

## Introduction

The continuing cutbacks in publicly funded business support have led to a reduction in the provision of free or subsidised business advice and support for small business in general. Any finance and support that is still available is more typically targeted at those starting up or running a business in specific sectors or groups, such as rural, agricultural, farm and countryside-based enterprises.

This factsheet provides information about sources of advice and support for rural enterprise.

## Sources of help and support for rural enterprise

There are numerous sources of help and advice aimed specifically at the needs of rural communities and rurally based enterprises.

**Lantra** is the awarding qualification body for land-based industries in the UK. It develops training courses and nationally recognised qualifications that are delivered through a network of training providers. It provides an online directory of courses and training providers tailored to rural businesses.

Tel: (024) 7669 6996

Website: [www.lantra.co.uk](http://www.lantra.co.uk)

**The National Farmers Union (NFU)** is a membership organisation representing the agricultural and horticultural sectors in England and Wales. The NFU provides information and advice for members, including a range of NFU Business Guides, which cover all aspects of running an agricultural or horticultural business.

Tel: 0370 845 8458

Website: [www.nfuonline.com/cross-sector/farm-business/business-guides](http://www.nfuonline.com/cross-sector/farm-business/business-guides)

**The Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers (RABDF)** runs a business training programme for prospective dairy producers, *Entrepreneurs in Dairying*, which provides guidance on topics such as the dairy supply chain, management of contracts and prices, and how to source finance. The majority of course content is delivered online.

Tel: (024) 7663 9317

Website: [www.rabdf.co.uk/entrepreneurs-in-dairying](http://www.rabdf.co.uk/entrepreneurs-in-dairying)

**The Country Land and Business Association (CLA)** is a trade organisation representing land, property and business owners in rural areas of England and Wales. The CLA provides advice and support on topics such as regulations, grants and promoting local products. The CLA also holds regional events, including training seminars and networking opportunities.

Tel: (020) 7235 0511

Website: [www.cla.org.uk](http://www.cla.org.uk)

**Women in Rural Enterprise (WiRE)** is a UK-wide networking and support organisation for women running rural enterprises. The WiRE website features a rural marketplace where female business owners can promote their products and services. It also provides access to national and regional networking events, and news and views from women working in rural enterprise.

Tel: (01952) 815338

Website: [www.wireuk.org](http://www.wireuk.org)

**Natural England** is a non-departmental public body that advises the Government on the natural environment. It publishes research findings, wildlife news and information about regulations for rural enterprises.

Tel: 0300 060 3900

Website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england)

**The Prince's Countryside Fund** is a charity that provides grants and business skills training to family, dairy and livestock farms in the UK.

Website: [www.princescountrysidefund.org.uk](http://www.princescountrysidefund.org.uk)

**The National Farm Attractions Network** is a co-operative group that provides assistance and support to farm and rural diversification enterprises. It offers guidance on a range of aspects of running a farm attraction, such as a health and safety code of practice and ways of generating additional revenue streams.

Tel: 03333 448987

Website: [www.farmattractions.net](http://www.farmattractions.net)

**The Rural Crafts Association** organises exhibition space highlighting the work of its members at agricultural, equestrian and horticultural shows throughout the UK.

Tel: (01428) 682292

Website: [www.ruralcraftsassociation.co.uk](http://www.ruralcraftsassociation.co.uk)

**The Plunkett Foundation** provides help to rural communities to set up and run community co-operatives to keep or revive essential resources such as local pubs and shops.

Tel: (01993) 810730

Website: <https://plunkett.co.uk>

**The Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI)** is a welfare charity that provides grants and support to working farmers who are in financial difficulty in England and Wales.

Tel: 0808 281 9490

Website: <https://rabi.org.uk>

**The Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RSABI)** is a charity that provides financial and practical support to individuals working in the agriculture sector in Scotland.

Tel: 0300 111 4166

Website: [www.rsabi.org.uk/Home-Page](http://www.rsabi.org.uk/Home-Page)

**The Scottish Rural Network** is a network for people who live or work in rural Scotland. The website features news and information about support and funding available to rural enterprises.

Website: [www.ruralnetwork.scot](http://www.ruralnetwork.scot)

**WRAP** (the Waste and Resources Action Programme) works with business and local communities to improve resource efficiency in England and Wales. It provides online resources and financial support to help farming enterprises reduce their environmental impact.

Tel: (01295) 819900

Website: [www.wrap.org.uk/category/role/farmer](http://www.wrap.org.uk/category/role/farmer)

**Cywain** is a project to support the development of new products and markets in the agricultural sector in Wales. It provides support, mentoring and training to help farming enterprises break into new markets and grow their business.

Tel: (01745) 770036

Website: <https://menterabusnes.cymru/cywain/en/home>

**Farming Connect** provides support, mentoring and training to new and established farming enterprises in Wales.

Tel: 0845 600 0813

Website: <https://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect>

**The College of Agriculture, Food & Rural Enterprise (CAFRE)** is part of the Northern Ireland Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs' Food and Farming Group. CAFRE provides training and support aimed at farmers, growers, and others working in land-based industries. It also delivers the Farm Family Key Skills programme to help family farms improve their farm's resilience and practices.

Tel: 0800 028 4291

Website: [www.cafre.ac.uk/business-support](http://www.cafre.ac.uk/business-support)

**Rural Support** is an organisation set up to support farmers and rural communities in Northern Ireland. It provides a telephone helpline, emergency funding and an online resource centre. Rural Support also delivers the On Farm Business Support programme, which provides support to help improve the long-term sustainability of farming enterprises.

Tel: 0800 138 1678

Website: [www.ruralsupport.org.uk](http://www.ruralsupport.org.uk)

## Further information

BIF040 Sources of Finance for Starting a Business

BIF269 Family-run Businesses

BIF463 Government Financial Support for Business

## Useful publications

'Farmwise: Your Essential Guide to Health and Safety in Agriculture'

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

Website: [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg270.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg270.htm)

## Useful contacts

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) is the UK Government department with responsibility for regulations and policy relating to environmental, food and rural matters.

Tel: 0345 933 5577

Website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-environment-food-rural-affairs)

The National Farmers Union (NFU) represents farmers and growers in England and Wales, and provides guidance for members.

Tel: (024) 7685 8500

Website: [www.nfuonline.com](http://www.nfuonline.com)

NFU Scotland represents farmers and growers in Scotland. It publishes information and provides discounted services for members.

Tel: (0131) 472 4000

Website: [www.nfus.org.uk](http://www.nfus.org.uk)

The Ulster Farmers' Union represents farmers and growers in Northern Ireland. It provides advice and guidance to members.

Tel: (028) 9037 0222

Website: [www.ufuni.org](http://www.ufuni.org)

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