

## SURVEY FARMERS' VIEWS OF THE RURAL PAYMENTS AGENCY'S SINGLE PAYMENT SCHEME FOR THE NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE

### Final Topline Results 04/07/06

- 1,000 telephone interviews were undertaken with farmers in England who applied to the 2005 Single Payment Scheme.
- Fieldwork took place from 9<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> June 2006.
- Quotas for the fieldwork were set by government office region and farm size, on the basis of the known profile of the population of applicants. Quotas were also set on level of deprivation (Severely Disadvantaged Areas [SDA] or not SDA, as provided by the NAO), and whether or not applicants had received their entitlements. These quotas aimed to ensure that SDA farms and unpaid applicants were sufficiently represented in the sample in order to allow comparisons between sub-groups of paid/unpaid and deprived/ not deprived farmers. All quotas were achieved.
- Weights have been applied for levels of deprivation, receipt of the entitlements, government office regions and farm size.
- Base for each question is all 1,000 farmers interviewed unless otherwise specified.
- Where figures do not add up to 100%, this could be the result of computer rounding or multiple answers.
- An asterisk (\*) indicates a score less than 0.5%, but greater than zero.
- Figures are usually given as percentages. However, where they are less than fifty, actual numbers are used: they are italicised.

Q1. **In relation to your 2005 SPS application, the one that had to be completed by May last year, which one of the following three statements applies to you: READ OUT. SINGLE CODE**

|  | %  |
|--|----|
| a) Your 2005 SPS application was the first time you registered land with the Rural Payments Agency   | 60 |
| b) You registered additional land with the Rural Payments Agency for your 2005 SPS application   | 14 |
| c) You did not register any additional land with the Rural Payments Agency for your 2005 SPS application, on top of the land you had registered previously | 25 |
| Don't know   | 1  |
| Refused  | -  |

Q2. **Thinking of your 2005 SPS application again, have you been fully paid, partly paid, or not paid at all yet?** SINGLE CODE

|                 | %  |
|-----------------|----|
| Fully paid      | 55 |
| Partly paid     | 30 |
| Not paid at all | 15 |

### **Administration of the scheme**

Q3. **During your application process for the 2005 SPS, how easy or difficult was it to finalise a correct set of maps for the Rural Land Register?** SINGLE CODE

|                            | %  |
|----------------------------|----|
| Very easy                  | 6  |
| Fairly easy                | 24 |
| Neither easy nor difficult | 8  |
| Fairly difficult           | 20 |
| Very difficult             | 39 |
| Don't know                 | 3  |

Q4. **How many successive versions of Rural Land Register maps have you been sent in relation to your 2005 Single Payment Scheme application?** PROMPT IF UNSURE An approximate number will be fine.

|                    | %  |
|--------------------|----|
| 0 version          | 8  |
| 1 version          | 24 |
| 2 version          | 23 |
| 3 version          | 21 |
| 4 version          | 8  |
| 5 version          | 4  |
| 6 versions or more | 5  |
| Don't know         | 8  |

Q5. **And was the Rural Land Register set of maps you signed off fully accurate, or not?** SINGLE CODE

|                        | %  |
|------------------------|----|
| Yes, fully accurate    | 75 |
| No, not fully accurate | 14 |
| Don't know             | 10 |
| Refused                | *  |

Q6. **Did you know the set of maps was inaccurate when you signed it off, or not?**

*Base: all who signed off a set of maps that was not fully accurate (151)*

|     | %  |
|-----|----|
| Yes | 47 |
| No  | 53 |

**Q7. Why did you sign off the set of maps knowing there were some inaccuracies?**

*Base: all who knew the set of maps was not fully accurate when signing off (69)*

|  | %  |
|--|----|
| Was agreed with the local land register/Mentioned the inaccuracy to the rural land registered when signing off | 30 |
| Frustration/Got fed up with the carry on/Too much hassle   | 19 |
| Only small amount of land/Small or very small discrepancy/Not worth pursuing                                   | 18 |
| Running out of time/Little time left to submit the application   | 14 |
| Time consuming/Waited too long already   | 5  |
| Other  | 15 |
| Don't know   | *  |

**Q8. How many hectares of land, if any, should have been included on this set of maps but were not? SINGLE CODE. READ OUT**

