

# **SFI for Horticultural businesses**

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Certification



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## Soil Association Charitable Group

Working with everyone to transform the way we eat, farm, and care for our natural world, we build real solutions from the ground up.



## **Content:**

- Headlines of SFI26
- 2026 June Applications
- SFI options overview
- Capital grants
- Other grants
- Next Steps

# Headline details

- Payment is capped at £100,000 per farm per agreement **per year**
- Only 71 options-duplicates or 'deadweight' options removed
- Payment rates reduced on 3 options but no change in existing agreements payment rates
- Payment rates increased on some, and higher rates will be paid on existing agreements
- All options **3 years** except organic conversion
- 2 application windows for SFI26

# Other areas still waiting for details

- Exact guidelines details (assuming 2025 will apply)
- Overlaps with CS schemes ending in December includes those offered rollovers last year and SFI24 which is ending
- CS Higher Tier opening to more farms
- CSHT does not include some SFI actions, and so both a CSHT agreement and an SFI will be needed
- SFI 2027-possible regional options / restrictions



# Eligibility for June SFI Application

1. Small farms (between 3ha and 50 ha) with or without an existing ELM revenue agreement
2. Any farm without an existing ELM revenue agreement
  - You need an SBI number.
  - And need to have been registered with the RPA by 1 January 2026

All others September 2026



# Overlaps with other schemes

- SFI26 can be claimed on land in mid-tier schemes but you cannot get paid twice for same action.
- SFI not possibly on older HLS schemes
- [www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms?](http://www.gov.uk/find-funding-for-land-or-farms?)

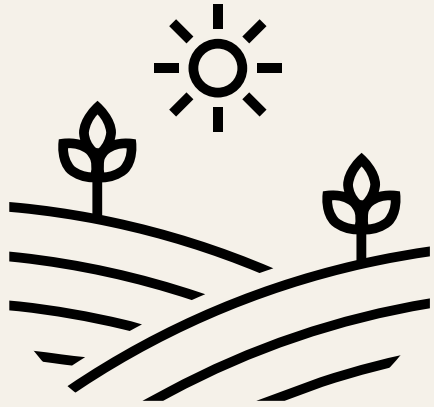
<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Action or option codes</b>
SFI 2024 actions	AHW6, OFA1, OFA6, OFC3, OFC4, OFM4, OFM5, AGF1, AGF2, PRF1, PRF2, PRF3, PRF4, SOH1, SOH2, CAHL2, CIPM1, CIPM3, CIPM4, CNUM1, CSAM1, CSAM2
SFI 2023 actions	AHL2, IPM1, IPM3, IPM4, NUM1, SAM1, SAM2
CS options	AB2, AB9, HS3, HS9, SW5, SW6, OP1, OP5, OR3, OR4, OT3, OT4
ES options	No ES revenue options
SFI pilot standards	No area-based SFI pilot standards

# SFI Offer 2026

- There are 71 options available.
- 11 organic –5 conversion  
6 management
- 2 Agroforestry
- 3 Boundary options
- 4 buffer strips
- 13 arable/horticulture options  
plus 3 IPM
- [Find funding for land or farms - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)
- arable/horticulture options plus 3 IPM
- 9 grassland plus 4 supplementary  
options
- 17 Upland and moorland
- 7 soil health options
- 9 Waterbodies
- 2 Heritage



# What SFI can offer you; Organic

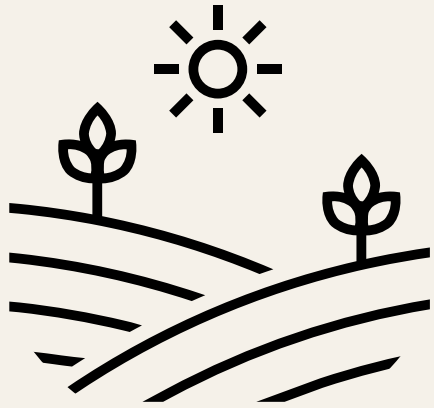


## Conversion

OFC1-Improved PP	£187
OFC2 Unimproved PP	£96
OFC3 Rotational	£298
OFC4 Horticultural land	£874
OFC5-Top fruit(3 years)	£1920



