).

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 agroforestry system must be comprised of suitable trees appropriate for the site, such as (this list is not exhaustive):

Aim 1 (Productive broadleaves):

- oak
- sycamore
- cherry
- beech
- birch
- aspen

Up to 20 per cent of the planted area can be composed of fruit trees or native shrubs species.

Aim 2 (Biodiversity):

- oak
- sycamore
- cherry
- beech
- birch
- Rowan
- Willow
- aspen

Up to 20 per cent of the planted area can be composed of fruit trees or native shrubs species.

Up to 10% of the planted area can be composed of Scots pine.

Aim 3 (Fruit & Nut trees):

- Apple
- Pear
- Damson
- Plum
- Cherry
- Elder
- Hazel

- Sweet Chestnut
- Walnut

Up to 20 per cent of the planted area can be composed of other native broadleaf species.

Applicants must be satisfied that provenance of fruit trees is suitable for their purposes.

If the proposed area is within a Historic Garden and Designed Landscape, as defined by Historic Environment Scotland, then up to ten percent of the planted area can be composed of conifer species appropriate to the locality and distributed across the site.

You must maintain the minimum tree stocking density for the duration of the contract. The trees can be evenly distributed within the application area in rows or in groups. Other designs may be acceptable but where this is proposed an explanation must be provided.

Where multiple agroforestry systems are used, i.e. alternating between silvopastoral and silvoarable, on the same land over the contract period, then the design of the agroforestry project must allow for suitable harvesting of crops between any trees.

Other eligibility criteria

Areas of open ground are not eligible for this grant.

The requirement for protection will depend on the livestock to be grazed. Minimum protection requirements are:

Cattle

- A 1600mm (minimum) high aggressive, cattle-proof guard, for example a Cactus Guard, supported with three 1500mm x 10mm diameter rebar rods.

Sheep & Poultry

- A 1.5 metre (minimum) high net cage made from 50 mm square weldmesh or similar with a 'cage' diameter of no less than 450mm, supported by two posts of minimum diameter / cross section of 75mm.

If there is a specific issue with voles or rabbits/hares a spiral guard should be attached to the base of the tree and inserted a minimum of five centimeters into the ground.

Expected maintenance regime

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

Tree protection must be suitably maintained or renewed within the contract period in order to provide continuing protection against livestock.

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

Maintaining management, including pruning, will enable both tree establishment and pasture sward to thrive together. The outcome of pruning under each aim is to:

- Aim 1: get a clean stem on timber producing species and reduce shading of the sward.
- Aim 2: reduce the shading of the sward.
- Aim 3: encourage and maintain yield and health from the fruit/nut trees and reduce shading of the sward.

Pruning also allows easier access for stock management, crop harvesting, and a safer environment when using quad bikes for example.

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.



[Agroforestry – operational plan template \(MS Word, Size: 318.5 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/agroforestry_operational_plan_july_23.docx

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](#)



[Example FGS Map - Agro-forestry \(PDF, Size: 673.9 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/FGS---Agro-forestry.pdf>

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.

The criteria will be written as appropriate to each Forestry Grant Scheme option; please refer to [Scoring criteria and clearing process](#) for details.

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

Or

- applications that clearly demonstrate appropriateness. You should thoroughly assess site conditions and propose the most appropriate tree species and management techniques to minimise the impacts to the environment. Your operational plan should demonstrate how the new fruit/nut trees will diversify your business.

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

- applications that propose 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 Scottish Forestry guidance – [The creation of small woodlands on farms](#)

Or

- applications that provide evidence of proposed collaboration with other local food producers to develop existing or create new food markets.

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

There are two types of claims for agroforestry: Annual Maintenance and Standard Cost Capital Items. The Annual Maintenance payments will be paid for five years, if you are eligible, and you must claim annually for these on your Single Application Form. All the other woodland creation grants are Standard Cost Capital Items.

You must claim your capital items on the Forestry Grant Scheme manual Standard Costs Capital Items Claim Form but, please, only submit a claim once you have satisfactorily completed the work.

For more information on claims and related forms, see our guidance on [claims and payments](#).

Rules for payments of agroforestry annual maintenance grant

Your first year of Maintenance Payment - You **must** have completed the planting for which you are claiming your first annual maintenance payment **and** submitted your initial planting capital claim by 30th June of the claim year specified in your Schedule of Works. If you cannot complete the planting by 30th June then you should request a variation to change the start year for maintenance payments to the following year.

For example: If you complete your SAF by 15 May 2024 to claim your woodland creation annual maintenance with the first claim year of 2024, you must do this only with the proviso that you CAN complete the initial planting work and submit your planting capital claim by 30th June 2024, otherwise you will not be paid for the maintenance in 2024, thus losing one of your five annual maintenance payments.

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 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](#)
- [UK Farm Woodland Forum](#)
- [Soil Association Agroforestry Handbook](#)
- [Scottish Apple Producers](#)
- [Stephen Briggs - Agricology](#)
- [Woodland Creation for Biodiversity: What needs to be considered?](#)
- [Bringing apple orchards back to Scotland](#)

Recent changes

Section	Change
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Eligible land	Birch added to list of trees and guidance added relating to fruit trees and native shrubs.
Expected maintenance regime	Small addition to the aim of pruning
Aim, Grant Support, Eligibility & Scoring Criteria	Additional aims added, grant rates, eligibility and scoring revised

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