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BASISnews

Promoting Professional Standards

Winter 2012

Professional Registers continue to grow

Membership of the BASIS Professional Register, the FACTS Annual Scheme and the PROMPT Register for professional pest controllers have all shown good growth in 2011. Indeed, the Professional Register and FACTS have both seen a steady rise over the past ten years.

Today there are 4,400 members of the Professional Register, up from 3,250 ten years ago. Following a surge in 2011, there are now 1,172 people on PROMPT. Membership of the FACTS Annual Scheme has also shown a dramatic increase rising from just over 1,600 ten years ago to over 2,500 today.

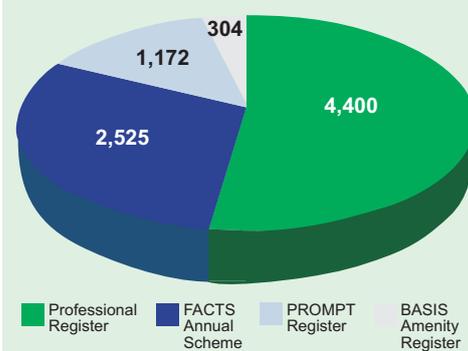
The only area which is lagging behind is the BASIS Amenity Register or BAR. This was introduced in 2010 and is open to people who are involved in decision making, contract management and the provision of professional advice in the

amenity sector. To date only a disappointing 304 people have joined.

An increasing number of agronomists are recognising the importance of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) both for career development and when face-to-face with customers.

"We are still waiting for the definitive regulations arising out of the Sustainable Use Directive," explains BASIS Managing Director Rob Simpson. "However we are hopeful that adviser certification will remain a statutory obligation. The BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection is a key industry standard recognised by assurance schemes, supermarkets, farmers, growers and the industry at large, both in the UK and overseas. It is clear that the UK is way ahead of the rest of

Membership of BASIS Registers



Europe with regard to our qualification standard and as an industry we should be proud of that achievement."

If your BASIS Professional Register membership has lapsed there are three routes to reinstatement:

- 1 Attend update training and take the exam;
- 2 Provide three years of CPD evidence and, once approved, pay the past three years' fees;
- 3 Take an advanced module which includes a viva as part of the assessment e.g. Advanced Cereals or Nutrient Management Planning.

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BASIS took a stand at AgriBusiness 2012, organised by the AIC and held on 16 November 2011. An array of speakers led by agriculture minister Jim Paice and NFU President Peter Kendall focused on sustainable intensification. Left to right: Amanda Capsey, Rob Simpson sporting his charity moustache grown to raise awareness and funds for men's health issues, Natalie Hewitt and Michele Williams. BASIS also exhibited at the HGCA's Agronomists' event on 6 December.

Why not make 2012 the year you go for your BASIS Diploma?



Anyone who has passed the BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection will find the BASIS Diploma well within their grasp. So says Jenny Lewis who runs Winchester-based, Hampshire Training Providers.

Jenny has been organising training courses for more years than she cares to mention, with the origins of Hampshire Training Providers going back to the days of the Agricultural Training Board (ATB).

Over the years she has witnessed at first hand the change in the type of people coming forward to do BASIS training.

"Today almost all the candidates taking the BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection through Hampshire Training Providers are farmers, farm workers or farm managers," she says. "And a lot of them are going on to take other BASIS courses – Soil & Water Management, BETA, FACTS, Advanced Modules and so on."

In fact last year four of Jenny's students: Simon Newberry, Peter Snell, Terry Johnson and Andrew Stilwell, achieved the BASIS Diploma and another five are almost there. With the exception of Peter Snell, who farms in Dorset and took some of his courses with the Dorset Group, the others have all completed their training through the Hampshire organisation. They have all taken a course or two every year and have often been together on the same

course getting to know each other pretty well over the years. "This has worked really well as they've given each other support and encouragement to keep going," says Jenny.