# What SFI can offer you; Organic



## Management

OFM1 Improved PP	£20
OFM2 Unimproved PP	£41
OFM3 Enclosed rough grazing	£97
OFM4 Rotational land	£132
OFM5 Horticultural land	£707
OFM5 Top fruit	£1920



# Stacking or Layering options

- 5 ha Organic Horticulture management OFM4 = 5X£707 £3535
- 3ha Agroforestry –low density AGF1
- 1ha Legume fallow CNUM3
- 0.5ha Over winter cover crop CSAM2
- 1 ha Summer cover crop SOH3
- 1ha No insecticide-CIPM4
- 0.1ha grass out of management CAHL3

400m hedges CRW2

- Total £5030
- £1000/ha –
- an increase of £300/ha across the whole area

# Static and Rotational actions

## Static actions

- Action is on same whole/ part field for length of agreement



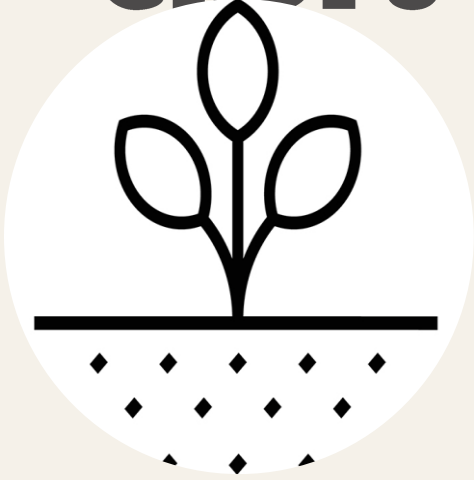
## Rotational actions

- Payment will be capped at area claimed in first year, and payment will be lower if lower area claimed.
- You will need to tell RPA where rotational options are each year



# What SFI can offer you; COVER

## CROPS



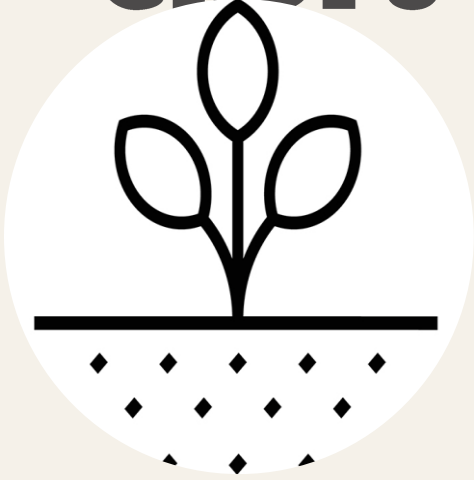
### CSAM2 – Multi species winter Cover Crops-£129

Multi species covers-at least 2 species from at least 2 plant families(brassica, legume, cereal/grass, herbs)  
Can be grazed, can be terminated up to 6 weeks pre planting next crop

### SOH3 Multispecies summer sown cover crop £163

at least 4 species-at least 2 species from 2 plant families(brassica, legume, cereal/grass, herbs)  
But not millet, maize, sorghum, artichokes fennel  
Cannot graze, do not destroy more than 2 weeks before reseeding

# What SFI can offer you; COVER CROPS



## CAHL1 Pollen and Nectar flower mix £739

Only 25% of farmed area. At least 6 flower species including at least 2 of Knapweed, musk mallow, oxeye daisy, wild carrot or yarrow, sown and maintained into following years so may need reseeding but plot can be moved

## CAHL2 Winter bird food on arable and horticultural land £648

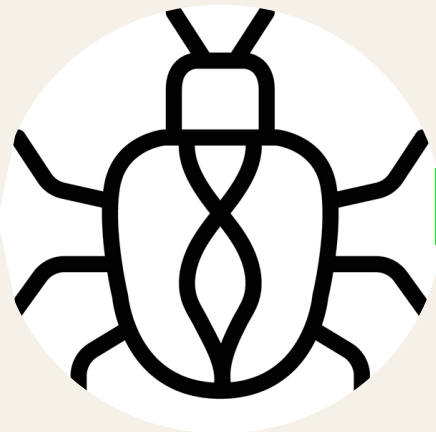
At least 6 seed bearing crops, cereals brassicas etc or if for 2 years biennials as well-kale teasels etc

