

Defra opens £2 million fund to restore flood-affected farmland

A £2 million fund to help farmers affected by summer flooding has opened for applications today (20 September).

Through the Farming Recovery Fund, farmers in parts of North Yorkshire and Wainfleet, Lincolnshire, who have suffered uninsurable damage to their property can now apply for grants between £500 and £25,000 to cover a number of repair costs.

This comes after the Government confirmed up to £5.25 million to support wider recovery work in the area, including the repair of roads and bridges and activating the Bellwin scheme, which can be utilised when an emergency involving the destruction of or danger to life or property occurs, to reimburse local authorities for emergency work in flood-affected areas.

Grants under the Farming Recovery Fund are available for a range of farm restoration work, including rebuilding dry stone walls, re-cultivating productive land and replacing damaged field gates. A [handbook has been published today](#) with full details of what is eligible and how to apply for funding.

Environment Secretary Theresa Villiers said:

This summer's unprecedented weather wreaked havoc on farmland in North Yorkshire and Wainfleet. The Government is taking action to help farmers get back on their feet in light of the extensive damage suffered.

I'm therefore delighted to open the Farming Recovery Fund and would encourage all those affected to check what they are eligible to apply for and to submit an application promptly to ensure they can access the money available to contribute to their restoration work.

To apply for this funding, farmers must submit an application to the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) which explains how their business has been impacted and provides the relevant evidence to show any damage caused by the flooding. For applications covering damage where the applicant has already paid for repairs, farmers should provide copies of any receipts and quotes to help the RPA process them as quickly as possible.

RPA Chief Executive Paul Caldwell said:

I welcome the opening of Farming Recovery Fund today for applications, following the destruction caused by unprecedented weather earlier this summer.

The RPA, alongside the NFU and CLA, has worked hard to get this scheme up and running, and we will continue to offer advice and support to affected farmers to complete their applications.

Farmers will have until 31 March 2020 to submit an application for this funding.

NFU Vice President Stuart Roberts said:

The reinstatement of the Farming Recovery Fund will be a relief to those farmers affected by the recent flooding events in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire who're now coping with a massive clear-up operation.

We will continue to work with Defra to ensure that the scheme is implemented and farmers are able to apply for the funding they desperately need.

CLA North Director Dorothy Fairburn said:

In early August, the CLA welcomed the Rural Payments Agency's announcement of £2 million flood recovery funding for farmers in North Yorkshire and we are delighted that this funding can now be accessed by those affected by the flooding.

We collaborated with the RPA to make sure the application process is as simple as possible, and we encourage those affected to apply for funding under this agreement as it will enable farmers and landowners to re-construct the landscape, allowing communities and the visitor economy to re-boot.

We have been working closely with farming support organisations and the local MP to ensure a swift and robust response to this very difficult situation. The diverse nature and quality of this response exemplifies what resilience is all about.