Andrew Stilwell is a good example of what can be achieved. When he started training nine years ago he was from a practical farming background. Now he is an agronomist for Bartholomews Agri Food, holds the BASIS Diploma and has recently become a BASIS examiner so he now gets to ask the questions during those nerve-racking vivas! "Whilst I found the training very challenging, it was also enjoyable and we formed a pretty strong team spirit," he says. "I now have a great job with a great company. I would encourage anybody to take the training, if I can do it so can they!"

Natural England announce 'green breakfasts'

Natural England is hosting a series of events beginning in the East and West Midlands in February and March.

Called 'Green Breakfast', these events for farm advisers will look at the year ahead for Environmental Stewardship (ELS & HLS), other farm-based grants, the Water Framework Directive (including NVZs) and Catchment Sensitive Farming.

The aim is to provide advisers with a strategic overview of the key issues to ensure that they are better informed and more able to help their farmers. Topics will include the role of ELS in 'sustainable

intensification' and the significance of ELS priority options as well as the latest on Environmental Stewardship and the Common Agricultural Policy. The events will start at 08.30 with breakfast and finish around 11.00.

Dates are currently being finalised so please keep an eye on the website at www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/farming/landmanagementadvice/events/ Scroll down to the map to click on your region.

Dates and venues will also be publicised on the BASIS website, when available.

CPD points will be awarded.

Trainers & Examiners share experiences

Last October BASIS ran a series of nine regional seminars for training providers, trainers and examiners at a range of venues from Arundel to Edinburgh. The seminars are held on a biennial basis and the 2011 events were, once again, very well attended and provided a useful forum for discussion.

"Holding these seminars allows us to discuss current courses and developments and helps to ensure consistency in training and examination standards across the country," explains BASIS Business Development Manager, Stephen Jacob. "It was also a useful opportunity to thank all involved with BASIS in what has turned out to be a record year for the number of candidates sitting our qualifications."

Over the past 12 months BASIS has examined over 1,600 candidates which is an increase of 61% over 2010. The increase in numbers can predominantly be attributed to the uptake in advanced modules such as Soil & Water Management and Nutrient Management Planning, with many candidates working towards the BASIS Diploma in Agronomy and the Harper Adams University College Graduate Diploma in Agronomy with Environmental Management.

Kevin joins agronomy elite



Kevin Pearcy (above) has joined the agronomy elite by becoming the third person to achieve the BASIS/Harper Adams University College Graduate Diploma in Agronomy with Environmental Management. An agronomist with Procram in the South Essex and Hertfordshire area, Kevin passed his BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection in 2001, followed by FACTS in 2002 and the BETA qualification in 2004 when he was a farm manager and sprayer operator. Three years ago he joined Procram going on to achieve the Advanced BASIS qualification followed by the Diploma.

Kevin is justly proud of his achievement and full of praise for his trainer James Christian-Ilett. James, he says, did a fantastic job preparing him for the viva which forms a major part of the graduate diploma assessment, along with a dissertation.

Anyone wishing to follow in Kevin's footsteps needs to get their skates on to earn the extra credits required to convert the BASIS Diploma to the Graduate Diploma. This is because after July 2012, higher education funding changes will mean no further support for candidates going for the Graduate Diploma.

PROMPT member solves wasp problem



When staff at the BASIS head office in Ashbourne were pestered by wasps last summer they quickly found the answer. Consulting the BASIS PROMPT professional pest controllers Register they called Dean Fowler. Dean who has been on the PROMPT Register for the past two years has more than 20 years experience in pest control and currently runs his own business, Advanced Environmental Services.

"At first it looked as if the problem was up in the attic where the local Ashbourne Radio is based. However after an inspection I soon located the nest, outside between a dormer window and the roof," explains Dean. "It was treatable, although not particularly easy to reach, but I'm pleased to report the treatment was successful," he adds.

FQA's reminder

FACTS Qualified Advisers (FQAs) who qualified before 1 January 2010 are reminded that to retain their FQA status after 31 December 2014, they must attend Nutrient Management Planning (NMP) CPD training and take the associated on-line assessment.

"Our records show that the majority of people affected by this requirement still need to take action," says Sue Mason from BASIS. "We are concerned that everyone seems to be leaving it to the last minute and if that happens there simply will not be enough training places available to allow people to meet the deadline. The result will be that many advisers will find themselves losing their FQA status and having to re-qualify by passing the full NMP exam.