*Base: all who signed off a set of maps that was not fully accurate (151)*

|                                     | %  |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| <b>None</b>                         | 31 |
| <b>Less than half a hectare</b>     | 25 |
| <b>A half to one hectare</b>        | 8  |
| <b>Between one and two hectares</b> | 7  |
| <b>Two hectares or more</b>         | 19 |
| Don't know                          | 9  |
| Refused                             | *  |

Including:  
over two hectares, up to four: 3%  
four hectares or more: 9%  
unspecified: 7%

**Q9. How many hectares of land, if any, were included on this set of maps, but should not have been? SINGLE CODE**

*Base: all who signed off a set of maps that was not fully accurate (151)*

|                                     | %  |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| <b>None</b>                         | 65 |
| <b>Less than half a hectare</b>     | 11 |
| <b>A half to one hectare</b>        | 3  |
| <b>Between one and two hectares</b> | 1  |
| <b>Two hectares or more</b>         | 10 |
| Don't know / can't remember         | 10 |
| Refused                             | *  |

Including:  
over two hectares, up to four: 2%  
four hectares or more: 3%  
unspecified: 5%

**Contact with the Rural Payments Agency**

**Q10. How well informed, if at all, did the Rural Payments Agency keep you about the progress of your claim? SINGE CODE**

|                        | %  |
|------------------------|----|
| Very well informed     | 10 |
| Fairly well informed   | 33 |
| Not very well informed | 34 |
| Not informed at all    | 22 |
| Don't know             | 1  |

Q11. **Have you contacted the Rural Payments Agency about your claim for the 2005 SPS in the last year or so?**

|     | %  |
|-----|----|
| Yes | 64 |
| No  | 36 |

Q12. **To what extent, if at all, did the Rural Payments Agency resolve your queries concerning your 2005 SPS claim? SINGLE CODE ONLY. READ OUT**

**Did they resolve them ....**

*Base: All who contacted the Rural Payments Agency about their 2005 SPS claim (651)*

|   | %  |
|---|----|
| <b>Completely</b>                         | 30 |
| <b>Partially</b>                          | 25 |
| <b>Not at all</b>                         | 21 |
| <b>They further complicated the issue</b> | 22 |
| Don't know                                | 2  |
| Refuse                                    | *  |

Q13. **How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with the way YOUR application for the Single Payment Scheme has been dealt with? SINGLE CODE**

|                                    | %  |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Very satisfied                     | 7  |
| Fairly satisfied                   | 30 |
| Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied | 11 |
| Fairly dissatisfied                | 23 |
| Very dissatisfied                  | 30 |
| Don't know                         | *  |

Q14. **What could the Rural Payments Agency have done to improve the quality of their customer service? WRITE IN**

|  | %  |
|--|----|
| Make process simpler/Easier/More straightforward   | 29 |
| Better trained/More competent/Knowledgeable/Experienced staff/Staff who can answer questions when you call | 22 |
| Improve/Better communication/Information/Keep us more informed   | 17 |
| Provide payments on time/quicker   | 12 |
| Speed up the service/Make service quicker  | 11 |
| Single point of contact/Not to be passed from pillar to post   | 11 |
| Reduce paperwork/red tape  | 10 |
| Get the maps right/Send them for sign off faster   | 6  |
| Improve the system/Computer system/Try and test it before implementing it                                  | 5  |
| Improve answering of phones/Respond to correspondence/Respond faster                                       | 4  |
| Employ more staff  | 3  |
| Other  | 5  |

## **Consequences of the timing of payments**

- Q15. **Did you receive your 2005 SPS payment earlier or later than you expected, or did you receive it when you expected ? PROBE IF EARLIER OR LATER. Is that much or slightly?**

*Base: all who had received their entitlements in part or in full at the time of the interview (820)*

|                  | %  |
|------------------|----|
| Much earlier     | 1  |
| Slightly earlier | 4  |
| When expected    | 20 |
| Slightly later   | 21 |
| Much later       | 54 |

- Q16. **I am going to ask you a general question about your farm. Please answer it in general, not thinking about the Single Payment Scheme. Which of the following, if any, have applied to your business in the last 12 months? READ OUT. MULTICODE OK. RANDOMISE ITEMS A) TO M).**

