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WINTER TRAINING PROGRAMME

We are now coming to the end of what has been a very busy winter, where we have had a wide selection of courses which have been well attended and received. May I take the opportunity to thank you all for your support and commitment over this winter especially when things have not gone quite according to plan. If you have any issues with a course or feel that something wasn't quite as it should have been please let me know, as poor publicity due to these problems could cost the group a member.

I would like to take this opportunity to let you know that I take my job very seriously and believe that the groups success has been due to the quality of training and high levels of customer service offered. Failure to deliver any of these points is taken very seriously and I will work hard to ensure that these things are put right, as we need to ensure that each training event is remembered for the right reasons.

Legislative Changes

ANIMAL TRANSPORT REGULATIONS

These regulations came into force on the 5th January 2007, these apply to anyone transporting animals for commercial/economic purposes. Anyone transporting animals over 65km will need to apply for an authorisation - available from SVS Worcester 0845 603 8395 or wit@svs.gsi.gov.uk. Authorisations are free at present but charging is planned. If you do not receive your authorisation before the 5th January 2007 you are advised to retain a copy of your completed application and keep it in your vehicle until your confirmed authorization is returned to you.

	Certificate of Competence	Authorisation	Inspection & Approval
<65km	No	No	No
>65km & 8hrs	Yes	Short	No
>8hrs	Yes	Long	Yes
Duration	Lifetime	5 Years	5 Years

Summary of requirements:

Please note: Authorizations are required from 5th January 2007; **certificate of competence required from 5th January 2008**; extra requirements for vehicles doing long journeys from 2009.

Course Places Available

'On Target'



This year's voluntary initiative training course is entitled "On Target". It is about spraying pesticides accurately and efficiently.

The training will look briefly at how pesticides work, relate this to the weed, pest or disease to be controlled and then show how to apply the pesticide to achieve the best result. There will also be information on the changes to NRoSO points scheme and how to maximise points, the changes to the old "Green Code" and an update on Pesticide Packaging Disposal.

This course will be run as a half day course on 27th February, members course rate £30, 8 NRoSO points available. I do appreciate a lot of you may have done this through your chemical companies.

Fertilizer Calibration Clinic—We still have 2 places left for these clinics which can help improve spread patterns and distribution rates and prevent an overspend on fertilizers. Dates available—26th February (1 Place) at Ashford Lodge, Halstead and 27th February (1 place) at Hill Farm, Kirtling. Cost £100 per machine and a test certificate will be issued.

Waste Regulations—In preparation for the May Waste Regulation Deadline this one day course is designed to introduce managers etc to the ways in which they have to comply with the new Ground Water Regulations and Farm Waste Management Regulations. It will cover the following requirements, how the new regulations will effect you and what you are now able to do, agricultural exemptions, checks to be made and on farm composting. Bio solids will also be covered including the proposed changes, your responsibilities and record keeping. The waste audit booklets will also be covered to show compliance. To be held on Friday 2nd March at Haverhill Golf Club, Cost £75 per head including a light lunch.

Basic Tree Survey— Following the recent windy weather which has resulted in a lot of fallen trees with obvious defects this is a very appropriate and timely course. This one-day course aims to provide specific tree inspection training at a basic level to farm managers/supervisors, tree wardens, grounds maintenance staff, and others persons of non-arboriculture background. This course has resulted from a recent number of high profile cases where fallen trees with a foreseeable defect have resulted in the deaths of a number of people. The course will cover, the legal and safety implications of hazardous trees, H&S during inspection, recognition of hazardous trees, level of risk, decision on appropriate action and recognition of your limitations. This is to be held on the 13th April at Babraham, near Cambridge. Members Course Rate £60 per person.

Chainsaw Maintenance Cross-Cutting & Basic Felling Refresher—2 day course refreshing employees on the safe use of chainsaws. This will cover employers responsibilities under PUWER (HSE specifies refresher training every 5 years). To be held on the 19th & 20th March. Members course rate £135.

Legislative Reminder

Anyone who has passed their driving test after 31st December 1996 is not legally entitled to tow a trailer, caravan, horsebox etc. I am sure there are several people at the moment who are not aware of this fact but be warned there is a large fine and 6 points on their licence for breaking the law if they are caught! It is not straightforward, trainees will have to apply to their local LGV testing centre (Peterborough, Norwich or Cambridge) for their test date and it will be a bit like taking their driving test again, it is in line with the HGV test.

With this in mind the driver in question may have picked up

some bad driving habits since passing their test so we can run a 1-day intensive course for 1 person or a 2 –day course for 2 people with a driving instructor who has a lot of experience of this type of training and test.

Please also note that if the vehicle being used is registered from 1st October 2003 onwards, the trailer must be of the type which the driver cannot see over whilst reversing i.e. a box trailer, horse box etc. If the vehicle is older than this then you can tow a flatbed, low loader or drop sided trailer for the test. The honeymoon period for this will cease from 1st July 2007 when only high-sided trailers will be permitted for use on the test. You must remember that at present until the trainee passes their test they must be treated like a learner driver and have someone with a full licence sitting beside them and display appropriate ‘L’ plates whilst towing.

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