

Farming Newsletter



WELCOME!



Welcome to the August 2025 edition of the Mersey Rivers Trust farming newsletter!

Read on to find out more about farming news and what's on offer this month, you can also keep up to date with our [Farming Hub](#) online.

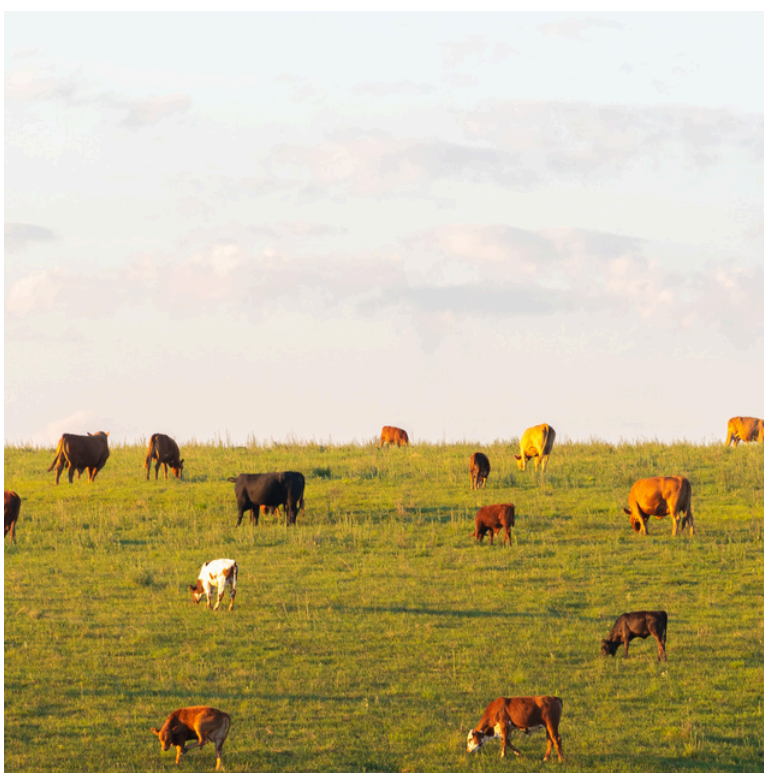
COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP HIGHER TIER

From September 2025, applications will open for the Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier (CSHT) scheme for those who have been invited to apply and already completed the pre-application process and any preparatory work.

This forms part of the government's investment in sustainable farming and food production during this parliamentary term. Within this, funding for nature-friendly farming, including Environmental Land Management schemes such as CSHT, will rise to £2 billion by the 2028/29 financial year.

The new scheme includes several improvements aimed at making the process more accessible and supportive for farmers and land managers. These include a rolling application window, quarterly payments and a simplified online application. For more information click [here](#).

Defra regularly updates their [Farming Blog](#). To subscribe to the blog and ensure that you receive their latest farming updates click [here](#).





WATER NET GAIN PROJECT

Water Net Gain is a catchment-scale approach whereby farmers are paid to store water on their land.

Creating additional ponds and reservoirs means water can be used on-farm or actively released into rivers and streams to improve flows during droughts.

This research project is being piloted across catchments throughout the country, but will be coming to the Mersey Basin this autumn, mainly focusing on the Downholland Catchment on the Alt.

If you are interested in having a farm visit from one of our advisors to see if there is potential for a storage pond on your farm please get in touch by emailing farming@merseyrivers.org

If your farm is outside of our priority catchment and you are interested in this scheme we want to hear from you!

- How could WNG be most beneficial for your business?
- Under which circumstances would you consider participating in this scheme?
- What would make it more appealing to you?

Please complete an online survey which covers your current water use and whether your water supply is resilient for the future. The aim is to understand what a scheme would need to provide in order to give you enough confidence to take part.

The survey takes approximately 15 minutes and will be live from September to December. To complete out the survey, click [here](#).

MERSEY RIVERS TRUST SMALL GRANTS SCHEME 25/26

For farmers in the River Bollin Catchment we have small grants of up to £5,500 available to help with capital works on farms to reduce water pollution. We can fund capital works including concrete, guttering, fencing, and sward lifting. We can also signpost you to further advice and funding.

To register interest and discuss your chances of securing funding for capital grant items in 2025/2026.

Email us at justine@merseyrivers.org or call Justine on 07952 056286.



UPCOMING DATES FOR THE DIARY

1st September - For any land located in a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ), this is the start of the closed period for applying organic manure with a high readily available nitrogen content to grassland on shallow or sandy soils and for any land located in an NVZ and applying manufactured nitrogen fertilisers to tillage land.

15th September - For any land located in an NVZ, this is the start of the closed period for applying manufactured nitrogen fertilisers to grassland.

16th September - For any land located in an NVZ, this is the start of the closed period for applying organic manure with a high readily available nitrogen content to tillage land on shallow or sandy soils that have been sown with crops on or before September 15th.

