

What can I get grants for?

Tim Bowden, grant specialist with P&L Agriconsulting says: "These grants have been very popular in the past and there is likely to be high demand again. The grants are competitive so a successful application depends on understanding what DEFRA want to see in an application, understanding the rules of the scheme and, ultimately, how much money is left in the pot. £10m sounds a lot but if the average application is £10,000 then that is only 1,000 grants for the whole of England.

The third round of the Farming and Forestry Improvement Scheme opened on February 4th. £10 million of grant funding is available across England. The grants are aimed at improving the efficiency of farming and forestry businesses.

The main funding themes are:

Energy Efficiency, e.g. Ice builders, heat pumps and vacuum on demand systems for dairies.

Nutrient Management, e.g. Slurry separators, Tractor mounted GPS equipment, roofing silage stores and dribble- bars for slurry tankers.

Water Resource Management, e.g. Rain water harvesting and storage.

Animal Health and Welfare, e.g. Mobile handling systems for cattle and sheep, sheep and cattle EID readers and weigh crates, cow mattresses, badger proof troughs, concrete grooving for dairies, PigSAFE farrowing accommodation and replacement drinkers for poultry.

Forestry, e.g. Tractor mounted and static firewood processors, saw benches, wood chippers, forwarders and forestry grabs.

The minimum grant is £2,500 and the maximum is £35,000 at 40% (50% in upland areas) of the capital cost. Applications must be in by 4th April 2014.

A key change to the grant system with this round is that applications will be appraised as they are received on a first come, first served basis. This should speed the whole process up and there is a definite advantage to getting your application in early."

If you would like more information you can contact Tim on 07970 498772, e-mail t.bowden@pl-agriconsulting.co.uk or check out the Rural Development Programme for England web site for a complete list of eligible items.