

**From:** Johnston, Chris  
**To:** "Roisin Grimes";  
**Subject:** RE: Willow rdp planting grant withdrawal  
**Date:** 31 March 2014 19:09:00

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Hi Roisin,

We don't get great support from the different bodies in the North on this front and it is difficult to know exactly what to do. I wonder however would it be worth your while seeking clarification from UFU, on behalf of IrBea, what their stance is on their farm members planting energy crops? This might be interesting. I don't think it will be too positive but at least this is a starting point for clarification.

I think Chris Osborne would be the contact. Happy to discuss.

Regards  
 Chris

Chris Johnston  
 Tel:- 02892681540  
 email:- [chris.johnston@afbini.gov.uk](mailto:chris.johnston@afbini.gov.uk)

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**From:** Roisin Grimes [mailto:roisingrimes@irbea.ie]  
**Sent:** 31 March 2014 12:20  
**To:** alanhegan@<sup>Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry</sup>; McCracken, Alistair; ianduff@<sup>Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry</sup> 'John Martin'; Johnston, Chris; Walsh, Linda; Michael Doran; Fred Tottenham  
**Subject:** RE: Willow rdp planting grant withdrawal

Dear all,

IrBEA recently held a roundtable discussion on energy crops in the south, which was attended by representatives from the relevant departments, Teagasc and the IFA. This is something I think would be important to pursue in the north also and would be a platform to discuss the issue below. It would be very useful if you all could give some direction as to particular people I should target in the north – relevant department members, UFU/NFU representatives etc. I realise this will be more difficult as IrBEA's lobbying position and profile is stronger in the south, however I still think it would be worth a try.

Kind regards,

Roisin

**From:** alanhegan@<sup>Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry</sup> [mailto:alanhegan@<sup>Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry</sup>

**Sent:** 31 March 2014 11:54

**To:** McCracken, Alistair; Roisin Grimes; [landuff@](mailto:landuff@) Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry ohn Martin; Chris Johnston; Linda Walsh

**Subject:** RE: Willow rdp planting grant withdrawal

Thanks for all your comments

I believe the last rdp scheme was seriously flawed in its approach when compared to forestry.

The 13ha that we had secured(after a lot of hard work) this year has pulled out of planting over the last few days. Reasons stated are that when compared to immediate income from forestry grant schemes, willow is unattractive with immediate input costs and 5 year break even point. (forestry premium paid annually makes move from conacre a lot more attractive).

As with the rhi teirs, unlevelled grant aid has lead to deliberate distortion of the market place.

Regards

Alan

On 31 Mar 2014 07:43, "McCracken, Alistair" <[Alistair.McCracken@afbini.gov.uk](mailto:Alistair.McCracken@afbini.gov.uk)> wrote:

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> Alan

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> The SRC planting grant was not included by Forest Service in the Rural Development Programme. The argument was that within EU regulations that with support for wood chip at the utilisation stage (RHI) it was double funding to also support SRC planting. We in AFBI had a number of discussions with them at the tail end of last year but they seemed to be pretty adamant that within the RDP there was little they could do.

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> The other issue that we were up against was that in the past few years the area of SRC planting for which growers applied for planting grants was extremely small and therefore was difficult for Forest Service to apply for funding to support a planting grant.

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> I am not ‘defending’ Forest Service, but trying to give you what I understand were the reasons for their decision. I think it is a serious omission that it is not included and would fully support any incentives to enable growers to plant and utilise this crop which has so much to offer.

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> We within AFBI cannot ‘lobby’ as such. I suggest that you (and as many growers / planter / others as possible) contact Forest Service with your concerns (Mr Malcolm Beatty is the Chief executive of the Forest Service). I have no doubt that if he thinks that here is a solution that he will discuss it with us in AFBI and you can be sure that we will give it our support.

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> I think this is a reflection on the fact that we have failed to convince the policy makers about the potential importance and value of growing SRC willow both for energy production and for environmental benefits.

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> Best wishes

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> Alistair

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> Alistair R. McCracken

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> From: [alanhegan@](mailto:alanhegan@) Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry [<mailto:alanhegan@> Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry]  
> Sent: 29 March 2014 11:34  
> To: Roisin Grimes; [ianduff@](mailto:ianduff@) Personal information redacted by the RHI Inquiry John Martin; Johnston, Chris; McCracken, Alistair; Walsh, Linda

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> Subject: Willow rdp planting grant withdrawal

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> Hi all

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> I have learned yesterday that forest service are to withdraw planting grant for src willow from rdp programme. Can you advise on emergency lobbying?

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> Regards

> Alan