*Base: all except those who received their entitlements earlier than they expected (957)*

|   | %  |
|---|----|
| a) <b>You have postponed some purchases or investments</b>                              | 40 |
| b) <b>You have sold some assets</b>   | 15 |
| c) <b>You have sold crops or livestock earlier than you would normally do</b>           | 19 |
| d) <b>You, or someone else in your household, have taken extra work outside farming</b> | 29 |
| e) <b>You have delayed payments to your suppliers</b>                                   | 22 |
| f) <b>You have delayed payments to your landlords</b>                                   | 7  |
| g) <b>You have considered leaving farming</b>   | 27 |
| h) <b>You have reduced the scale of your farming activities</b>                         | 24 |
| i) <b>The value of your farm has decreased</b>  | 12 |
| j) <b>You have made some staff redundant</b>  | 5  |
| k) <b>You have asked banks for a new loan</b>   | 14 |
| l) <b>You have extended the size or terms of an existing loan</b>                       | 19 |
| m) <b>Your business has been operating at a loss</b>                                    | 37 |
| None of the above   | 27 |
| Other   | 1  |

Q17a You said that <<INSERT ITEM TICKED AT Q16>> in the last 12 months. To what extent, if at all, was this a consequence of the timing of your SPS payment? SINGLE CODE

Bases in brackets: all who have ticked item at Q16 and have been partly and fully paid

|  | Bases |   | Entirely | Mostly | Only partly | Not at all | Don't know |
|--|-------|---|----------|--------|-------------|------------|------------|
| a) You have postponed some purchases or investments                              | (318) | % | 24       | 17     | 39          | 20         | -          |
| b) You have sold some assets   | (117) | % | 15       | 8      | 33          | 44         | -          |
| c) You have sold crops or livestock earlier than you would normally do           | (173) | % | 35       | 19     | 33          | 14         | -          |
| d) You, or someone else in your household, have taken extra work outside farming | (245) | % | 7        | 8      | 36          | 49         | -          |
| e) You have delayed payments to your suppliers                                   | (182) | % | 43       | 21     | 24          | 12         | *          |
| f) You have delayed payments to your landlords                                   | (63)  | % | 47       | 18     | 22          | 13         | -          |
| g) You have considered leaving farming   | (231) | % | 10       | 8      | 35          | 46         | 1          |
| h) You have reduced the scale of your farming activities                         | (190) | % | 4        | 5      | 33          | 58         | -          |
| i) The value of your farm has decreased  | (91)  | % | 10       | 5      | 29          | 54         | 3          |
| j) You have made some staff redundant  | (37)  | % | 12       | 1      | 35          | 52         | -          |
| k) You have asked banks for a new loan   | (117) | % | 41       | 13     | 26          | 20         | -          |
| l) You have extended the size or terms of an existing loan                       | (160) | % | 43       | 18     | 20          | 18         | -          |
| m) Your business has been operating at a loss                                    | (294) | % | 13       | 8      | 39          | 38         | 1          |
| Other 1  | (31)  | n | 9        | 1      | 3           | 7          | 1          |
| Other 2  | (3)   | n | -        | 1      | -           | 1          | -          |

Q17b You said that <<INSERT ITEM TICKED AT Q16>> in the last 12 months. To what extent, if at all, was this a consequence of the non payment of your SPS entitlement? SINGLE CODE

