

## £22 million awarded to farmers to boost productivity

More than 3,600 farmers are set to benefit from £22 million in productivity-boosting equipment from round two of the government's Countryside Productivity Small Grants scheme.

Under the scheme, farmers can apply for grants of between £3,000 and £12,000 to invest in new and innovative equipment – from livestock monitoring cameras to precision farming technology – which help businesses save time and money and improve productivity.

Farming Minister George Eustice confirmed today that all eligible applications have been approved as part of round two of the successful scheme, with the Rural Payments Agency writing to the 3,677 successful applicants from today.

The first round of funding opened in 2018, with £15 million spent to support farmers investing in technology to boost their productivity. Today's announcement means that £37 million has been allocated to farmers in the scheme's first two funding rounds, with a third and final funding round to open in autumn 2020.

Farming Minister George Eustice said:

Boosting farm productivity is hugely important, and I'm delighted we've been able to fund all applications, supporting farmers to invest in game-changing technology.

As a former farmer I know that new equipment can provide a real boost, saving businesses time and money while improving yields.

When we introduce our landmark Agriculture Bill we will set out further measures to help farmers become more productive, efficient and resilient.

The Rural Payments Agency is encouraging farmers to speak to their suppliers to confirm the items they wish to order are available before accepting their grant by using the acceptance portal on GOV.UK by 10 November.

New items were added to the list of the equipment available for the second round of the Small Grants Scheme, with grants available to minimise soil compaction in fields, monitor ammonia levels in farm buildings, and increase machinery precision when applying slurry.

Farmers are encouraged to make early orders to leave time for deliveries to arrive and payment claims to be processed by the end of May 2020.

Rural Payments Agency Chief Executive Paul Caldwell said:

The Small Grants scheme is extremely popular with farmers, so it is fantastic to see the funding is being made available for all the eligible applications we received for round two. Harnessing innovative technology can provide a real boost for productivity across the farming sector in England, and I am delighted that we are able to help unlock access to new equipment for many farmers.

I would encourage all our customers to contact their suppliers early to ensure their items can be delivered ahead of the claim deadline.

More information on the Countryside Productivity Small Grants scheme can be found [here](#).