

# Press release: Environment Agency announces support for farmers during dry weather

Following the driest June since 1925 and a dry July, farmers have reported water supply concerns which could affect the irrigation of crops and welfare of livestock. Ahead of the National Farmers Union's drought summit today (Wednesday 1 August), the Environment Agency issued guidance to farmers detailing options to flex abstraction licences in serious cases.

The arrangements will allow farmers to trade water allowances – as set out in their abstraction licence – on a short-term basis, without the need to change their licence. The EA will fast-track the process to enable farmers to act quickly and arrangements will be agreed locally where the EA is satisfied that there will not be any adverse effects on the environment or the rights of other lawful water users. The EA also monitors river flow and will maximise access to water when it is available, such as following heavy rain.

In severe cases where there is a real or imminent threat to crops and livestock, the EA may temporarily allow additional, emergency abstraction. Each case will be assessed to minimise impacts to the environment or the rights of other water users.

Paul Hickey, head of water resources, Environment Agency said:

We know that farmers are facing considerable pressures in responding to drought conditions and we want to support them by allowing them to flex their abstraction licences in the most serious cases to safeguard food production and animal welfare.

We must also balance farmers' needs with those of wildlife and other water users so we will only allow these arrangements where we are satisfied there won't be any adverse effects on the environment.

As the hot, dry weather is set to continue we urge everyone to use water wisely to protect the environment and help prevent the need for water restrictions.

The Environment Agency will continue to carry out compliance checks on abstraction licences to ensure that abstractors keep to their licences and any agreed flexible arrangements.

The temporary arrangements do not apply to water companies as they are able to use a variety of drought measures defined in law to manage droughts and public water supply. The Environment Agency works closely with water companies to ensure they are following drought plans and implementing actions

to conserve water in a timely way.

## **Notes to Editors**

It is up to abstractors to ensure that they use water wisely, efficiently and have sufficient water for their needs.

Any flexible arrangements will be one-off, limited to this event. If any abstraction outside a licence is likely to need to re-occur, licence holders must apply to vary the licence at the earliest opportunity.

It is important that water abstraction licence holders check their licence details – licence holders can now view and [manage water abstraction licences online](#)

The Environment Agency can review hands off flow conditions more frequently to allow abstractors to take advantage of any peak flows when significant rainfall occurs.

Use of water company headroom by other abstractors where this is sustainable. Southern and Anglian Water have said that in principle this can be provided and we are awaiting details from the companies on their proposals.

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# [Press release: Yorkshire leading the way for manufacturing exports outside of London](#)

Just in time for Yorkshire Day, the government is today (1 August 2018) revealing that it's Yorkshire which is the top exporter of manufacturing goods outside of London.

Official figures show that for every 10,000 residents in Yorkshire in 2017, there were 22 exporting companies – more per person than anywhere else in the Northern Powerhouse as well as more than Scotland and Wales. Between 2016 and 2017, exports from Yorkshire also surged by 14% – the strongest growth from across the Northern Powerhouse.

One explanation for the table-topping export figures is Yorkshire's strong and enduring industrial base. Almost 10% of the region's workforce is employed in manufacturing.

From Siemens UK investing up to [£200 million in a state-of-the-art train factory in Goole](#) to Sirius Minerals announcing a [revolutionary mineral transport system](#) in Wilton creating billions of pounds in exports, Yorkshire continues to build on its reputation as the beating industrial heart of the North.

The region also boasts the highest proportion of exports going to Sub-Saharan Africa as well as above UK average exports going to Latin America and the Caribbean.

Yorkshire's high export figures can be attributed to the wide variety of goods and products the region produces in a diverse number of industries – from advanced manufacturing to traditional farming – exports of food and animals were valued at nearly £1 billion in 2017, and exports from this sector grew by 11.6% between Q1 2017 and Q1 2018.

The county is also home to the headquarters of Tata Steel, Northern Foods, Northern Monk Brewery Co, a world-renowned farming industry and some of the most iconic household brands like Fox's biscuits and Cravendale milk.

Northern Powerhouse Minister, Jake Berry MP, said:

This Yorkshire Day, let's recognise the tremendous achievements of the entrepreneurs, business owners, manufacturers and innovators who are leading the charge of the Northern Powerhouse with an export-driven economy at its heart.

