



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Multi-Annual Support Plan Agriculture

2025-2029



December 2024

Introduction

This Multi-Annual Support Plan (“MASP”) seeks to provide the agricultural sector with assurance, transparency, and clarity that the Welsh Government has in place a plan or suite of activities of future support for the sector, over a 5-year period. The intention in doing so, is to enable the sector and its businesses to plan ahead in five yearly cycles.

To meet the requirements of section 11(2) of the Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023 (the “Act”), this MASP, must:

- Specify the period in relation to which it applies.
- Set out how the Welsh Ministers intend to provide support during the period so as to best contribute to achieving the sustainable land management objectives (in accordance with section 2).
- Describe each scheme that is intended to be in operation, or expected to come into operation during the period, under a scheme as mentioned in section 8(3).
- Describe any support intended to be provided during the period other than under a scheme as mentioned in section 8(3).

If any information provided within the plan ceases to be accurate or complete, the plan will be amended to reflect the changes and re-laid in the Senedd as soon as reasonably practicable.

For the purposes of this MASP, it covers the 5-year period between 1st January 2025 and 31st December 2029.



Sustainable Land Management

The Act established Sustainable Land Management (“SLM”) as the framework for future agricultural support and regulations within Wales. Four SLM objectives were established which will underpin agricultural support and regulation in Wales:

- Produce food and other goods in a sustainable manner.
- Mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- Maintain and enhance the resilience of ecosystems and the benefits they provide.
- Conserve and enhance the countryside and cultural resources and promote public access to engagement with them, and to sustain the Welsh language and promote and facilitate its use.

The Act provides Welsh Ministers with the powers to provide support to the agricultural sector, pursuant to section 8, and in doing so, the support will / must contribute to achieving the SLM objectives.

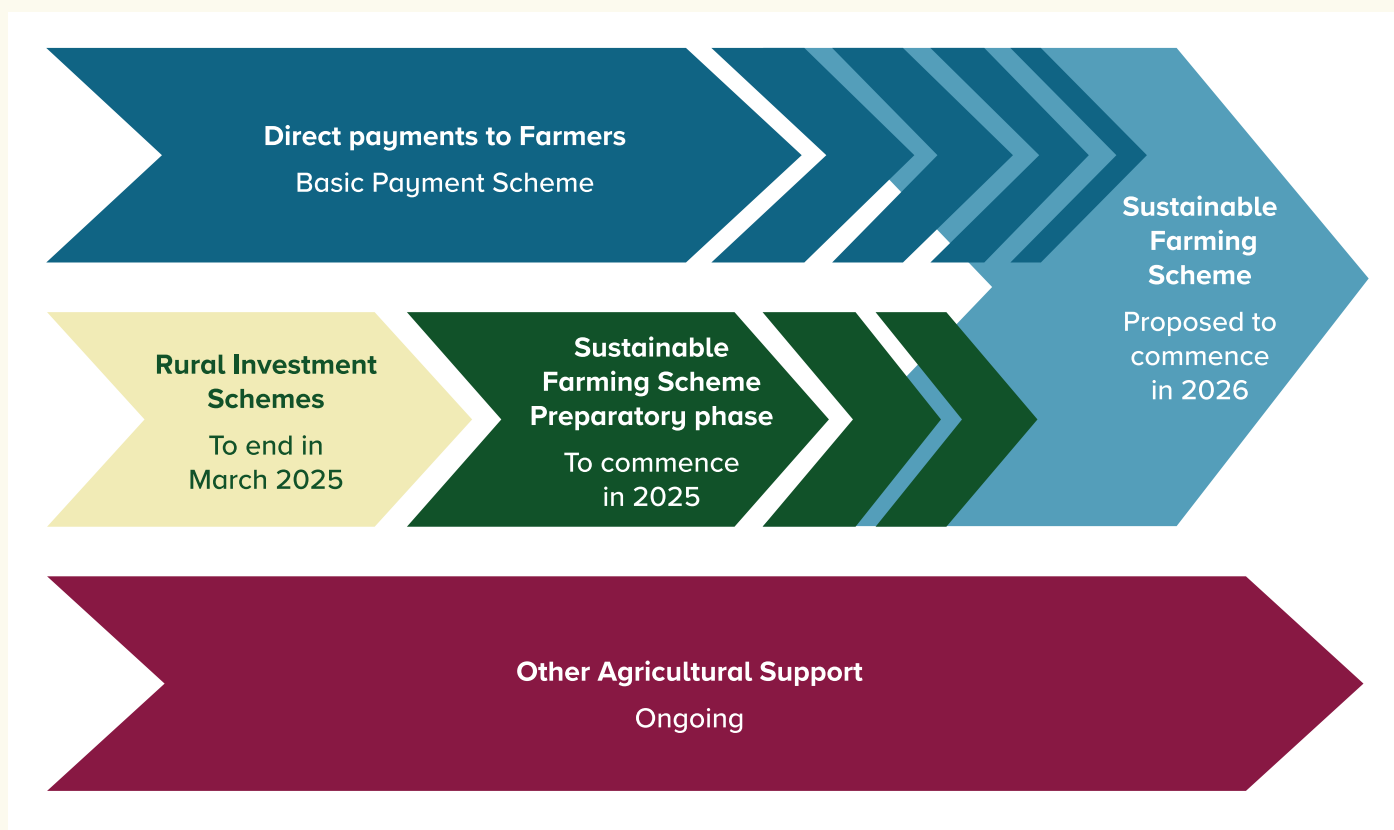
The MASP sets out how the Welsh Ministers intend to provide support during the period so as to best contribute to achieving the SLM objectives, through the provision of support via schemes or otherwise.

