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What are farmers applying for in March?

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In March, the budgets and the procedure for applying for several important state aid schemes were approved by the State Fund "Agriculture". Do not forget the important dates and deadlines!

Control of pests in potatoes

From 1 March to 16 May, SFA accepts applications under the state aid scheme "Aid to compensate the costs of farmers related to the implementation of measures under the 'National programme of measures for control of soil pests in potatoes from the wireworm family (Elateridae)'". A financial resource of 2,160,000 leva has been allocated, which will be received by farmers under the scheme.

The amount of aid for the control of pests in potatoes is up to 100% of the costs for the purchase of plant

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protection products for preventing the spread and eradicating the invasion of soil pests from the wireworm family (Elateridae).

In 2022 the aid will be increased from BGN 850/ha, VAT included, to

BGN 1,020/ha, VAT included.

Documents shall be submitted by 31 May, and the aid is expected to be paid by 30 June 2022.

Quality seeds and planting material

Between 15 and 30 March, applications are being accepted under the state scheme “Aid for participation of farmers in a Quality Scheme for the production of seeds and planting material”. The budget for this year is BGN 1.2 million, which will be finally paid by 16 December 2022. The aid is up to 100% of the actually incurred costs in accordance with the Tariff of the fees collected by IASAS.

The purpose of the aid is to encourage the production and use of certified (quality) seeds for cereal, fodder, oilseed crops, potatoes, tobacco, cotton, certified by IASAS (Executive Agency for Variety Testing, Field Inspection and Seed Control).

Certification under the GLOBALG.A.P. standard

From 15 March to 30 September, SFA accepts applications for certification of farms in the “Fruit and Vegetables” sector under the GLOBALG.A.P. standard. The budget for the aid in 2022, approved by the Management Board of SFA, is BGN 100,000. Applicants shall submit their reporting documents by 30 November, and the deadline for payment of the aid is up to 30 working days thereafter.

A mandatory condition for granting the aid is obtaining a valid certificate of conformity with the GLOBALG.A.P. standard for each year in which the farmer or the group/organisation intends to participate in the support scheme.

Co-financing of insurance premiums

Between 21 March and 29 July, applications are being accepted under the scheme “Aid for co-financing of insurance premiums for insurance of agricultural production”. The approved financial resource for this year is BGN 3.5 million. Insurance policies shall be submitted by 31 August 2022, and contracts with SFA are concluded

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within 20 working days thereafter. The aid is paid within 10 working days after the conclusion of the contract with the Fund.

For fruit, vegetables, essential oil crops and tobacco, the maximum annual aid intensity is up to 65% of the insurance premium. The support per hectare is up to BGN 195/ha. For cereal and oilseed crops, the intensity is up to 35%, with support granted for the first 2,000 ha at up to BGN 21/ha.

In 2021, at the request of sectoral organisations, the scheme was re-notified, and its scope was extended to include cereal crops: wheat, barley, maize and oilseed crops: sunflower and rapeseed. Beneficiaries of the aid may be farmers growing:

- fruit crops over 0.5 ha and with a service life of the plantations of less than 20 years;

- vegetable crops grown in greenhouses over 0.1 ha;

- vegetable crops over 0.3 ha;

- essential oil crops over 0.5 ha;

- tobacco over 0.1 ha; - cereal crops over 3 ha;

- oilseed crops over 3 ha.

Investments in crop production

From 8 March to 8 April 2022, farmers may apply for support under the scheme “Aid for investments in tangible assets in agricultural holdings related to the primary production of crop agricultural products”. The scheme has been developed at the proposal of sectoral organisations in the “Crop Production” sector and will be implemented for a third year.

Its period of operation has been extended until 31.12.2022.

The allocated budget of the aid for 2022 amounts to BGN 10 million, which will be distributed until it is exhausted, in the order of application.

The maximum amount of aid under the scheme is up to BGN 120,000, with up to 50% of the costs incurred for investments being reimbursed. For the purchase of box pallets, crates and reusable boxes, the maximum

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amount of aid is up to BGN 24,000, and for the purchase of equipment for silo farms – up to BGN 50,000. The support is provided in the form of a capital subsidy to cover part of the costs for the implementation of investments for the purchase of machinery, equipment and lines for preparation for sale, cooling and storage in the production of own primary agricultural products, as well as machinery, equipment and facilities for protection against frost and hail.

Restructuring and conversion of vineyards

From 14 March to 1 April 2022, inclusive, applications will be accepted for granting financial aid under the measure “Restructuring and conversion of vineyards” from the National Support Programme for the Wine Sector for the period 2019–2023.

The budget envisaged under the measure for this year amounts to BGN 4,473,470.19.

Under the measure “Restructuring and conversion of vineyards”, support is provided for conversion of the varietal composition of plantations (grubbing-up, planting and construction of a supporting structure), change of the location of vineyards (grubbing-up, planting and construction of a supporting structure) and improvement of vineyard management techniques (construction of underground drainage collectors, manholes and drainage channels, construction and/or reconstruction of terraces, construction of automated drip irrigation systems, replacement of supporting structure, construction of supporting structure for newly established plantations and change of training system).