Yorkshire has a rapidly growing network of businesses who are part of our Northern Powerhouse partners programme. These latest figures show what can be achieved when government and business work

together and I encourage local companies of all sizes to join our coalition of private and public sector partners taking the Northern Powerhouse forward.

Minister for Investment, Graham Stuart, said:

Today, more and more local Yorkshire companies are seizing the enormous global opportunities which exist across the world, with consumers admiring the creativity, quality and ingenuity of Yorkshire made goods.

For those who are considering exporting, help is instantly accessible from the Department for International Trade, with online tools available at [great.gov.uk](http://great.gov.uk). From sporting success to growing exports, Yorkshire has an enormous amount to offer and as a Yorkshire MP I take great pride in the success of local businesses exporting goods and services from the Northern Powerhouse across the globe.

Exporting businesses across the region are also backed by the government's Local Enterprise Partnerships with 3 rounds of Growth Deal funding totalling £145.9 million going towards projects which kick-start growth and promote job creation.

Northern Powerhouse Minister Jake Berry visiting the Wilton site of Sirius Minerals in June as they started work on a revolutionary mineral transport system which will create over 4,000 jobs and deliver billions of pounds in exports for the Northern Powerhouse

Based on publically available [HMRC data](#) for Yorkshire and the Humber which covers most (but not all) of the historic county of Yorkshire, and parts of Lincolnshire.

The Northern Powerhouse is government's vision for a super-connected, globally-competitive northern economy with a flourishing private sector, a highly-skilled population, and world-renowned civic and business leadership.

The Northern Powerhouse Partner Programme is an essential part of creating the Northern Powerhouse. Government is looking to build a network of partners who all believe strongly in the economic potential of the North, and support the need for a combined effort by government and business to realise that potential. There are currently over 145 businesses and organisations signed up to the partner programme.

Prospective partners can email [NorthernPowerhouse@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:NorthernPowerhouse@communities.gsi.gov.uk) for more information about the Partners Programme and how to apply.

Businesses in Yorkshire and the Humber who have announced their partnership with government on the Northern Powerhouse include:

- University of Sheffield
- Walker Morris LLP
- York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP
- Yorkshire Building Society Group
- Zikodrive
- aql
- AA Recruiting
- CMS
- Creating Inclusive Cultures
- Drax Power Ltd.
- Ernst & Young
- Lambert Smith Hampton
- Leeds Bradford Airport
- Leeds City Region LEP
- Make It York – (DCLG/GCS Local)
- Medilink – Matt, BPT
- Mills & Reeve LLP
- North Invest – Jacquelyn Goddard
- Rugby Football League
- Sheffield City Region LEP
- Sheffield Hallam University

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## **[News story: Game-changing technologies for aerospace: apply for funding](#)**

[The Aerospace Technology Institute \(ATI\)](#), [Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#) and Innovate UK are inviting organisations to come forward with game-changing ideas in civil aerospace.

This is done through the [UK Aerospace Research and Technology Programme](#), a £3.9 billion joint government and industry investment in projects that will make the UK more competitive in civil aerospace.

There is around £150 million available each year to support the best ideas. This is one of a series of regular calls for projects.

Businesses and researchers can put forward expressions of interest to carry out innovative projects. The best ideas will be invited to apply for funding.

### **Ideas must deliver UK aerospace strategy**

We are looking for projects that help the UK to meet its technology strategy for aerospace.

Priority areas include:

- strengthening the UK's whole-aircraft design and system integration capability for future generations of civil aircraft
- developing smart, connected and more electric aircraft
- ensuring the UK is a global leader in large complex structures, particularly wings
- advancing more efficient propulsion technologies, particularly large turbofans

## Competition information

- the competition opens for expressions of interest on 6 August 2018, and the deadline is midday on 22 August 2018
- successful applicants will be invited to make a full funding application. The approval process typically takes at least 6 months
- organisations can work alone or in partnership with other businesses and researchers
- project costs and duration should be in proportion to the objectives
- businesses could attract up to 70% of their project costs
- you will need to sign up to the [ATI framework agreement](#) to be eligible to apply

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## [Press release: 100% of UK employers publish gender pay gap data](#)

For the first time ever 100% of UK employers identified as being in scope of gender pay gap regulations have published their data.

The UK is one of the few countries in the world to require employers to publish such comprehensive gender pay gap data.

