**Oxford Farming Conference/RASE ‘Practice with Science’ Award**

**The Award**

The Oxford Farming Conference (OFC) is a charitable trust whose primary purpose is to support innovation and knowledge transfer to the agricultural industry. We do that primarily through organising what is commonly regarded as the leading annual conference for agriculturalists in the UK, attracting top quality speakers from politics, academia, the farming community and the global food industry.

To further develop the OFC’s charitable purpose, an annual ‘Practice with Science’ award has been established in conjunction with the Royal Agricultural Society of England (RASE) with additional sponsored support from AB Agri.

The award will recognise applied scientific work that has resulted in particular benefits to the agricultural industry. The aim is to encourage new thinking and innovation that results in practical advances or improvements in technical and economic efficiency, and the award will be made to both individual researchers and businesses or institutions that commissioned the research.

**Rationale**

The current system of assessing and evaluating academic research is based primarily on peer review by scientists and tends to rank scientific achievement by novelty rather than by application. Many agricultural scientists, who are particularly focussed on practical application of their work in the industry, fail to receive adequate recognition of their work by their academic peers. However, all practical agriculturalists realise that it is the transfer of scientific knowledge into practical application that is key to driving innovation in the industry. The Trustees of the OFC now wish to fill that ‘recognition gap’ by establishing this new award for research and development that has delivered practical benefits to agriculture.

**Criteria on which the Award will be based**

The research should:

* Be novel and original in terms of application
* Provide clear economic benefit to the industry, food chain and consumers
* Improve sustainability through the more efficient use of resources

The applicant should:

* Have the support of his/her team to apply for the Award
* Have the support of his/her Head of Institution/Company to apply for the Award
* Have the endorsement of at least three industry practitioners who are not directly associated with the research team
* Be prepared to present a paper on their work at the Oxford Farming Conference following their award (3-5 January 2012)

**Judging Panel**

The judging panel will consist of a Trustee of OFC, an academic of recognised standing in the agricultural sciences who may serve in this capacity for up to 5 years and a representative from the RASE and the sponsor.

**Prize**

The prize will be an award of £10,000, of which £3,000, funded by AB Agri, will be awarded to the individual and £7,000, funded by the RASE and the OFC, to the institution or business at which the R&D team is based. The latter monies will be used to support further research work on the subject, through the support of a studentship/traineeship or through the purchase of a piece of research equipment.

**Applications and closing dates**

Application forms, in PDF and MS word format, will be available via the OFC website www.ofc.org.uk Entries should be submitted to the Chairman of the OFC with supporting documentation by the 7 September 2012. Judging will be completed by the 26 October 2012, with presentation of the Award at the Oxford Farming Conference the following January (2-4 January 2013).

Short-listed applicants will be invited to attend an interview in London in September at their expense. The winner will be expected to give a ten minute talk at the Oxford Farming conference 2013 (2-4 January 2013), expenses covered by the Conference.

Return application forms to: OFC Secretariat, Killington Hall, Killington, Carnforth, Lancashire, LA6 2HA

**Application Form**

**Section One.**

**Researcher/Applicant:**

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**Section Two.**

**Research Body/Organisation**

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Brief description of company/Dept. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Section Three.**

**Project Entry**

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Project funding/ investors \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Is the research subject to any IP agreement/binding contract? Yes No (circle as appropriate)

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Description Project Findings \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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The main benefits to farmers\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Communication and KT description (how you have communicated the findings)

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Examples of uptake and improvements on farm

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Previous awards for the same work

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**Section Four.**

**Next Stages**

If you were awarded extra funding for your research body/company, how would the money be used?

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**Section Five. Supporting Statement**

Why is the project you have entered so important to British farmers?

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**Section Six. Endorsement**

Please provide contact details for three endorsers regarding the value of your work to farmers (this can be a farmer, research partner, journalist etc.). We may contact them independently if we need to. Also, please provide, on a separate accompanying sheet, a written endorsement from one of your three endorsers.

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