Overview of Support

It is intended that support will be provided to the agricultural sector during this plan period through a number of schemes and interventions. The schemes and interventions detailed will be provided subject to budget availability, with the MASP being updated accordingly.

It was announced on 14 May 2024 that the Sustainable Farming Scheme (“SFS”) preparatory phase of activity will commence in 2025 with the proposed SFS transition period starting from 2026. This will see a transition from direct payments from historically EU funded / backed programmes and projects, to support which is developed and delivered pursuant to section 8 of the Act. Over the transition period, support will be provided in accordance with both Retained European Union Law (“REUL”) (Assimilated Law) and the Act. We have outlined below the general support and associated legislative powers during the period of this plan.

Support Timeline



Direct Payments to Farmers

It has already been announced that the Direct Payments to Farmers through the **Basic Payment Scheme** (“BPS”) will continue unchanged for 2025. The BPS is a continuation of existing direct payments made pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013. It is important to note that the BPS is exempt from the SLM duty as outlined at section 3(e) of the Act.

Rural Investment Schemes

Welsh Government continues to provide a package of support through the **Rural Investment Schemes** (RIS) until March 2025 which are set out in Annex 1. This funding is aimed at supporting the rural economy and our natural environment with a focus on sustainable land management, productivity and diversification, woodland and forestry, on farm environmental improvements and food and farming supply chains. Many of the schemes complement the proposed SFS.

The RIS schemes are delivered using EU Assimilated Law / Government of Wales Act (“GOWA”) powers. Each of the schemes have been assessed and are considered to best contribute to achieving the SLM objectives through the actions taken.

Sustainable Farming Scheme – Preparatory Phase

The **Sustainable Farming Scheme – Preparatory Phase** will be made up of a number of schemes that will prepare farmers and land managers for the SFS. This phase of support and the associated schemes are highlighted in Annex 1.

Whilst the SFS is developed, the preparatory schemes will continue to utilise EU Assimilated Law / GOWA powers. Each of the schemes will be assessed to ensure they best contribute to achieving the SLM objectives through the actions taken before being launched.

Sustainable Farming Scheme

From 2026, subject to final scheme design decisions, the **Sustainable Farming Scheme** will be made up of a three-tiered structure comprising of Universal, Optional and Collaborative Layers, plus a number of Scheme Rules, all sitting above the regulatory baseline. This support scheme will be the first to adopt and implement the powers pursuant to sections 8 and 9 of the Act and its supporting regulations. The scheme is being designed to ensure it best contributes to achieving the SLM objectives through the actions taken.

