

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO
THE ENGLAND RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (CLOSURE OF
PROJECT BASED SCHEMES) REGULATIONS 2006**

2006 No: [2298]

1. This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and is laid before Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

This memorandum contains information for the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments.

2. **Description**

2.1 These Regulations close four rural development grant schemes under the England Rural Development Programme (ERDP) to new applications. The schemes are known as the Project Based Schemes (these schemes comprise the Rural Enterprise Scheme, the Vocational Training Scheme, the Processing and Marketing Grant and the Energy Crops Scheme).

3. **Matters of special interest to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments**

3.1 None.

4. **Legislative Background**

4.1 These Regulations have an effect on the provisions within the following Regulations:

Energy Crops Regulations 2000 (S.I.2000/3042);
Rural Enterprise Regulations 2000 (S.I. 2000/3043);
Vocational Training Grants (Agriculture and Forestry) Regulations 2000 (S.I. 2000/3045);
Agricultural Processing and Marketing Grants regulations 2000 (S.I. 2000/3046);

which form part of the ERDP, which implements Council Regulation (EC) No. 1257/1999 on support for rural development from the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund and was approved by Commission Decision No. C (2000) 3003 of 11 October 2000. In particular the schemes implement chapters I, III, VII and IX of Council Regulation 1257/1999.

5. Extent

5.1 This instrument applies to England.

6. European Convention on Human Rights

6.1 As the instrument is subject to negative resolution procedure and does not amend primary legislation, no statement is required.

7. Policy Background

7.1 These Regulations provide that the Secretary of State shall not consider any applications received on or after the 1st October 2006 under four development grant schemes which form part of the ERDP.

7.2 The ERDP closes at the end of 2006. A new Rural Development Programme for England for the period 2007 –13 is currently being developed. The socio-economic elements of the new programme will be delivered by the Regional Development Agencies and will be operational in 2007. This will meet Defra's commitments in the Rural Strategy 2004 to work with regional and local partners to simplify funding for rural areas, by bringing together the range of domestic and European funding streams within each region.

7.3 The schemes closed administratively to new applications on 30th June 2006 (Rural Enterprise Scheme, Vocational Training Scheme, Processing and Marketing Grant and the Producer Group element of the Energy Crops Scheme) and 31st July 2006 (Energy Crops Scheme – Establishment Grants). This closure date provided time for applications to be processed and approved before the end of September and, in the case of the Energy Crop Scheme-establishment grants, by the end of December 2006. This is so as to enable a smooth handover from 1st October from the current delivery body, the Rural Development Service (RDS) to, in the case of the first four schemes referred to above, the new delivery bodies, the Regional Development Agencies, and, in the case of the Energy Crops Scheme Establishment Grants, to the new delivery body, Natural England.

8. Impact

8.1 A Regulatory Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this instrument as it has no impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

9. Contact

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