For those who qualified after 1 January 2010 the clock is also ticking. These FQAs have five years from the date of qualifying to complete the same NMP CPD and on-line assessment. Further information is available at www.basis-reg.com

Amenity-specific NSK re-vamped

Nominated Storekeepers (NSKs) in the amenity sector now have a more tailored training syllabus and qualification, thanks largely to the efforts of BASIS trainer, Mark Mason.

For the past four years, Mark has run his own training and health & safety consultancy, but he spent much of his career at the sharp-end in landscape and amenity services for Sandwell Council in the West Midlands. About 18 months ago he got involved in BASIS training and found himself struggling to keep the attention of amenity sector delegates when they were on the NSK course.

As Mark explains: "The problem was that large sections of the agricultural syllabus were really not very relevant for the amenity guys. For example, a lot of time is spent on the requirements of the ADR Directive concerning the transport of dangerous goods. Whilst the amenity storekeepers need to know of the ADR and its basic requirements, they don't need the same depth of knowledge as the agricultural sector. This had the knock-on effect of making the exam at the end of the training very challenging for the amenity guys, with up to a third of the questions connected to the ADR."

Mark took the problem up with BASIS and suggested a revised syllabus be developed for the amenity sector. "I'm pleased to say BASIS took the idea on board and asked me to work on a separate syllabus and workbook. So now, when storekeepers want the NSK certificate, they have a choice between an amenity sector or agricultural distributor course. They can also rest assured that the exam will be relevant to their chosen sector.

Environmental Stewardship ... full steam ahead

As the current Rural Development Programme for England draws closer to its 2013 end date, it's full steam ahead to make the most of the remaining time and funding through Environmental Stewardship (ES), says Natural England. As part of the new proactive approach to Higher Level Stewardship (HLS), the organisation says it has already confirmed agents' Farm Environment Plan (FEPs) proposals for 2012/13's HLS agreements. Plans for FEPs for holdings in the 2013/14 HLS programme are due to be confirmed by March 2012. This will provide farmers and land managers with the certainty they need. An ES timetable to the end of the programme is also being published on the web at www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/farming/funding/es

HLS pipeline clinics will take place between now and early March so that holdings to be included in the 2013/14 programme can be confirmed. As part of this, holdings with Countryside Stewardship Scheme or Environmentally Sensitive Area agreements which expire in 2013, will be assessed to establish whether they are most suited to HLS or ELS. Those more suited to ELS will be eligible to receive support and advice by Natural England contractors. To receive regular updates on the ES timetable, plus other useful information from Natural England you can register as an ES Agent. Go to: www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/farming/funding/es/agents/register.aspx

CSF project extended

The government's Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) project has been extended to run until March 2014, so there is still opportunity for farmers and their advisers to make use of the local Catchment Sensitive Farming Officers and to apply for financial support through the Capital Grants Scheme to reduce diffuse water pollution.

Almost 1500 grants have been made. Grant recipients are reminded that claims must be submitted by 29 February and that the 2012/13 Grants Scheme will open for applications on 1 March.

SAY NO TO DRIFT CHLORPYRIFOS

New requirements for all 2012 applications of chlorpyrifos insecticides have been announced by a consortium of the three major approval holders of UK products; Dow AgroSciences, Makhteshim Agan and Headland Agrochemicals. The changes form part of the new 'Chlorpyrifos: Say NO to DRIFT' initiative. The new guidelines specify LERAP three star rated low drift nozzles and an extended 20 metre no-spray buffer zone next to watercourses for all chlorpyrifos applications from now on. Full details at www.saynotodrift.co.uk

STOP PRESS: The Dangerous Goods Awareness course has been relaunched with a new workbook. Contact BASIS to join the next course in Ashbourne in March.