The **Universal Layer** will be made up of a suite of Universal Actions which all farms participating in the scheme must deliver against. However, some Universal Actions will not be relevant to all farms.

For example, the Universal Action to establish a Designated Site Management Plan will not be relevant to farms which do not overlap Designated Sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (“SSSI”). The purpose of the SFS is to produce food and other goods in a sustainable way that takes account of and supports actions which have a positive impact on the declared nature and climate emergencies in Wales.

A farm business will receive a Universal Baseline Payment for meeting all requirements of the Universal Layer of the Scheme.

Farmers who want to go further than the Universal Layer can opt to undertake further actions in the **Optional and Collaborative Layers** for additional funding. There will be additional SFS Optional and Collaborative Actions introduced throughout the SFS Transition Period.

Welsh Ministers will not be making final scheme design decisions until 2025. This follows an ongoing phase of stakeholder engagement including through the SFS Ministerial Roundtable. This MASP will be amended to reflect those decisions.

Other Agriculture Support

Support is provided to the industry through Other Agriculture Support in addition to the main packages of support outlined above.

Annex 1

The table below includes a list of existing schemes / support already in operation, as well as schemes / support anticipated to commence during the MASP period. This information will be updated as necessary to ensure the plan remains current.

Direct Payments to Farmers

Scheme / Intervention	Scheme Description	Powers	Timescales
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Payment Scheme Redistributive Young Farmer 	<p>A description of the Basic Payment Scheme is publicly available via the Welsh Government website at the following link:</p> <p>https://www.gov.wales/single-application-form-saf-2024-rules-booklet</p> <p>Domestic scheme based on EU Common Agricultural Policy – Direct Payments.</p> <p>An annual payment for farmers in Wales with at least five hectares of eligible land.</p>	<p>EU Assimilated Law [Regulation (EU) No 1307/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013]</p>	<p>Continues to be available in 2025.</p>





Rural Investment Schemes

Scheme / Intervention	Scheme Description	Powers	Timescales
Organic Conversion Scheme	<p>As these schemes have been operating since 2022, scheme guidance details can be found at the following link:</p> <p>https://www.gov.wales/rural-grants-payments</p>	<p>EU Assimilated Law and GOWA</p>	<p>To end March 2025.</p>
Organic Support*			
Growing for the Environment*			
Small Grants – Environment*			
Food Business Acceleration Scheme (FBAS)*			
Integrated Natural Resources Scheme (INRS)*			
Natural Flood Management Accelerator Programme			
Nutrient Management Investment Scheme*			
Small Grants – Yard Coverings*			
Small Grants – Agricultural Diversification*			
Small Grants – Efficiency*			
Horticulture Development*			
Small Grants – Horticulture Start Up*			
Woodland Creation*			
Woodland Restoration*			
Farming Connect*			
Agri-tech College Farms			
Habitat Wales Scheme*			
SSSI management plans*			
Animal Health Improvement Cycle*			

* Schemes marked with an asterisk in the Rural Investment Scheme Phase are expected to continue into the SFS Preparatory Phase.

Rural Investment Schemes Continued

Scheme / Intervention	Scheme Description	Powers	Timescales
Agri-Food Technology Challenge Fund*	Details can be found at the following link: https://sdi.click/sbriagrifood	EU Assimilated Law and GOWA	To end March 2025.
Sheep Scab Eradication*	Details can be found at the following link: https://ahww.cymru/home/		
BVD Eradication*	Details can be found at the following link: https://www.gov.wales/bovine-viral-diarrhoea		
Anti-microbial Resistance*	Details can be found at the following link: https://rhaglenni.mentera.cymru/arwaindgc/en/home/		
National Peatland Action Programme*	Details can be found at the following link: https://naturalresources.wales/evidence-and-data/maps/the-national-peatland-action-programme/?lang=en		
Bovine TB*	Details can be found at the following link: https://www.gov.wales/bovine-tb-0		
Strategic Innovation Scheme (SIS)*	The scheme will support five key programmes of activity: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowledge, Innovation and Technology for Success 2. Enterprise for Success 3. Skills for Success 4. Scale-up for Success 5. Clusters for Success. 		