Bases in brackets: all who have ticked item at Q16 and have been not been paid

|  | Bases |   | Entirely | Mostly | Only partly | Not at all | Don't know |
|--|-------|---|----------|--------|-------------|------------|------------|
| a) You have postponed some purchases or investments                              | (51)  | % | 16       | 17     | 44          | 23         | -          |
| b) You have sold some assets   | (21)  | n | 2        | 2      | 9           | 8          | 1          |
| c) You have sold crops or livestock earlier than you would normally do           | (16)  | n | 6        | 2      | 6           | *          | -          |
| d) You, or someone else in your household, have taken extra work outside farming | (47)  | n | 2        | 1      | 15          | 21         | -          |
| e) You have delayed payments to your suppliers                                   | (25)  | n | 8        | 2      | 7           | 2          | -          |
| f) You have delayed payments to your landlords                                   | (9)   | n | 2        | *      | 2           | 1          | -          |
| g) You have considered leaving farming   | (31)  | n | 4        | *      | 12          | 10         | -          |
| h) You have reduced the scale of your farming activities                         | (38)  | n | 4        | 4      | 14          | 10         | -          |
| i) The value of your farm has decreased  | (15)  | n | 4        | -      | 4           | 5          | 4          |
| j) You have made some staff redundant  | (7)   | n | 3        | -      | 3           | 2          | -          |
| k) You have asked banks for a new loan   | (17)  | n | 4        | 1      | 2           | 5          | -          |
| l) You have extended the size or terms of an existing loan                       | (20)  | n | 5        | 1      | 4           | 1          | -          |
| m) Your business has been operating at a loss                                    | (57)  | % | 9        | 7      | 35          | 49         | -          |
| Other  | (4)   | n | 1        | -      | 2           | 2          | -          |
| Other  | (1)   | n | -        | -      | -           | 2          | -          |

Q18. Apart from the consequences mentioned above, has the timing of your SPS payment had any other effects your business?

Base: all except those who received their entitlements earlier than they expected (954)

|  | %  |
|--|----|
| Cash flow difficulties/Money worries/Pressures on the business                 | 6  |
| Increased stress/Anxiety/Worry/Disillusion/Got desperate                       | 3  |
| Can't plan ahead/Had to revise/Cancel important decisions/Too much uncertainty | 3  |
| Increased workload/Working longer hours  | 2  |
| High interest charges/Bank overdrafts  | 2  |
| Waste of my time   | 1  |
| Other  | 2  |
| None/Nothing   | 83 |
| Don't know   | *  |

Q19. **Again, apart from the consequences mentioned above, has the timing of your SPS payment had any other effects on you or your family?**

Base: all except those who received their entitlements earlier than they expected (954)

|  | %  |
|--|----|
| Increased stress/Anxiety/Worry/Disillusion/<br>Got desperate     | 20 |
| Cash flow difficulties/Money worries/Pressures on the business   | 4  |
| Frustration  | 4  |
| Increased workload/Working longer hours/Too time consuming       | 3  |
| Put pressure/Strain on the family/Disagreement within the family | 3  |
| Children do not want to go into farming                          | *  |
| Other  | 3  |
| None/Nothing   | 70 |
| Don't know   | *  |

**Impact on your business**

Q20. **Roughly how much have you received or do you expect to receive in total from your SPS claim for 2005?**

|  | %  |
|--|----|
| Less than £100                         | 17 |
| £100 or more but less than £500        | 18 |
| £500 or more but less than £1,000      | 5  |
| £1,000 or more but less than £3,000    | 7  |
| £3,000 or more but less than £6,000    | 5  |
| £6,000 or more but less than £10,000   | 4  |
| £10,000 or more but less than £20,000  | 9  |
| £20,000 or more but less than £50,000  | 12 |
| £50,000 or more but less than £100,000 | 4  |
| £100,000 or more                       | 2  |
| Don't know                             | 14 |
| Refused                                | 4  |



Q21. **Approximately what percentage of your total net annual income does the SPS represent?**

|            | %  |
|------------|----|
| 0% - 2%    | 29 |
| 3% - 4%    | 2  |
| 5% - 10%   | 12 |
| 11% - 20%  | 8  |
| 21% - 30%  | 6  |
| 31% - 40%  | 4  |
| 41% - 50%  | 6  |
| 51% - 60%  | 1  |
| 61% - 70%  | 1  |
| 71% - 80%  | 2  |
| 81% - 90%  | 4  |
| Don't know | 22 |
| Refused    | 3  |

Q22.A **As a direct result of the timing of your SPS payment, roughly how much, if anything, have you had to pay in total on:**

