



THE PRINCE'S  
COUNTRYSIDE  
FUND

# Farm Cornwall

SOUND, PRACTICAL, REALISTIC & CONFIDENTIAL ADVICE

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## CORONAVIRUS ADVICE

### Farm Cornwall Office

Although the office is not currently manned, we are still operating using email, phone, website and social media.

**Farm Visits:** Given the risk of viral infections from COVID - 19 we will **not** be making any visits to farmers as we do not wish to become carriers and spread the disease from farm to farm.

However the office will remain operational. I personally use a WhatsApp group. If you wish

to use my WhatsApp, (Farm Cornwall) please let me know by text and I will add you in; we can also speak face to face via SKYPE or FaceTime if that is more appropriate.

I hope you find the information below useful—we will update it as soon as we know more. All information was correct at time of going to press.

Kind regards

**Edward** 07775 667825

### Livestock Markets - applies to Markets run by Kivells and Lodge Thomas

Currently livestock markets are open but certain restrictions apply. Livestock will be unloaded, with drivers of vehicle asked to stay with their vehicles and all paper work dealt with on a "stop and go" basis. No sellers can watch their livestock being sold—Only buyers can attend the market standing 2 metres apart, in a designated grid.

Café will not be open.

There will be no sales of breeding livestock at the markets covered by Lodge and Thomas, Kivells, Greenslade Taylor Hunt. If Breeding sales of sheep or dairy are organised we suggest you contact the auctioneers and discuss the issues and suggest whether a private treaty sale would be a better option. Drivers who are elderly, pregnant or suffering from an underlying health issue should avoid going to market.

### Disease control

We need to limit our social contact with others as much as possible.

We would also recommend that you wear gloves at petrol stations—some petrol stations have had to remove them from the forecourt (due to theft) but all will be happy to provide you with a pair if you ask.

If you have a direct selling business, wherever possible ask for payments to be made by card (**not** cash) and purchases be limited to contactless rather than chip and pin.

You will all have relatives who, for whatever reason, are not as fit as you are. These people are less able to deal with Coronavirus.

If you are in a room of 10 people and one of you has Coronavirus then you may catch it and recover from it. However if 7 of you have and 3 don't then those without could suffer from virus overload and the body will struggle to cope, however fit you are.

If you don't feel well, don't go out and, in any event, observe the 2 metre rule.

*Edward's Joke: Why does mineral water that has run through mountains for centuries have a use-by date on it?*

### Small Business Rate Relief

If your business is eligible for Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR) or Rural Rate Relief (RRR) or tapered rate relief then you potentially could get up to £10000 grant aid support. Cornwall Council will contact you directly if you are eligible. 0300 1234 171

## Government Help can be accessed as follows:

### Coronavirus business interruption scheme

This is a Government supported loan, with the Government providing 80% of the backing of up to £5 million - the first twelve months will be interest free. <https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/ourpartners/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme-cbils/accredited-lenders/>

### HMRC "time to pay"

Self assessment due 31<sup>st</sup> July can be deferred until 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021. Anyone facing difficulties paying tax due should contact 0800 0159 559. If you are a payer of VAT (as opposed to most farmers who claim VAT) then "time to pay" also applies - please discuss all options on the payment of tax with your accountant.

### Employee government payment scheme

The Government is offering to pay the wages of all employees at a rate of 80% up to a maximum of £2500 per calendar month, if those employees have to be laid off "furloughed" (granted Leave of absence). No details as yet of how to apply.

Continued on next page.....

**Statutory Sick Pay**

The Government will cover the costs of sick pay up to 14 days; however, as yet there are no details of how that money will be recovered.

Those self-employed who are eligible for sick pay will need to follow the Universal Credit route.

**Government Help (continued)**

We will endeavour to keep you posted with details on our website or alternatively contact the Growth Hub 01209 708 660 <https://www.ciosgrowthhub.com/> <https://www.farmcornwall.co.uk/> FarmCornwall whatsapp group

**Grant aid for tourism and retail business**

Available to those businesses with a rateable value £15,000 - £51,000, up to a maximum of £25,000 per property. Contact 03001234 171. (This is a Cornwall Council number)

**Holiday businesses**

My understanding is that if you have contracted the signing-up of visitors through an agent (and they have closed the site) then you should resist the temptation to offer sites when contacted by individuals.

**Meetings**

All meetings, AHDB beef group, Resilience programme, Farm Women's Group, etc will cease until further notice. We are investigating with AHDB the possibility of offering online training – more information to follow - as I know some of you expressed an interest in Farm Bench.

**Supplies**

We are told that there could be potential difficulties in sourcing spare parts. Straw is also likely to be in short supply given that cereal plantings have severely affected; straw **will** be in short supply next autumn.

**Staffing**

Farmers are suggesting that staffing will be difficult to find particularly in the horticultural sector, or if permanent staff go off sick. There will be opportunities out there.

**Countryside Stewardship (CS) and BPS Claims**

Each year we do BPS applications for farmers; the window for applications is now open and will close on the 15<sup>th</sup> May. If we do your applications please speak to me personally so that the application can be done with the right crop in the right field or alternatively please post a cropping plan.

For Countryside Stewardship claims all fixed options will remain; however where rotational options apply to the fields I will need to know which fields those have been applied to. All current applications will need a claim including schemes starting in 2020, even though you may have only just signed for them.

**New Countryside Stewardship Applications**

For those farmers not already in a CS scheme I would advise you to join—it will be the forerunner to the new ELMS scheme starting in 2024. We are informed that those farmers in CS schemes in 2024 will be able to merge their scheme into the new scheme

“seamlessly”. Those farmers who are already in schemes which are coming to an end in 2020 are being offered an extension and again I would advise you to continue with those schemes. The application window is open until 16<sup>th</sup> May for the application form and then until 31<sup>st</sup> July for the paperwork to be returned completed.



For 80 years, Citizens Advice have been helping people with the issues they face, whether that is welfare benefits, debt, housing, employment or consumer problems.

Each year, our team in Cornwall help around 8,500 people and in 2018/19 achieved an income gain for these people of over £3.3m with £5.4m debts written off and £1.6m debt rescheduled.

Citizens Advice Cornwall understands

that many farmers and rural industries are facing challenging times, and is putting together a project that will work alongside Farm Cornwall and other organisations to provide advice and support to ensure that any appropriate benefits are claimed, debts become manageable and help is given with issues relating to employment or housing.

Our services run from 9 offices around Cornwall as well as 6 outreaches, but we understand that farmers are very busy people. This project will provide specially trained advisers from a

farming or rural industries background who will meet farmers at or close by their workplace.

As with all our services, this will be free, impartial and open to anyone who needs help.

**Whilst we finalise this project, if you need help, please text DEBT or ADVICE to 788666 and someone will respond to you within 48 hours. You can call us on 03444 111 444 or visit us online at [www.citizensadvicecornwall.org.uk/getting-advice](http://www.citizensadvicecornwall.org.uk/getting-advice).**



**Farm Cornwall**

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If you have any information which you think might be useful to other farmers, please feel free to email us on [mail@farmcornwall.co.uk](mailto:mail@farmcornwall.co.uk)