

ABOUT THE NI RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2007-2013

The NI Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 is jointly funded by the European Union, through the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD). The Programme aims to protect and enhance our rural environment and contribute to the development of competitive and sustainable rural businesses and thriving rural communities. It is worth over £500million and represents one of the largest ever investments in rural communities in Northern Ireland.

The NI RDP is split into four main areas:

Farming and Food (Axis 1)

Under Farming and Food, £45million will be made available to improve the performance of Agriculture and Forestry businesses. This will be achieved by funding **Farm Modernisation** projects, helping businesses to improve their **Processing and Marketing skills** and supporting projects that will strength **Supply Chain** partnerships. **Advice, mentoring, training** and practical support is also available for farmers and their families through the **Focus Farms, Family Farm Options** and **Benchmarking** measures.

Measure	Contact Name	Organisation and Email	Telephone
Farm Family Options:	Valerie Stewart	Countryside Agri-Rural Partnership Email: options@countrysiderural.co.uk	0845 026 7534
Farm Modernisation:	Andrew Kerr	Countryside Agri-Rural Partnership Email: modernisation@countrysiderural.co.uk	0845 026 7535
Supply Chain	Sam Hawkes	Countryside Agri-Rural Partnership Email: supplychain@countrysiderural.co.uk	0845 026 7538
Focus Farms	Sam Campbell	Countryside Agri-Rural Partnership Email: focusfarms@countrysiderural.co.uk	0845 026 7536
Benchmarking	Brian Kennedy	Countryside Agri-Rural Partnership Email: benchmarking@countrysiderural.co.uk	0845 026 7537
Processing and Marketing Grant Scheme	Tom Sherry	DARD Email: tom.sherry@dardni.gov.uk	028 9052 0844
Marketing Development Grant Scheme	Robert Erne	DARD Email: robert.erne@dardni.gov.uk	028 9052 4449
Short Rotation Coppice	Joe Bradley	DARD Email: joseph.bradley@dardni.gov.uk	028 9052 4561

Environment and Countryside (Axis 2)

£390million of the total NI RDP budget will be allocated to Environment and Countryside. This funding will help farmers to manage the land more sustainably and deliver important outcomes on biodiversity, landscape and climate change.

Measure	DARD Contact	Email	Telephone
Forestry	Joe Bradley	Email: joe.bradley@dardni.gov.uk	028 9052 4561
Less Favoured Areas	Liz McWatters	Email: liz.mcwatters@dardni.gov.uk	028 9052 4329
Agri Environment Schemes	Richard Crowe	Email: richard.crowe@dardni.gov.uk	028 867 57514

Rural Life (Axis 3) and the LEADER Approach (Axis 4)

£100million will be dedicated to improving the quality of life in rural areas. This will be achieved by supporting a wide range of projects which include diversification, business creation, tourism, basic services for rural communities, village renewal, conservation and upgrading of the rural heritage.

The LEADER approach refers to the role of **Local Action Groups (LAGs)** in the delivery of the measures under Axis 3 aimed at improving the quality of life in rural areas and diversifying the rural economy. LEADER is an integrated approach that aims to bring together key players in a local area to identify local needs, develop a strategy to meet those needs and deliver actions in support. In Northern Ireland **Local Action Groups** are geographically representative of seven local council clusters (see map and contact information for more details).

For further information on the NI Rural Development Programme, please visit www.rdpni.info