*Base: all who have been partly or fully paid (820)*

|    |   |    |
|----|---|----|
| a) | <b>Overdraft or loan set-up fees</b>                                  | %  |
|    | Nothing   | 76 |
|    | Less than £200  | 2  |
|    | £200 or more but less than £400                                       | 2  |
|    | £400 or more but less than £600                                       | 2  |
|    | £600 or more  | 8  |
|    | Don't know  | 10 |
|    | Refused   | *  |
| b) | <b>Interest on loans</b>  | %  |
|    | Nothing   | 75 |
|    | Less than £200  | 1  |
|    | £200 or more but less than £400                                       | 2  |
|    | £400 or more but less than £600                                       | 2  |
|    | £600 or more  | 9  |
|    | Don't know  | 10 |
|    | Refused   | *  |
| c) | <b>Additional consultant's fees for business advice or assistance</b> | %  |
|    | Nothing   | 77 |
|    | Less than £200  | 5  |
|    | £200 or more but less than £400                                       | 5  |
|    | £400 or more but less than £600                                       | 3  |
|    | £600 or more  | 7  |
|    | Don't know  | 3  |
|    | Refused   | *  |

Q22.B **As a direct result of the non payment of your SPS entitlement, roughly how much, if anything, have you had to pay in total on:**

Base: all who have not been paid (180)

|    |   |    |
|----|---|----|
| a) | <b>Overdraft or loan set-up fees</b>                                  | %  |
|    | Nothing   | 87 |
|    | Less than £200  | 2  |
|    | £200 or more but less than £400                                       | -  |
|    | £400 or more but less than £600                                       | *  |
|    | £600 or more  | 5  |
|    | Don't know  | 6  |
|    | Refused   | -  |
| b) | <b>Interest on loans</b>  | %  |
|    | Nothing   | 84 |
|    | Less than £200  | 1  |
|    | £200 or more but less than £400                                       | 2  |
|    | £400 or more but less than £600                                       | 1  |
|    | £600 or more  | 4  |
|    | Don't know  | 8  |
|    | Refused   | -  |
| c) | <b>Additional consultant's fees for business advice or assistance</b> | %  |
|    | Nothing   | 75 |
|    | Less than £200  | 8  |
|    | £200 or more but less than £400                                       | 6  |
|    | £400 or more but less than £600                                       | 2  |
|    | £600 or more  | 4  |
|    | Don't know  | 5  |
|    | Refused   | -  |

Q22.A **Have you had to pay anything else as a result of the timing of your SPS payment?**

Q22B **Have you had to pay anything else as a result of the non payment of your SPS entitlement?**

Base: all who have had to pay something else (56)

|  |  |    |
|--|--|----|
|  |  | %  |
|  | Loss of interests on overdraft/savings/current account | 34 |
|  | Telephone costs  | 18 |
|  | Postage charges  | 15 |
|  | Accountants fees                                       | 9  |
|  | Extra work/ managerial time                            | 7  |
|  | Having to use my own money                             | 6  |
|  | More maps  | 5  |
|  | Other  | 24 |
|  | Don't know   | 2  |

Q23. **How confident are you, if at all, that the Rural Payments Agency will deal with your 2006 claim effectively? SINGLE CODE**

|  |                                   |    |
|--|-----------------------------------|----|
|  |                                   | %  |
|  | Very confident                    | 6  |
|  | Fairly confident                  | 27 |
|  | Neither confident nor unconfident | 11 |
|  | Not very confident                | 29 |
|  | Not at all confident              | 26 |
|  | Don't know                        | 2  |

## **Demographics**

Q24. Which of the following do you consider to be your main farming activity? READ OUT.  
SINGLE CODE

|   | %  |
|---|----|
| Mostly livestock                                      | 56 |
| Mostly arable   | 33 |
| Mostly orchard  | 1  |
| Mostly dairy  | 5  |
| Mostly horticulture (fruit,<br>vegetables & potatoes) | 3  |
| Other   | 2  |
| Refused   | *  |

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Q25. Are you principally a tenant farmer? SINGLE CODE

|     | %  |
|-----|----|
| Yes | 17 |
| No  | 83 |

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Q26. Did you apply for Hill Farm Allowance on your 2005 SPS form?  
SINGLE CODE

|            | %  |
|------------|----|
| Yes        | 7  |
| No         | 91 |
| Don't know | 1  |

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Q27. How many people in your family, including you, are wholly or largely dependent on income from the agricultural elements of your business?

|                   | %  |
|-------------------|----|
| Nobody            | 39 |
| 1 person only     | 17 |
| 2 persons         | 22 |
| 3 persons         | 8  |
| 4 persons or more | 13 |

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