* Schemes marked with an asterisk in the Rural Investment Scheme Phase are expected to continue into the SFS Preparatory Phase.



Sustainable Farming Scheme – Preparatory Phase

Where schemes are current, scheme details can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.wales/rural-grants-payments>

The following new schemes are being developed and a brief description is provided below, ahead of schemes becoming available:

Scheme / Intervention	Scheme Description	Powers	Timescales
Ffermio Bro: Farming in Designated Landscapes	The Ffermio Bro - Farming in Designated Landscapes scheme will integrate incentives for positive farming practices with the purposes of Designated Landscapes (i.e. National Parks and National Landscapes). It will involve environmental, nature recovery and climate mitigation collaborative projects on multiple farms within Designated Landscapes, with these projects thereby also providing opportunities for people to discover, enjoy and understand the landscapes including their cultural heritage.	EU Assimilated Law and GOWA	To commence in 2025. Preparatory Phase to lead into SFS.
Integrated Pesticide Management Innovation Scheme	The Integrated Pesticide Management Innovation Scheme will commission work to provide a fully formed, impact assessed and costed actions plan which could be rolled out as the Integrated Pesticide Management optional layer under the Sustainable Farming Scheme, supporting actions to increase the uptake of Integrated Pest Management approaches leading to a reduction in chemical pesticide use, an increase in biodiversity, water quality and soil health and improved farm productivity and resilience.		
Landscape Scale Control of Invasive Non-Native Species	The Landscape Scale Control of Invasive Non-Native Species project will support and fund partnerships to deliver control of invasive non-native species (INNS) on a landscape scale.		
Farm woodlands and trees - income generation support	This scheme will support farm businesses to generate income to improve their resilience, by better understanding and maximising the potential of timber and non-wood products that can be sustainably produced from farm woodland and from trees used as part of an agroforestry system.		
Woodland Management Scheme	The Woodland Management Scheme will provide support to develop plans to meet the Welsh Ministers' commitment to bring unmanaged woods into good economic and environmental condition.		



Sustainable Farming Scheme

Scheme / Intervention	Scheme Description	Powers	Timescales
Universal Actions	Details of the updated outline for the Sustainable Farming Scheme published 25 November 2024 can be found at the following link: https://www.gov.wales/sustainable-farming-scheme-proposed-scheme-outline-2024	Agriculture (Wales) Act 2023 Powers of support section 8	Anticipated commencement in 2026.
Optional Actions			
Collaborative Actions			

Other Agriculture Support

Scheme / Intervention	Scheme Description	Powers	Timescales
Bovine TB Compensation	<p>Details can be found at the following link: https://www.gov.wales/bovine-tb-guidance-farmers-compensation</p> <p>The arrangements for paying compensation for cattle slaughtered because of TB are set out in the Tuberculosis (Wales) Order 2010 (as amended). The Tuberculosis (Wales) Order 2011 (as amended) provides arrangement for compensation for Non-Bovine animal(s).</p> <p>In most cases, full compensation will be paid, but the amount of compensation you receive may be reduced if the rules set out in the TB Order have not been followed.</p>	GOWA	Ongoing.
Nature Networks Programme	<p>Details can be found at the following link: https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/nature-networks-fund-4</p> <p>The aim of the Nature Networks Programme is to improve the condition and resilience of Wales’ network of protected land, freshwater and marine sites. Improving the condition of these protected and connected sites will enable them to function better as nature networks. Nature networks are vital, resilient areas where habitats and species can thrive and expand. Restoring connectivity in these networks will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevent further declines in species and habitat condition • support nature recovery • enhance capacity to adapt to the climate crisis <p>The programme is delivered in two key ways – funding for NRW to deliver projects directly including for land management agreements, and through the Nature Networks Fund (NNF). The fund is a competitive grant scheme run by National Heritage Lottery Fund on behalf of Welsh Government and is open to all private landowners and organisations in Wales. You must demonstrate that you have, or are working towards obtaining, the right permissions, licences and consents to undertake activity on the protected site network or surrounding areas.</p>	GOWA	Further windows of the NNF are expected in summer 2025 and 2026 exact timing TBC.