

## **Subscriber Membership**

### **Outline Proposal for Features and Services to be provided through the National Centre for Precision Farming (NCPF) to subscriber members**

#### **Rationale**

Precision farming may be seen to be entering a new era of development in which engineering and associated technological innovation is opening up new dimensions of support and intervention, not only in the established disciplines of arable and livestock farming, but also with regard to integration and the emergent areas of urban and integrated farming. Geospatial technological developments facilitated by Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), unmanned aerial systems (UASs), robotics, communications, sensory and other data acquisition technologies, coupled with the emergent concept of the Internet of Things (IoT) are representative of these technologies. Growth in urbanisation and the need for innovation and new enterprise to meet the challenges of food provision is also stimulating increasing attention to new technologies and engineering solutions.

Emphasis on increasing efficiency, productivity and innovative approaches to future food security needs, coupled with appropriate attention to environmental needs and pressures for reducing carbon footprint, are clearly adding to this new era of farming challenges. 'Smart', in the context of smart integrated farming, is a term that is now being applied to these evolving technological drivers.

However, 'smart' is not only about technology, it is also about smarter ways of doing things, improving processes and business activities based upon profound understanding of the constituent processes and connected systems. It is not only about big businesses, it is a platform that can assist businesses large and small. At a time of recession and with severe demands upon farmers to secure food supplies, assure quality, welfare, meet health and safety requirements and accommodate needs for environmental protection, energy conservation and reducing carbon footprints, any developments that can assist the farmer should be entirely welcome. Subscriber membership of the NCPF is being seen as an appropriate platform for helping to facilitate support for these developments and also provide a forum and a collective voice on UK and European matters that can serve to build the UK industry for precision farming.

#### **Features and Services for a NCPF subscriber Membership**

In seeking to develop the subscriber membership forum for precision farming with the above rationale in mind the NCPF will endeavour to provide appropriate elements of support and services that can help move farming businesses and enterprises forward.

The principal features and deliverables being proposed for the PFF include:

1. A common 'voice' on precision farming issues at national, European and international levels, supported by a strong promotional facility for precision farming that recognises the principal sectors of arable and livestock farming, together with emergent sectors of urban and vertical farming, and the important role of SMEs within the farming industry.

2. A platform for organising NCPF events and networking between members and potential clients through website and NCPF events.
3. Monitoring and commentary on precision and 'smart' defined farming at national, European and international levels, supported via a bi-monthly e-newsletter with contributions from members and a set of advisory services, including:
  - An advisory service for explaining precision farming, and its developments, to practising farmers.
  - An advisory and evaluation facility directed at industry generated systems and product design and taking into consideration the needs of SMEs.
  - An advisory support service on ISOBUS and the needs for more effective configuration management and additional standards, supported in turn by a facility recognising available ISOBUS services and Type Testing facilities, together with the prospect of a UK Testing service.
4. A research alliance with university establishments to support accreditation and assist in encouraging collaborative research and development, and very importantly effective translation of research into practical farming implementation.
5. Platform for promoting subscriber member services, products and activities through webinars, face-to-face events, profiling and white papers, recognising too the importance of existing technologies and the need to promote market pull in relation to these technologies and associated products.
6. Foundational voice on standards and regulatory developments and on other developments relating to precision farming, such as quality assurance and accreditation.
7. Platform for celebrating excellence through an annual event with awards, a conference and exhibition.
8. Special interest groups, lead by subscriber members, and directed at mutual up-dating in specialist areas of precision farming and food support services.
9. Training alliance directed at members helping members on training requirements and collective training activities involving a range of precision farming disciplines; linking where appropriate with academic education and training establishments.
10. Platform for 'brokerage' events, bringing innovation to prospective investors and developers.
11. Platform for sponsorship supported 'thematic' demonstrator development (eg an unmanned aerial system for precision agricultural research)
12. Platform for presenting leads and employment opportunities and for promoting the importance of bringing young new entrants into the industry.

To be able to facilitate all of these features and offer all of these services requires a strong and supportive membership and, of course, funding through subscriptions and costed services. The amount that can be done and the range of services that can be provided are dependent upon the funding that the Centre and the subscriber membership can generate. In the first instance an annual subscription of £250, for individual membership, is being proposed, with a view to offering the above (1-12) provisions. To help establish the viability of a subscription based service we would welcome your response to the following questions:

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Name:</b>
<b>Individual</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>or Organisational representative</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Organisation represented (if appropriate):</b>	
<b>Email contact:</b>	
<b>Particular interest in Precision Farming:</b>	

1. Are the listed features (1-12) attractive for a subscription-based NCPF subscriber membership service?

Yes  No  Partly

2. Are there features or services missing from this list that you would like to see included? – please list:

3. What would you consider to be the priority features or services (select corresponding numbers in the 1-12 list) or other (please list) for which you would consider a subscription acceptable?

Priorities from list (in order of priority):

Other priorities (please name):

4. Would you be in favour of regular meetings, with where appropriate, demonstrations from, Precision farming manufacturers and suppliers?

Yes  No  Regionally  With demonstrations

5. In commencing a subscription based membership a single subscription rate is envisaged. Do you consider an individual subscription of £250 per annum to be high for the features or services on offer?

Yes  No

If yes, what would you consider a more reasonable individual subscription? £

6. Would you consider becoming an individual subscriber member of the NCPF at a rate of £250 per annum?

Yes  No   At a subscription rate of £ (Insert preferred rate)

7. In developing the services and subscription base for the Centre a scale of subscriptions is envisaged. Would you prefer to see it remain at a single subscription rate or rates for

individuals, students and corporate bodies and other organisations, with the corporate membership based upon turnover?

Individual

Individual and Student

Individual, Student and Corporate

8. Would you be interested in serving on a steering group or interest group for the subscriber membership forum?

Steering Group: Yes

No

Interest Group: Yes

No

Please send your response to:

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