



HAMPSHIRE & ISLE OF  
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## Rural communities urged to be aware of farm machinery fraud

We're urging members of our rural and farming communities to be aware of a farm machinery fraud that has recently been brought to the attention of police.

The general circumstances centre on fake adverts for the sale of farm machinery being published either on social media sites such as Facebook, or through other legitimate publications and magazines.

Victims, upon seeing the advert, contact the 'seller' and pay huge sums of money to purchase the farm machinery. Victims have been given addresses on the Isle of Wight to attend to collect the machinery, and travel across the country to the Island only to find no such equipment exists and they have been scammed.

Often the addresses given to victims are those of real Isle of Wight farmers who have no knowledge of the scam and who are then left in a vulnerable situation in which they are confronted by confused, upset and disgruntled victims of crime.

In other scenarios, victims have been promised to have the equipment delivered to them, but the goods never turn up and the 'seller' then disengages from all contact from the victim.

We have reached out to trade media whose publications have been targeted by scammers in this manner.

Our advice to members of the farming community is to be wary of this type of fraud and trust your instincts - if something appears too good to be true, it probably is. We encourage you to also consider the following:

- View the machinery in person first and ask for the registration and/or V5 document before handing over any money.
- Find out as much as possible about the seller; ask them about the history of the machinery and their business
- Request scans of the registration document and do some research on the item – consider phoning the previous owner or the DVLA
- Check that the engine number still correlates with the logbook
- Do an online HPI check to ensure there is no outstanding finance

For more detailed advice and information on how to protect yourself from fraud and cyber crime the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC), in partnership with the National Farmers Union, have developed a PDF security guide which you can access on the NCSC website here: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/cyber-security-for-farmers>

Furthermore, if you are a farmer and find yourself in a situation where you are confronted by a disgruntled victim of a scam, our advice is to remove yourself from the situation and if you feel threatened or in danger, ring 999 immediately.

Anyone who has been a victim of fraud is urged to contact Action Fraud in the first instance, either by calling 0300 123 2040, or visiting: <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/reporting-fraud-and-cyber-crime>