Under new regulations that came into force in April 2017, all employers with over 250 employees are required to report their gender pay gap data. All 10,000 UK employers that the Government has identified as having over 250 workers have now published their data.

[The data](#) has shown that more than three out of four in scope UK companies pay their male staff more on average than their female staff, more than half give higher bonuses to men, on average, than women, and over 80% have more women in their lowest paid positions than in their highest paid positions.

The Government Equalities Office has also published today [Wednesday 1 August] a [new 'What Works' guidance](#) for companies to help them improve the recruitment and progression of women and close their gender pay gap.

Minister for Women and Equalities, Penny Mordaunt, said:

It is appalling that in the twenty-first century there is still a big difference between the average earnings of men and women.

While I am encouraged that over 10,000 employers have published their data, these figures set out in real terms for the first time some of the challenges and the scale of this issue.

We need to take action to ensure businesses know how they can make use of their best talent and make their gender pay gaps a thing of the past.

Sheila Flavell, Chief Operating Officer, FDM Group, a global professional services provider with a focus on IT, said:

At FDM diversity and equality have always been our core values and we are proud once again to report a zero per cent gender pay gap for the second year in a row.

Achieving this required a huge effort at all levels of the organisation, including major initiatives such as our women returners and graduate recruitment programmes which help women train and enter the world of technology. We also had honest conversations about senior pay, job roles and increased opportunities for introduced flexible working initiatives to ensure strong representation of women at the top of the company.

Fiona Dawson, Global President of Mars Food, said:

Delighted to see the launch of the Government Equalities Office, 'What Works' guidance and to see that the evidence based recommendations within it echo so many of those made by the Women's Business Council particularly in relation to the importance of flexible, agile and dynamic working.

The gender pay gap regulations and first year of reporting has focused the attention of the businesses community and its leaders on understanding the causes behind their organisations, and sector's, gender gaps and the importance of putting into place practical solutions and actions to tackle their causes. Supportive guidance such as this document and best practice case studies of what has worked are vital for organisations to now take the next step in ensuring their staff have the same access to opportunity regardless of their gender.

Equality and Human Rights Commission Chief Executive, Rebecca Hilsenrath, said:

Building on the work by the Government Equalities Office, our enforcement approach has proved to be successful, resulting in full compliance by all those considered to be in scope.

We have been clear that it is not only the right thing to do but that we would use all our enforcement powers where employers failed to report. They have taken our warnings seriously and avoided costly court action. We will now be turning our attention to the accuracy of reporting.

The [‘What Works’ advice](#) to employers published by the Government Equalities Office today includes recommendations to:

- Assess candidates based on actual tasks they would be expected to perform in their role, and make interviews more structured to avoid unfair bias creeping in.
- Encourage salary negotiation by showing salary ranges, as women are currently less likely to negotiate their pay than men.
- Introduce transparency to pay, promotion and reward processes.

#### NOTES TO EDITORS:

- The ‘What Works’ guidance was produced in partnership with the Behavioural Insights Team.
- The guidance, including details of all of the research evidence, has been published on the gender pay gap website, <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/>
- For more information please contact the GEO press office on 0207 023 0600.
- Sheila Flavell, Chief Operating Officer, FDM Group, also said:

The gender pay gap reporting process has been an incredibly positive initiative for UK companies, elevating a vital issue to the top of the boardroom agenda and forcing business leaders to face up to the extent of the problem.

Whilst in some cases the reporting has shown major pay discrepancies in companies, it’s important to recognise that tackling this issue is no easy task. These businesses should be judged on the plans and promises they put in place to reduce the gap, and the willingness shown to make change happen.

- Fiona Dawson, Global President of Mars Food, also said:

Last year Mars partnered with the Women’s Business Council to create ‘The Pipeline Effect’, a toolkit enabling gender parity beyond middle management where the gender gaps within most sectors dramatically increase.

In the toolkit we've identified three primary obstacles to women's mid-career progression. The visibility of relatable role-models, the need for supportive line management and most importantly the access to flexible, dynamic and agile working patterns.

In Mars we've embraced this by rolling out multi-level sponsorship and mentoring programmes to support more women into senior leadership positions.

This is supported by our in depth line manager training which ensures our family friendly policies including parental leave and flexible working are applied consistently across the business and ensures all employees hold authentic conversations with their managers allowing our male and female associates to enjoy balanced lives with thriving families and careers.