Best BASIS candidate 2011 announced

James Mayes, a farm manager with Sentry Limited in Bedfordshire, has been crowned the 2011 best candidate in the BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection exams. He received the Barrie Orme shield from David Caffall, Chief Executive of the Agricultural Industries Confederation at a ceremony held at the Farmers Club in London. The award, which is sponsored by the Agricultural Industries Confederation, Nufarm UK Ltd and C & J Supplies, recognises technical ability and professionalism in crop protection.

2011 was a bumper year with 241 successful candidates passing the exam, compared to 186 in 2010.

Presenting the trophy, Mr Caffall reminded his audience of the origins of BASIS, which was first established as a self-regulatory organisation in the late 1970s. He highlighted the establishment of the Professional Register in 1992, which now boasts 4,400 qualified and regularly updated, members saying: "We should be extremely proud of the level of professionalism that exist in the industry today; professionalism which has been brought about through self-regulation."

James' exam marks put him in the top three candidates in the country, but this award is about more than academic achievement. He has also demonstrated that he is a good ambassador for UK agriculture, for example working with

universities and attending student careers fairs for Sentry.

"Thank goodness we have the quality of young people like James coming into the industry," added Mr Caffall.

Accepting the award James said: "Thank you for this accolade which is much appreciated. I recognise what a prestigious award it is. Going forward I think holding professional qualifications will become more and more important. On a personal level it has also given me more confidence."

James grew up on a large farming estate in Suffolk and, although not from a farming family, always wanted to be a farmer. He studied at Otley College and Writtle, before joining Sentry, as a trainee in 2004. James was quickly promoted to



David Caffall (left) presents the Barrie Orme Shield to the best BASIS candidate 2011, James Mayes.

Assistant Manager. Today, at 32, he manages 1,100 hectares in Bedfordshire. He is a great example to other young people that they can come into farming without the background or family farm connections and do well.

And the runners-up were:

- **William Corrigan**, a regional business manager with Dow AgroSciences;
- **Edward Dicken**, a lecturer at Harper Adams University College;
- **Phillipa Dodds**, an agronomist for Angus Soft Fruits;
- **Andrew Gough**, an agronomist with Agrovista;
- **Sam Patchett**, an agronomist with Masstock.

Quite a year for Debbie!

The best BASIS candidate 2011, James Mayes, was quick to thank his trainer, Debbie Wedge for all her help and guidance. Debbie runs the Chelmsford and West Essex Training Group and it is in fact, the third time in the eleven year history of the award that Debbie has been the trainer behind a Barrie Orme trophy winner.

As a freelance trainer she also has a hand in training two of the 2011 runners-up – William Corrigan (via the Vale Training Group) and Sam Patchett (working for Landbased Training) so 2011 was quite a year for Debbie!

BASIS, PepsiCo & potato storage

What do these three organisations/activities have in common? The answer is simple. BASIS and PepsiCo, who owns Walkers Crisps, both want high quality potato storage and that means professional qualified potato store managers. In addition, under the Sustainable Use Directive there is likely to be a requirement for potato store managers to hold a Certificate of Competence. Aware of this, BASIS, in conjunction with the Potato Council, developed potato storage training leading to the BASIS Certificate in Crop Protection (Stored Potatoes), aided by leading independent trainer James Christian-Ilett.

It soon became apparent that more than one qualified trainer would be needed. John Horrocks, Agricultural Development Manager Europe, for PepsiCo International has worked for Walkers and now PepsiCo for 37 years and for the past 15 years his role has included training. With a large contracted crop in the UK and continental Europe, particularly Eastern Europe, PepsiCo is keen to ensure all its suppliers have fully competent store managers so John now delivers the BASIS stored potato training for PepsiCo suppliers. In addition he will also be running courses for other UK potato store managers – email: trbjohn@gmail.com for details.

As John explains: "The relationship is a win-win. BASIS gets additional training places for candidates and PepsiCo ensures its potato stores are being managed by qualified store managers."

CPD recording changes

Training Providers and Register members should note that CPD attendance sheets must now record delegates account numbers. These begin 200..... and can be found on the front of ID cards. Alternatively providers can purchase bar code readers from BASIS at £105 + VAT each (with discounts for bulk purchases) and simply scan the details in.



PROFESSIONAL PEST CONTROLLERS REGISTER

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