

FARM BUILDING “BIBLE” TO BE RE-LAUNCHED BY RIDBA

- **Image available, see overleaf**

An up-to-date edition of the agricultural buildings bible that is a vital reference for farmers and estate managers considering constructing or maintaining their structures is to be published by the Rural and Industrial Design and Building Association (RIDBA).

The *Farm Buildings Handbook* is also aimed at contractors and designers who may not have an in-depth knowledge of the particular requirements of agricultural construction such as how much space to allow livestock and how much waste stock produces.

RIDBA is set to re-launch the handbook at the Agricultural Building Show at Myerscough College in Lancashire on April 7th when it will become apparent just how much things have changed since the book was first published by MAFF in 1961.

Back then, there were grants towards the cost of constructing farm buildings and so the quality of design and construction was controlled. Now there are no grants, and as working farm buildings are not covered by Building Control regulations, there is no third-party check on their design and construction.

Back then, health and safety legislation was not as rigorous as it is now – the total number of deaths at work reducing from 5.6% to 0.7% per 100,000 workers between 1961 and 2009, and a reduction in construction accidents likely to show a similar trend.

Back then, it was accepted that building contractors were the experts in building so their farmer clients were not expected to ensure they were themselves competent in health and safety. Now, farmers are partly responsible for the health and safety practices of the contractors they employ.

And back then, the green issue was in its infancy. Now there are strict regulations on environmental impacts such as slurry storage, use and disposal, nitrates, the storage of chemicals, disposal of dead stock and hazardous waste.

