



# oakbank

CREATING THE PERFECT HABITAT

## OAKBANK E-NEWS SEPTEMBER 2024



# STEWARDSHIP REMINDERS

## CSS OPTIONS SEPTEMBER

### HEDGEROW MANAGEMENT (BE3)

you can now cut your hedges until 28th February, but only a third of the length in this option. If you have gone for the two-year cutting regime then you cannot cut until 1st January

## **NECTAR FLOWER MIX (AB1)**

can be grazed from the 1st September and the entire area should be cut between 15th September and 30th March, removing or shredding cuttings

## **CULTIVATED AREAS FOR ARABLE PLANTS (AB11)**

can be cultivated from 1st September

## **AUTUMN SOWN BUMBLEBIRD MIX (AB16)**

should be sown by 15th September

## **WOODLAND EDGES ON ARABLE LAND (WD3)**

can be cut to maintain scrub and grass mosaic and to control injurious weeds (no more than one-third cut in any one year)

## **SFI UPDATE**

If you have an existing agreement for the SFI 2023 offer which contains a base action (AHL2, LIG1 or LIG2), you'll be able to apply for eligible supplemental actions in a separate agreement for the expanded SFI offer. The biggest win here is for people who have winter bird food (AHL2) in their SFI2023 agreement, as you can now claim the supplementary feeding action, AHW2, on the whole area.



# COVER AND COMPANION CROPS

If you haven't managed to get round to planting your over-winter cover crops, it is not too late. It would be worth considering increasing the seed rate as the total biomass will reduce the later drilling gets.

Remember to treat your cover crop as a cash crop to maximise its full potential. Slugs were a massive issue last year so do set traps and monitor, applying protection where needed.

We have seed mixes available and if you are considering growing cover crops in SFI2024, then trialling a small area is always worthwhile.

Cover crops can be so beneficial ahead of a spring crop, keeping the soil friable, conditioning it, storing soil nutrients, helping with drainage and drought.

Removal/destruction of biomass in the spring is often a concern of growers, so please talk to us to discuss species choice to help deal with this concern.

For more information and seed quotes, please contact the team at the office on 01480 890686.

## TREES & WOODLAND

### HEDGING & TREES

If you are planning on planting any new hedges or gapping up existing hedgerows, or planting new woodlands this winter, please get your planting stock ordered asap. We use three outstanding nurseries for all of our planting stock and their order books are already filling up.

### DEFINITIONS OF TREES AND WOODLAND MADE CLEARER

The Forestry Commission has published new guidance on how to [interpret the terms 'trees' and 'woodland'](#) for the purposes of felling licences and forestry environmental impact assessments.

### HEALTH & SAFETY IN FORESTRY AND WOODLAND WORK

Forestry and agriculture are among the most high-risk industries in the UK. Gavin Scarr-Hall, director of health & safety at Peninsula offers advice in Farmers Guardian – see the article [Here](#). Planning, managing, and coordinating forest operations is complex because the risk profile is rarely simple and straightforward. Do not hesitate to contact us if you need assistance in managing this essential role on your land holding.

## MYSTERIOUS MISTLETOE

European mistletoe (*Viscum album*) is a parasitic plant which grows in green clumps on various trees across the UK. While mistletoe can harm the trees it grows on, it can benefit a number of bird species in the winter.

Mistletoe's abundance is thought to be changing. Please help research by submitting your own sightings, pictures and observations of mistletoe using a new app developed by the University of Oxford and the Tree Council: [MistleGO!](#)

## NEW STARTER



In August we welcomed Louise Webster to the Oakbank team for her placement year from Harper Adams University. Louise is from farming stock in the Borders and is studying Environmental Land Management. She joins the Stewardship team to assist with all aspects of CS, SFI, mapping and seeds. Speaking to you, our customers, will be an invaluable education and will hopefully make her year with us interesting and enjoyable!

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