

# Basic Payment Scheme



The Basic Payment Scheme acts as a safety net for farmers and crofters by supplementing their main business income.

To qualify for this support, you must actively farm your land.

Support under the Basic Payment Scheme is available to farmers who are allocated payment entitlements.

You can apply for entitlements based on the land you farm and the activity you undertake.

The scheme also delivers environmental and other benefits by requiring you to meet certain practices and farm in a sustainable way.

Together, these are called Agricultural Practices Beneficial for the Climate and the Environment but is more commonly called Greening.

Full guidance for Greening requirements can be found in the Greening section, along with guidance from previous years.

[Greening guidance 2019](#) - Effective from 1 January 2019

[Greening guidance 2020](#) - Effective from 1 January 2020

Greening requirements will vary depending on your circumstances, but all farmers and crofters must also observe Cross Compliance requirements. These are rules that enforce laws around animal and plant health as well as sustainable agricultural practices.

[Cross Compliance](#)

## Full scheme guidance

Before you apply for this scheme, you should read the full scheme guidance. If you have any questions, please check with us before you submit an application.

[Full scheme guidance](#)

If you need any help or assistance to use this guidance, you can book an appointment at your local area office.

[Book an appointment](#)

## Updates

- 8 June 2017

We've updated the guidance on assessing land eligibility

[Assessing your land eligibility](#)

You can check previous versions of our guidance in the archive.

[Basic Payment Scheme archive](#)

[Greening archive](#)

## Eligibility

You need to have an eligible business and eligible land in order to claim the money and you must prove you are actively farming every year.

We will allocate Basic Payment Scheme payments in 2015. To be eligible to apply for these you must fall into one or more of the following categories.

- automatic right of allocation – for businesses who were active in 2013 and declare land in 2015. This will include businesses as buyer or lessee who can take over the original business' qualification for subsidy (either in whole (all land) or in part (particular fields))
- active farmers in 2013 – you must be able to supply evidence if you did not apply for Single Farm Payment Scheme. This will include businesses in previously excluded sectors, such as fruit and vegetable producers or deer farms

If none of the above apply to you, you may be eligible to apply to the [National Reserve](#).

It's important to remember that entitlements do not give an automatic right to a payment. You must activate your payment entitlements each year by declaring at least the eligible land your entitlements equate to in your Single Application Form.

## Young Farmer payment

If you qualify for the Basic Payment, you may also receive the Young Farmer payment. You will receive this if you:

- submit a Single Application Form
- farm a minimum of three hectares in Scotland
- are a sole trader or head of the farm business and
- are less than 41 years of age on 31 December of the first year you apply for the Basic Payment Scheme

The level of Young Farmer payment is based on a maximum of 90 eligible hectares and rate is 25% of the average value of payment entitlements held for the scheme year concerned.

For businesses where the young farmer is classed as head of the farm business, this means that person is the main shareholder / partner in the business, takes the majority share of any profits and makes the key business decisions.

The Young Farmer Payment is made to eligible applicants for a maximum of five years from the date of their first application submission.

Applicants who set up from calendar year 2014 onwards will be eligible to receive YFP for a period of five years from the date of first submission of an application for payment.

For example, a young farmer setting up in 2014 who submitted their first application for YFP in 2015 will continue to be eligible to apply for payments in 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. A young farmer setting up in

2014 who submits their first application for YFP in 2016 will continue to be eligible to apply for payments in 2017, 2018, 2019.

An eligible business can be active for many years before business members change. The Young farmer is eligible for up to 5 years from the year they took control of the business. For example a young farmer who took control in 2011 and submits an application for YFP in 2015 would be eligible up to 2016. So getting two years of YFP.

YFP must continue to be claimed annually by the eligible business and annual checks will be undertaken to ensure the business remains eligible for payment.

You can apply for the Young Farmer payment on the Single Application Form, where you will be asked to provide evidence of your eligibility. Full details of how to apply for the payment will be included in the guidance notes issued with your Single Application Form.

[Single Application Form](#)

## Applications

You can apply for your Basic Payment entitlements through your Single Application Form in 2015 during the annual application window. To continue to be paid on your entitlements, you must declare eligible land through your Single Application Form each year.

You can find out more about the Single Application Form using the link below.

[Single Application Form](#)

If you submit a Single Application Form online:

- we will calculate your totals automatically
- you will reduce the chance of making mistakes
- we will provide 24-hour access and give you an instant receipt
- we will give you up-to-date information on the progress of your claim

For your application to be eligible, you must:

- be at least 16 years of age
- declare at least three hectares of eligible land in your Single Application Form
- be actively farming the land you are claiming against on 15 June
- meet cross compliance conditions on all the land declared in your Single Application Form

To receive your payment, each year you must match each entitlement you hold with an equivalent eligible hectare.

If you don't do this you will lose some or all of your entitlement, unless you can prove that an exceptional circumstance prevented you from doing so.

If you want to transfer entitlements, you must do so by completing [PF23 - Application to transfer entitlements form](#).

## Payment

Under European Commission rules, we must make payments between 1 December of the scheme year and 30 June the following year.

We will start to process your claim when we receive your Single Application Form, provided it is correctly completed and sent with any necessary supporting documents.

We will pay you in pounds sterling unless you tell us on your Single Application Form to pay you in euros.

We will make payments to your business' [nominated bank account using BACS](#).

We can only pay into a United Kingdom bank account held in the name of the business and you must provide your business' bank account details to allow us to pay you.

## Inspections

If you receive support from this scheme you will be subject to our inspections programme.

You can find out more about how and why we carry out inspections in our dedicated section.

### [Inspections](#)

As a minimum, we will check that:

- the land you claim is eligible
- the area you have claimed is correct
- you are meeting Cross Compliance rules on all of your land

## Non-compliance and penalties

If we find you have not been fulfilling your obligations in return for payment, we will call this non-compliance and you could face a loss of support.

It is important we take action where we do find that the requirements of the scheme have not been followed to make sure we are acting within European Commission law and avoid the Scottish Government being fined by the Commission.

Penalties for not following the rules can result in you having to pay back some or all of your payments, a reduction in future payments or payments being cancelled entirely.

Reasons for failing to meet the scheme conditions could include:

- submitting your Single Application Form after the deadline (midnight on 15 June)
- breaching scheme rules, for example in relation to land declarations
- if your farming practices fail to meet cross compliance requirements

You can find more information about penalties in our guidance on completing your Single Application Form.

### [Single Application Form guidance](#)

## Appeals and complaints

If you are unhappy with a decision we have made regarding your application, you have the right to appeal.

Likewise, if you are unhappy with our service as a whole, we have a dedicated complaints procedure to help you resolve this.

### [Appeals](#)

### [Complaints](#)

## Contact us

If you have any questions about this scheme, please get in touch. Contact details can be found in our Contact us section.

[Contact us](#)