

Agricultural Consultant

Agricultural consultants give business, technical and financial advice and support to farmers. They also give advice to companies which produce animal feed, seeds, fertilisers, weedkillers and other materials used on farms. They may also advise landowners, environmental agencies and conservation bodies.

The Work

You could be giving advice on:

- the best types of seeds to use
- how to improve the soil, use of fertilisers, weedkillers or other materials used on farms
- better ways to keep and feed livestock
- introducing alternative farming methods, such as organic farming
- new farm machinery or new farm buildings
- health and safety
- animal diseases and pest control
- using farm land for recreation or wildlife
- business planning, budgets and applying for grants.

You could also be:

- keeping up to date with new developments and research
- arranging and running field trials for crop treatments or production
- collecting and analysing data
- writing reports and advisory leaflets or articles
- supporting clients with government grant applications or providing legislative advice
- specialising in one subject, such as animals, crops, soil science or farm management.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Starting salaries for agricultural consultants in the UK tend to be in the range £22,000 to £27,000 a year. With experience, you could earn between £27,000 and £40,000 a year and senior advisers and consultants with more than five years' experience can earn up to £50,000 or more a year.

Salaries may vary depending on the area of specialism.

Conditions

- You would work in an office.
- You would also spend a lot of time out of the office visiting farms, suppliers and manufacturers.
- At times, you may have to start early in the morning and work into the evening.
- You may also have to work some weekends.
- You will have to be prepared to spend some time outside in all weather conditions.
- You might wear protective clothing, for example if dealing with chemicals.

Getting In

- You normally need a good degree (SCQF Levels 9-11) in agriculture, horticulture, plant science, soil science, environmental science or a related subject.
- In some cases, you might get in with an HND (SCQF Level 8).
- Entry requirements for a degree are 4 or 5 Highers plus 1-2 subjects at National 5. The Highers should normally include at least one science subject, and English and Maths may be required at least at National 5. Entry requirements for an HND are normally 2 Highers.
- For technical advisory work a postgraduate degree (SCQF Level 11) is helpful.
- Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) run degree courses in a range of agriculture and business subjects. They also run relevant postgraduate courses to allow specialism in an area, such as soil or poultry.
- You usually need experience working on a farm.
- You may have a business qualification as well as agricultural qualifications and experience.
- A driving licence is essential.

You could work for an agricultural research organisation, an agricultural company, an independent agricultural consultancy firm or a college or university. You may need to be prepared to move around the UK for job opportunities.

You can find jobs on websites such as Farmers Weekly, Farmers Guardian and The Scottish Farmer, as well as general recruitment websites and industry magazines.

What Does It Take

You need to be able to:

- get on with a wide range of people
- able to work alone or in a team
- make good judgements
- analyse and interpret data
- keep up to date with research and new developments
- manage budgets.

You need to have:

- good attention to detail
- organisational skills
- a keen interest in agriculture and farming
- good communication and negotiation skills

- good business and marketing skills
- strong analytical skills.

Training

- You would spend a number of years gaining experience on the job.
- You would attend a range of short courses and other training sessions relevant to the work you are doing.
- For technical advisory work you may need to do specialist training for example in fertilisers or agrochemicals.
- If you do not already hold a postgraduate qualification, you could improve your prospects by studying for one part time.
- Depending on the specialism you work in you might do BASIS Registration training and qualifications (for the pesticide, fertiliser and allied industries) or you could undergo training for the Fertiliser Advisers Certificate and Training Scheme (FACTS), which covers the crops, soil, air and water aspects of agriculture.
- You may be able to do a continuous professional development programme (CPD) as a member of a professional body, such as the [British Institute of Agricultural Consultants](#) or the [Institute of Agricultural Management](#).

Getting On

- After gaining experience you may become a senior advisor within your organisation.
- In some cases in order to gain promotion, you may have to move to different parts of the country.
- There can be opportunities within universities and colleges to do advanced research and consultancy work.
- After a lot of experience, you may be able to set up your own business offering advisory and consultancy services.

Contacts

Lantra Scotland

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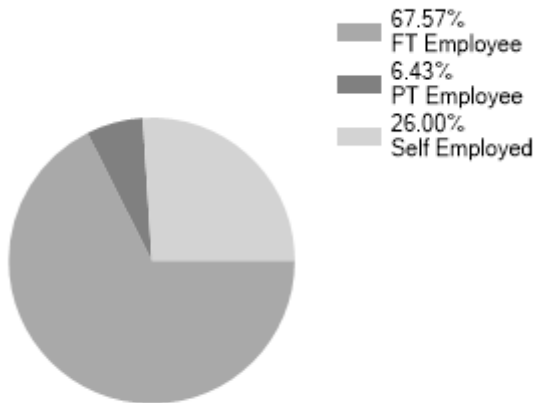
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Statistics

Employment Status UK %

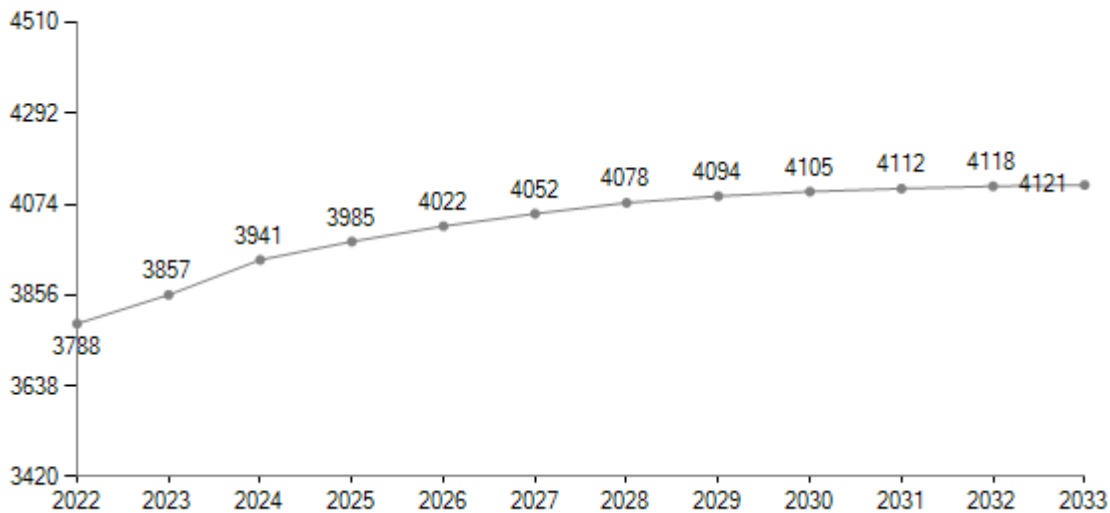


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)