# What SFI can offer you; PEST & NUTRIENT management



**CIPM2 Flower rich margins,  
blocks and infield strips £798**

At least 4 grass species (not ryegrass) and 10 Wildflower species. Can be rotational



Integrated pest management

CIPM3 – Companion Crops

**CIPM4 – No insecticide**

Nutrient management

**CNUM3 – Legume Fallow £532**

At least 6 legumes as well as non-legume flowers and grasses such as cocksfoot/timothy/fescues  
Cannot graze, cut but can top  
Rotational or static

# What SFI can offer you; AGROFORESTRY, GRASSLAND & HERITAGE

## Agroforestry

AGF1 Maintain very low-density agroforestry 30-50 trees/ha £248

AGF2 Maintain low density 50-120 trees/ha £385

Can include shrubs and newly planted trees  
In rows or a grid, not densely packed

## Grassland options

CLIG3 Low input grassland

CIGL1 Take grassland field corners out of management

## Heritage

HEF1 Maintain weatherproof traditional buildings

HEF6 Manage historic and archaeological features on grassland

# What SFI can offer you; **FIELD EDGES**



## Buffer strips

CAHL4 – 4-12m buffer strip  
Arable and horticultural land  
£515

BFS1 12-24m watercourse  
buffer on Cultivated land  
£707

BSF6 6-12m habitat strip by  
waterbodies £742

CHRW2 – Manage  
hedgerows £13/100m

Buffer strips options can be  
used around in field  
trees and ponds

# Options on arable land under horticultural crops

Where fields are not under organic horticulture OT4 but OT3 rotational management, Arable options can be applied for such as

- CSAM3 Herbal ley £224

- at least 1 grass, 2 legumes and 2 wildflower/herbs

- AHW10 low input harvested cereal £354

- Reduced seed rate to create low head count

- Can under sow a flowering companion crop

# Next steps

- Ensure you, or your agent can get onto RPA portal
  - Make sure maps on RPA are up to date and land use codes are correct-(remove dung heaps shown on maps)
  - Decide what options you want to apply for
    - What do I do that they pay for?
    - What do I want to do that's different?
    - What will be effect of applying for this option?  
Rotational and system effects
- ... and ignore all the others



# Application process guidance

- Application is online on RPA portal
- It is a field-by-field process
- System will not allow you to claim wrong actions-
  - 1-Land use code
  - 2-stackable options

Hard surfaces, poly tunnels, greenhouses etc can not get payments-remove from claimed area

Scheme	Action or option codes
SFI 2024 actions	OFC3, OFC4, OFM4, OFM5, AGF1, AGF2, PRF2, CIPM1, CNUM1, CSAM1
SFI 2023 actions	IPM1, NUM1, SAM1
CS options	OR3, OR4, OT3, OT4
ES options	No ES revenue options
SFI pilot standards	No area-based SFI pilot standards

# Land use codes

- Were required annually for BPS forms, now not required but all actions are restricted to specific land uses (Arable includes horticulture), so check what is recorded on RPA portal and change if needed

Eligible land type	Eligible land cover	Compatible land use code	Eligible land type	Eligible land cover	Compatible land use code	Eligible land type	Eligible land cover	Compatible land use code
Arable land used to grow crops	Arable land	Land use code <a href="#">leguminous ar</a>	Mixed arable crop - group 1	Variable	Variable	AC58	Mixed arable crop	
Temporary grassland	Arable land	TG01	Mustard-type arable crop	Brassicaceae	Sinapsis alba	AC38	Includes White or Yellow mustard; use AC37 for Brown mustard	
Arable land lying fallow	Arable land	FA01	Nigella	Nigella	-	AC99	-	
			Oats (spring)- type arable crop	Avena	Spring variety	AC19	Includes Feed oats, Naked oats, Porridge oats, Quaking oats	

# Next steps

- Write it down and be prepared to spend time when window opens because application is field by field
- RPA staff are good at helping the application process if you are having issues, but less good at reading your mind about what you are doing and cannot tell you what options to apply for!



