

# farmers guardian

AGRICULTURE'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER



## GRASS & FORAGE

Advice on first cut, forage, baling and tedding p33-45

## ES INVESTMENT AND EFFICIENCY p19-26

# cks on livestock rise ers 'failed' by police



n investigation has revealed reported dog attacks on sheep have risen from 691 in 2011 to 739 in 2012. PICTURE: Janet Ardley

e total cost to  
nains about  
U Mutual.  
"The figures  
think we are  
surface.

caused a wide range of prob-  
lems, both emotionally and  
financially.

"This year when there have  
been so many losses from  
Schmallenberg, liver fluke, and  
the weather, on top of feed  
shortages, farmers are not in the  
right frame of mind to deal with  
another added pressure," said  
Mr Stocker.

"It also means some ewes are  
not in the condition they should  
be and will be less robust, mak-  
ing them an easier target for  
dogs."

Scottish Land and Estates  
policy officer, Annie Gray,

agreed many areas were still in  
'recovery mode' and could not  
sustain any more deaths.

Farming and rural organisa-  
tions said they were shocked by  
the latest figures, with the Farm-  
ers Union of Wales calling them  
'extremely concerning'.

The RSPCA said officers were  
often called out to 'pick up the  
pieces' and rescue sheep which  
had been chased into 'precarious  
situations'.

Vet John Whitwell, who  
has attended a number of inci-  
dents in the last few years, said  
dog owners had to be more  
responsible.

He said: "Sheep worrying is  
a big problem in villages where  
people are moving into the  
country with their Hunter  
wellies and their two Labradors  
and they think they can do what  
they want."

K9 Magazine editor-in-chief  
Ryan O'Meara said the increase  
in attacks was 'further evidence  
of a small proportion of dog  
owners failing to take responsi-  
bility for the public behaviour of  
their pets'.

**i MORE ON THIS STORY**  
For full stats and farmers'  
rights, see pages 10 and 11.

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**WILLIAM & ANDREW  
COWX, CUMBRIA**  
"It is going to be a  
very expensive  
spring with all  
the extra feed  
the ewes are  
getting"

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# NEWS

## New Farmers Weather launch from Farmers C

▶▶ Video forecast online every day

▶▶ Service aims to help producers plan ahead

*FARMERS Guardian* is launching a new daily weather service specifically for farmers this week.

Farmers Weather will see a new, in-depth video forecast launched online at lunchtime every day at [www.farmersguardian.com](http://www.farmersguardian.com), [www.arablefarming.com](http://www.arablefarming.com) and [www.farmersweather.co.uk](http://www.farmersweather.co.uk).

The new service will be a detailed look at the UK's weather forecast, explained *Farmers Guardian* editor Emma Penny.

She said: "We know many farmers watch Sunday night's

*Countryfile* forecast to see the week ahead. Our new service will be aiming to provide that level of detail, and more, every day, to help farmers better plan ahead.

"By launching the new forecast at lunchtime every day, we are using the very latest computer meteorological model information - this will be the most up-to-date farmers weather forecast available. It will cover tomorrow's forecast, up to the next seven to 10 days and will look in-depth at what is happening."

### Presenter

Farmers Weather is being presented by Dr Simon Keeling, who said he is a 'self-confessed weather anorak'. He is a Fellow of the Royal Meteorological Society, has completed a PhD in forecasting and presented the weather on *GMTV*. Dr Keeling now broadcasts and trains weather people for the BBC and other television stations, as well as specialising in providing accurate, in-depth weather forecasts for many industries.

Dr Keeling said: "For too long farmers have had to rely on forecasts which are not attuned to their needs. We are aiming to provide an interpretation of what



Dr Simon Keeling is to present the new Farmers Weather

is happening with weather patterns so producers can plan work more accurately."

Farmers Weather relies on information from more than 20 worldwide meteorological computer models which becomes available by 11am every morning, said Dr Keeling.

"We use a vast amount of information from the world's leading meteorological computer models. A crucial thing is we are interpreting what the output means for farmers."

The aim is for the forecasts to be online at lunchtime every day, seven days a week.

## Feed supplies dwindle as weather impact takes hold

FARMING unions are continuing their push to get help to the most weather-beaten businesses amid dwindling fodder supplies.

Farmers in Northern Ireland and Scotland are the worst hit, with the Ulster Farmers' Union (UFU) reporting a number of feed supplies have 'completely run out'.

UFU president Harry Sinclair said: "We are now in a position where farmers are turning to meal and straw to feed their livestock and this is far more expensive, putting the cost of production through the roof. This is the last thing farmers need when the cost of production is already outstripping the price paid at the farm gate."

It comes as NFU Scotland reiterated its call to the Scottish Government for assistance to

mitigate the worst effects of this year's prolonged and extreme winter weather.

The union is updating and reissuing its weather survey of 2012 to reinforce the body of evidence it accumulated at the back end of last year, so it can work out how best to provide assistance to members who are struggling.

### Targeted support

NFUS president Nigel Miller said: "While challenges surround both available funding and EU rules on extraordinary payments, we think there is scope to provide targeted support."

"However, the chronic and cumulative impacts of the weather on all sectors - arable and livestock - must not be ignored or forgotten."

The Welsh Government also announced it would extend the on-farm burial derogation for a further and final week.

It means with the right permissions in place, some farmers in areas badly affected by the weather will be able to bury carcasses on their own land up until midnight on Tuesday (April 30).

Farming charity the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution welcomed steps by Barclays bank to offer a support package to those businesses which have been crippled in the last few months.

Environment Secretary Owen Paterson is expected to meet with farm chiefs next week to discuss the weather's impact on farms. Last week Defra made £250,000 available to reimburse farmers for the cost of removing sheep killed in the snow.

## Brian M to boost

ROCK star and anti-badger campaigner Brian M is launching a new single to help his campaign to stop pilot badger culls.

The former Queen's singer has mixed 10-year-old songs and cartoon music with Queen's 'Save Me a Place' to produce a 'save the badger' message for the masses. The anti-badger cull last weekend, in Scotland, was intended to add a new single by actor Brian Blessed to the mix.

He said farmers were being taken down the 'wrong path' in the cull which was 'not sustainable'.

200,000

The amount of signatures on the petition opposing the cull has received.



# It's h