Secure your entitlements for 2013

Complete your Basic Payment form now

James McDonnell
Finance Specialist, Teagasc Rural Economy Development Programme.

Table 1 below shows how important direct payments were to the farming community in 2016. The figures for 2017 will not be much different.

The agricultural sector is enduring a tough period, with market volatility, global politics and weather having a significant impact on farmgate prices. Therefore, it is more important than ever to ensure that you are making the best use of the monetary supports available. In this article, I will discuss the completion of the 2018 Basic Payment application form.

The 2018 Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) application system opened in early February. The information packs were posted recently, which is about a month earlier than last year. It would be prudent to make a phone call to your adviser (Teagasc or other) to discuss the completion of the 2018 Basic Payment application form.

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The 2018 application is an application that must be made if you wish to participate in other schemes, for example GLAS, TAMS or organics, etc. The BPS application process includes:

- Basic Payment Scheme.
- Greening Payment.
- Continuation of the Young Farmer Scheme if you were an applicant in 2015, 2016 or 2017.
- Aid for Protein Crops (Peas, Beans, Lupins).
- Areas of Natural Constraint Scheme.

Making changes to the herd/crop/flock identifier

Every year, a significant number of farmers make changes to the herd/crop/flock number for one reason or another. For example a herd number (identifier) in a single name was joined by a child to avail of the National Reserve and/or the Young Farmer Scheme. Registered farm partnerships and farming companies are other examples.

If you are planning to make changes to the herd identifier number, it must be completed in good time to allow the Regional Veterinary Office (RVO) to process the application.

Making changes to the identifier can result in late, or slow, processing of the BPS application as there are extra steps required.

- If a change must be made, it should be completed immediately to allow the RVO adequate processing time.
- The date the application is received becomes the date of change. When making a change to the identifier, include a copy of the application and a stamped addressed envelope and request the copy be returned stamped received. This should be given to your adviser to upload with the BPS applications.

If no correspondence is received by you from the RVO by the time of your BPS appointment, you must inform your adviser of this fact, as a new blank online BPS application must be completed instead of the pre-populated one.

The partnership registration office will not accept applications between 31 March and 1 June this year. This is to help make the BPS application process more efficient.

If you are planning to make changes to your farm, be sure to consult with your Teagasc adviser early so that all the relevant application forms and tasks can be lined up and completed timely.

National Reserve (NR)

This year, the National Reserve opened for applications in early February. The funding available this year is less than last year’s, but fewer applications are expected.

A 50ha limit was applied in 2017. The rules are similar to last year. Successful applicants will expect to receive entitlements worth just over €180. On top of this, all of the applicants were paid Greening, which was worth a further 44% (€77). Some of these applicants also qualified for the Young Farmer Scheme (–€50).

The National Reserve scheme has two mandatory categories:

- Young Farmers
- New Entrants

The full terms and conditions are available to download from your Agfood online account. Applications can be submitted through this online service also.

The Young Farmer Scheme

This scheme delivers a top-up to young farmers who have recently taken up farming. To be eligible, you must have started in the last five years and you must be 40 or younger in 2018. Once you qualify, you can avail of the payment for up to five years.

The date your name appeared on the herd number is the year you started. If you start farming in 2018, you are guaranteed to get at least two payments. The final payment depends upon what happens in the next CAP negotiations.

The payment is payable on a maximum of 50 entitlements. The payment is worth about €50 (per hectare). The terms and conditions are similar to last year. Applications can be completed on the Agfood online web service. The funding for this scheme is similar every year during the current CAP agreement.

Applicants who were successful in previous years must reapply for the next payment on the online BPS application form as part of the BPS application. New applicants will have to complete a separate online YFS application.

Getting help with the form

If you intend getting help in completing your application form for the BPS or any of the other CAP schemes, it is important that you make an appointment with your adviser immediately. Before you visit your adviser, review all the documentation you have received from the Department (DAFM). If you plan significant changes to the 2018 application, state that you may require a longer appointment than usual, so that it can be completed in one visit.

The more complex cases may also involve your solicitor, accountant or valuer and potentially some or all of the following transactions:

- Completing a VAT return.
- Completing a Capital Gains Tax return.
- Transferring entitlements using the transfer application.
- Updating your will.
- Correcting an obvious error (minor clerical error).
- Adding or deleting a parcel.
- Change of use of a parcel.
- All amendment forms will be acknowledged in writing.
- Ticking/un-ticking the ANC box (where applicable).

Table 1: Value of Direct Payments and contribution to income in 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Direct payments</th>
<th>Contribution to income (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dairy</td>
<td>€19,735</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle Rearing</td>
<td>€14,400</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle other</td>
<td>€16,209</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>€17,946</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilage</td>
<td>€26,331</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>€17,804</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Payments are average/term. Source: Teagasc National Farm Survey.