# Other support options

## Capital Grants

Providing 3-year agreements offering capital items to achieve specific environmental benefits in 4 groups:

- boundaries, trees and orchards
- water quality
- air quality
- natural flood management

Other Grants you can apply for now:

- Protection and Infrastructure grants
- Woodland Management Plan (WMP) grants
- Woodland Tree Health (WTH) grants
- Implementation Plan (PA1) and Feasibility Study (PA2) grants

**Countryside Stewardship Higher-Tier currently open to invited farms ONLY**

# Capital grants- will open July 2026 full details to be announced

- Different grants available
  - You do not need to be in a CS/SFI to get them
  - Land parcels with unfinished previous works are not eligible
  - Budget is £225m but its first come first served
- Funding limit on 4 areas
- Air quality £25,000
  - Boundaries, trees and orchards £35,000
  - Natural flood management £25,000
  - Water quality £25,000

The payments help fund the work they may not pay all of the costs for the work

# Capital-Boundaries, Trees and Orchards (agroforestry)

- £35000 funding limit
- CSF support not needed
  
- Plant an agroforestry tree £5.40 (+guard £3.95 up to £132.16)
- Plant a hedge £22.97 per m
- Sheep netting-£7.47/m
- Rabbit supplement-£5.65
- Hedge laying £13.52 per m (coppicing £5.33/m)



# Improvements and Assessments

- Educational access £363 per visit  
Up to 30 visits

(you must have a separate agri-environment (SFI or Mid tier) or woodland agreement with management actions or options)

- Assess woodland condition £13.63 for first 30ha then £4.09/ha



# Capital-Water quality

- £25000 limit some options need CSF support \*
- Above ground water tank £73.34/m<sup>3</sup>\*
- Sheep netting £7.47/m
- Livestock troughs £152.92 plus £3.31 per m pipework
- Hardcore tracks £44.63/m\*
- Roofing £72.50 /m<sup>2</sup>\*

# Capital -Air Quality items

- £25000 limit Need Catchment Sensitive farming support
- Automatic slurry scraper £2760 per channel
- Supply and plant tree plus guards around buildings(£1.72 plus £2.43)

# Next steps

- As with SFI, access via RPA portal
- Decide what you want to do and where before you start.
- You have 3 years to do the work
- Prioritise actions which make farming easier-(fences, water troughs) and improve your environment (trees, hedges, slurry facilities)
- Supporting evidence (maps and also evidence of funds if applications are £50000+) is needed at application.

# Fipl Examples - Nature

- Tree planting – shelterbelts, cactus guards, (CS options at CS rates – includes infrastructure)
- Habitat creation or restoration – ponds, scrapes, meadow restoration (e.g. green hay, plugs)
- Grazing infrastructure to help biodiversity – drag troughs, electric or paddock fencing
- Species protection - Ground nesting birds



# Farming Equipment and Technology Grants

Competitive applications – now open

Closes at midday on **12 May 2026**

- Minimum of £1,000 and up to £25,000 each from 3 pools;
- **Productivity**
  - Arable, forestry, horticulture, livestock, water resource and energy management
- **Manage slurry**
- **Animal health and welfare**
  - Cattle, sheep, pigs, poultry



# Equipment

- Must be new – keep receipts and serial numbers
- Can not be bought using PX, on HP, already owned.
- Cannot be an insurance replacement
- Expected to be on farm for at least 5 years
- Grant will pay 40-50% of either an average price or the actual invoiced price



