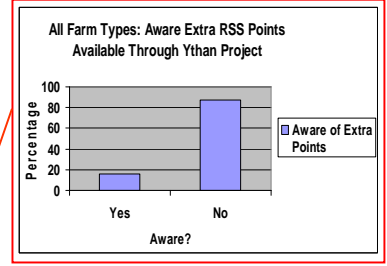
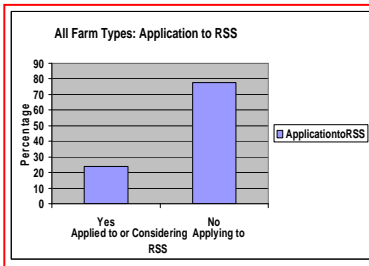
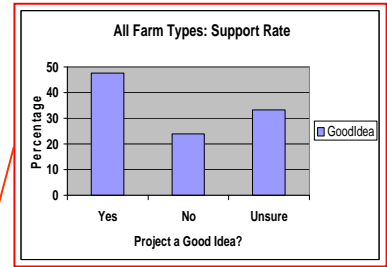
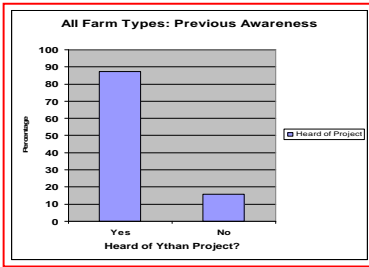


Ythan Project - Farmers Views

The Ythan Project is a partnership approach drawing together several organisations to improve the Ythan river catchment. The project does not seek to attribute blame to any particular group of people, instead it aims to assist the local people to protect and enhance the river. As so much of the catchment is in agricultural use, the project aims to work with farmers on a number of actions. The project is part funded by a European program called Life Environment and at the end of the project we will have to report back to Europe on how the project has progressed. In order to be able to tell if what we are doing has had a real benefit for local people, we will be undertaking three surveys during the life of the project, one at the beginning, middle and end. The first of these surveys was undertaken in March 2002 and involved sending questionnaires to a random sample of farmers. The responses we received have been collated and some of the results are shown below:

The results from the survey will be used to enable us to target project actions more effectively and will also give us a baseline knowledge which we can compare against in the future.



YTHAN PROJECT SURVEY

The Ythan Project. You may not be aware that the Formartine Partnership, in association with other organisations, has secured European funding for 3½ years, to assist the communities within the Ythan catchment to develop a 'whole river/whole community approach' to river management. Both non-farming and farming communities have roles to play in this, but farmers are particularly important. One of the key objectives of the Ythan Project is to ensure that farmers are aware of related opportunities for funding through SEERAD agri-environment schemes like the Rural Stewardship Scheme, and also how they can best adapt to the requirements of the Ythan being a designated Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ).

The Survey. We would be very grateful if you could take a few minutes to answer the following questions. The information will be used to help us target our efforts more effectively.

Questions

1. Does some of your farm lie within the Ythan river catchment? YES NO UNSURE

2. Can you please indicate whether your farm is predominantly:

arable

livestock

mixed

3. Had you heard of the Ythan Project before receiving this letter?

4. Do you think that a whole river/whole community approach like this is a good idea?

5. Would you consider involving volunteers in helping with habitat or river restoration projects on your land?

6. Are you considering, or have you already submitted, an application to the Rural Stewardship Scheme (RSS)?

7. Were you aware that it is possible to gain extra points for your RSS application by linking it to the Ythan Project?

8. Would this influence your decision to apply to the RSS?

The Ythan NVZ Action Plan will require farmers to do nutrient budgets and keep records of fertilizer purchases and applications.

9. Have you had any experience of doing nutrient budgeting?

10. Do you currently keep records of fertiliser applications?

11. Would you be interested in the capital grants towards provision of storage for livestock manures, that will form part of the NVZ Action Plan?

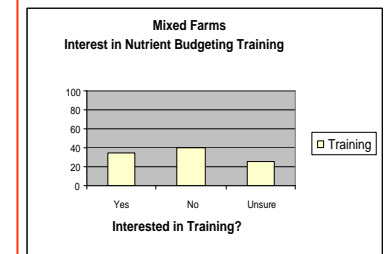
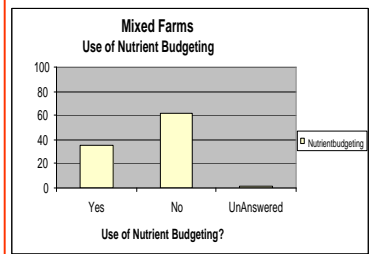
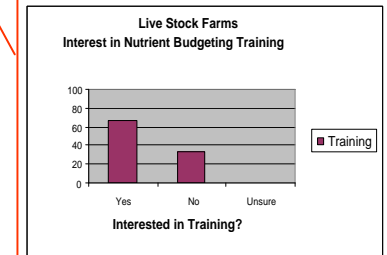
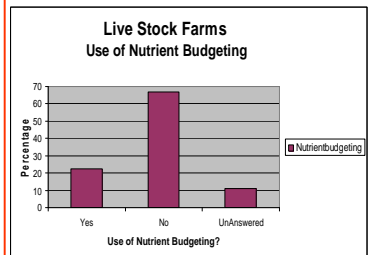
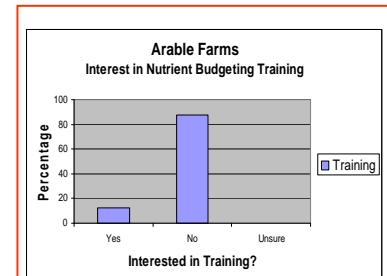
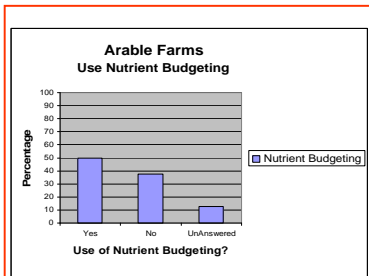
The Ythan Project team plan to hold sessions where farmers can get practical help with nutrient budgeting and record keeping systems. These are predominantly computer-based.

12. Would you be interested in attending a training meeting on nutrient budgeting?

13. Do you currently, or plan to in the near future, use a computer for your record keeping?

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours Sincerely,
Tamsin Morris.



For further information contact:
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