

### EXAMPLES OF WHAT IT COVERS

#### Legal/planning/rules and regs

- \* Do you need planning permission?
- \* What are your permitted development rights?
- \* What steps do you need to take to meet health and safety rules?
- \* What are the latest regs for fuel/dirty water/silage effluent/asbestos storage?
- \* What do the IEE rules for mains electricity mean for farmer builders?
- \* How you deal with waste disposal?

#### Construction technology

- \* How do you select the right concrete mix for the job?
- \* What lengths/widths/angles/thicknesses of material do you need for foundations, purlins, spans, bays and roofs? What timber section sizes?
- \* What size and fall of gutter do you need?
- \* Which mortar mixes are best?
- \* How much overlap of roofing/wall sheets do you need to have?
- \* What are the electricity supply dos and don'ts?
- \* Can do you run three-phase motors off a single-phase supply?
- \* What's the best way of laying on a water supply?
- \* Should you sink a borehole?

#### Livestock production

- \* Waste management – how do you assess slurry or muck quantities?
- \* What's the best type of storage?
- \* What are the options for muckscrapers, slurry mixers, aerators, strainer boxes and separators?
- \* How do you maximise ventilation?
- \* What areas do you need per cow, sheep, pig or goat?
- \* How big should cubicles be?
- \* How big should the feeding area be?
- \* How wide should passageways be?
- \* What welfare rules do you need to comply with?

#### Crop storage

- \* What airflows do you need for effective drying?
- \* What are the ideal dimensions and structure for an intake pit?
- \* What are the particular requirements for a potato cold store or chitting house?
- \* How big does a machinery shed really need to be?
- \* What's the safest design for fuel or chemical stores?

# Check out the regs before putting up a new building

Thinking of putting up your own building? Here's a book you should read before you even dig the first hole, explains **David Cousins**

\* Among their many other skills, farmers have always been industrious and imaginative builders. Most will turn their hand to smaller jobs like laying concrete, doing plumbing or electrics and quite a few will tackle a bigger barn project.

Given the cost advantages of putting up a building using farm labour at quiet times of the year, that's likely to remain the case. But massive changes in waste, environmental and animal welfare legislation mean that life for the farmer-builder has become a lot more complicated in recent years.

For all those who fall into this category, the launch of a new version of the *Farm Buildings Handbook* at this year's Agricultural Buildings Show at Myerscough College, Lancashire on 7 April can only be good news.

Produced by the Rural and Industrial Design and Building Association (RIDBA), it was first published in 1961 and last updated in 1992, so a lot has changed in the intervening years.

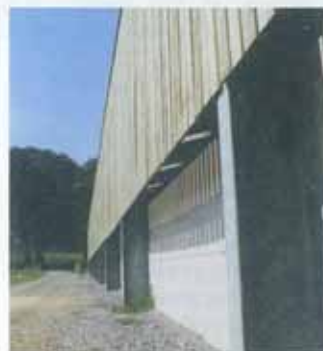
Back in the 1960s, says RIDBA national secretary Tony Hutchinson, farm buildings attracted grants, so the quality of design and construction was closely controlled. Now there are no grants and farm buildings aren't covered by Building Control regs so there are no third-



party checks any more.

Health and safety legislation has changed massively, too, not just in terms of what practices are allowed and not allowed but in the legal accountability of farmers. Back then, building contractors took responsibility for health and safety and farmers weren't expected to be involved. Now farmers are partly responsible for the safe working of contractors they employ.

And green legislation, unheard of a few years ago, is now an important factor for farmer-builders, says Mr Hutchinson. Slurry storage, nitrates, chemical and fuel storage, for instance, all



The RIDBA handbook helps farmers know what to look for in a building.

have a set of rules that have to be adhered, too.

The latest version of the *Farm Buildings Handbook* – which consists of about 200 A5 pages – covers all these areas. It's not intended to include every single aspect of farm buildings, says RIDBA, but is designed to be a guide to what needs to be considered.

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### AVAILABILITY

\* It's available on 7 April direct from RIDBA on 01449 676 049 or [www.ridba.org.uk](http://www.ridba.org.uk).

Or you can get it through specialist agricultural book distributors like the Landsman's Bookshop [www.landsmansbooks.com](http://www.landsmansbooks.com). Price is £12.



The handbook covers everything from concrete mixes to power supply.