# Improve Productivity

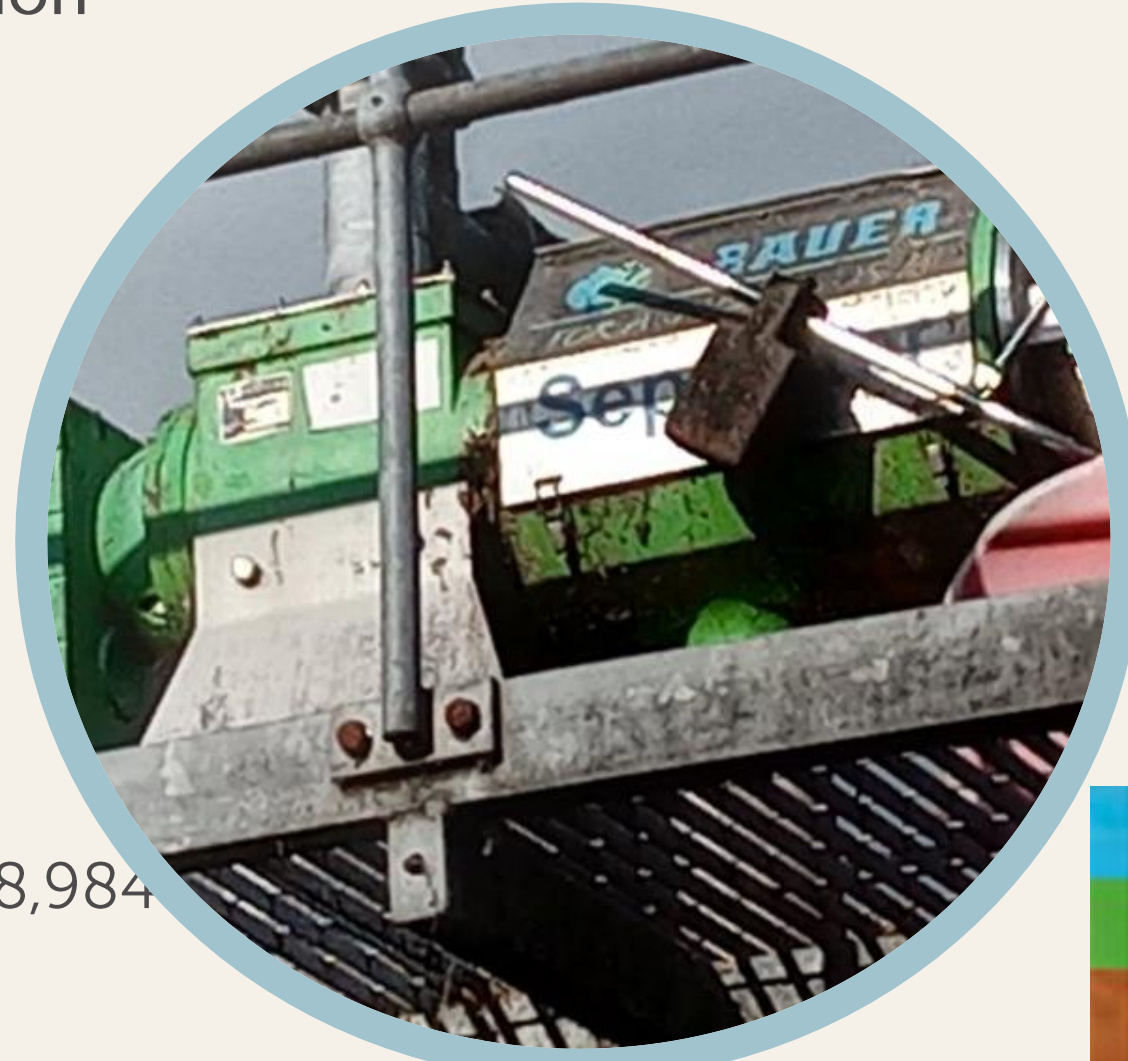
- Rainwater harvesting (minimum 5000ltr) – up to £634
- Rainwater harvesting minimum 50000L – up to £3517
- Intra row weeders 1.8m up to £25000
- Solar powered water pump- up to £2000
- Robotic drill and hoe- up to £25000
- Digital weather station - up to £721
- Remote soil moisture sensing- up to £318



