

Family Farm Options

Family Farm Options is funded under Axis 1 of the Rural Development Programme.

It aims to encourage farmers and farm family members to consider options, for both themselves and their farm, and provide the necessary training and support to secure the viability of their farm business and their own financial well-being.

There are two elements:

Farm Family Options – This will assist farmers and farm family members with analysing their current position and identifying their options for the future.

Skills Training – This, although not part of the Rural Development Programme, will run in conjunction with the Farm Family Options element. It will provide farm family members with guidance on training opportunities and financial assistance to develop new, work-related skills.

Applicants to the programme will meet with a mentor to discuss what assistance is available.

After identification of their initial needs, applicants will be directed to:

- Farm Family Options;
- Skills Training;
- Alternative scheme/programme supported by the Rural Development Programme; or
- Signposted to other services.

Who can apply?



Both the Farm Family Options and the Skills Training Schemes are open to farmers and farm families of agricultural and horticultural businesses and who have a Business Identification Number (Business ID).

What funding is available?



Under the Farm Family Options Scheme financial assistance is available towards the cost of legal and financial advice, if required as part of the options appraisal process.

The Skills Training element focuses on courses which could provide farm family members with the necessary training and support to develop work-related skills and generate additional income. Courses such as LGV driving, Health and Safety, forklift training, excavator training and computers may be considered. Equally, modules in childcare, eldercare and counselling would be considered, as would essential skills training. This may be the preferred route prior to progressing to more specific job training.

Hobby-type courses, e.g. art classes, flower arranging and digital photography, as well as courses at NVQ levels four and five will not be supported.