# Slurry Equipment

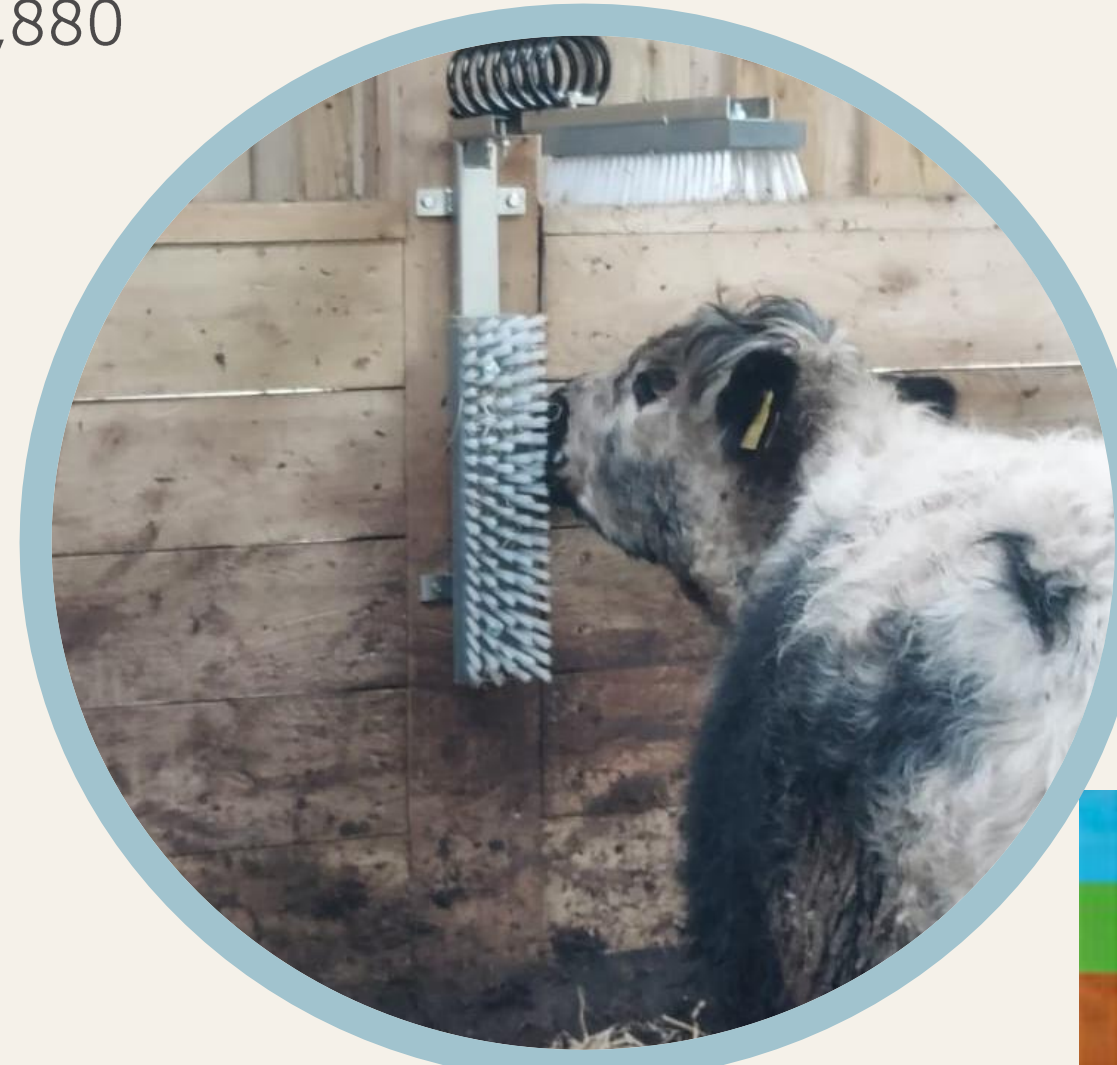
Collection, storage, testing and application

- Slurry separator up to £9,516
- Dribble bar
  - more than 6m up to £5,250
  - more than 10m up to £38,000
- Shallow injection systems
  - minimum working width 3m
    - up to £8,250
  - minimum working width 6m
    - up to £8,984
- Umbilical hose reeler - up to £5,067
- Shallow injector minimum 6m - up to £8,984



# Animal health and welfare

- Mobile sheep handling system - up to £4,880
- Electronic weigh crate - up to £1,270
- Weigh bars for cattle - up to £465
- Water bowser and trough - up to £1,694
- Mobile Field shelter for poultry - up to £1,198
- Mobile cattle handling system - up to £8,337
- Rotating cow brush - up to £877
- Static cow brush - up to £46



# Questions

