

Key dates for 2020 and links for further information

Guide to cross compliance 2020

www.gov.uk/guidance/guide-to-cross-compliance-in-england-2020

Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) guidance 2020

www.gov.uk/government/collections/bps-2020

Email

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Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm
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Our helpline gives technical and business advice to farmers on:

cross compliance | 'greening' | water use and quality pesticide use, including Integrated Pest Management planning

1 Jan: You must start following the rules in the cross compliance guide from this date. The Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) year starts. Land used to apply for BPS must be eligible all year.

1 Jan: Ecological focus area (EFA) period for hedges and trees in a line (which must be present all year unless newly planted) and buffer strips and field margins (which must be present all year). (BPS guidance)

1 Jan: EFA period for EFA fallow land (until 30 June). (BPS guidance)

1 Jan: You can apply organic manure with a high readily available nitrogen content (for example, slurry, poultry manures or liquid digested sewage sludge) to grassland and tillage land on shallow or sandy soils from this date if conditions are suitable and you adhere to the quantity restrictions for application of these manures. (SMR 1)

1 Jan: Beginning of the year for assessing the annual amount of livestock manure applied to your land. (SMR 1)

16 Jan: You can apply manufactured nitrogen fertilisers to grassland and tillage land from this date if conditions are suitable. (SMR 1)

1 Feb: You can apply organic manure with a high readily available nitrogen content (for example, slurry, poultry manures or liquid digested sewage sludge) to grassland and tillage land on all soil types from this date if conditions are suitable and you adhere to the quantity restrictions for application of these manures. (SMR 1)

28 Feb: End of the additional quantity restrictions for application of organic manures with a high readily available nitrogen content. (SMR 1)

1 Mar: You must not cut or trim hedges or trees from this date, but you can carry out hedge and tree coppicing and hedge laying from 1 March until 30 April. Fruit and nut trees in orchards, or trees acting as windbreaks in orchards, vineyards, hop yards or hop gardens are not included in the ban. (GAEC 7a and 7c)

31 Mar: If you hold a water abstraction licence, expect to receive your annual bill (or first part charge if you hold a two-part tariff agreement) for the forthcoming financial year. (GAEC 2)

1 Apr: You must not burn heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium on land, other than in upland areas, from this date. (GAEC 6)

1 Apr: If you hold a winter or all year-round water abstraction licence (authorising abstraction outside the period April to October), the Environment Agency will make actual abstraction return forms available to you from 1 April. You then have 28 days to send your readings to the Environment Agency. (GAEC 2)

16 Apr: You must not burn heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium in upland areas outside the burning season. The burning season is from 1 October to 15 April for uplands and from 1 November to 31 March for land not within an upland area. (GAEC 6)

30 Apr: You must have recorded the number of 'specified' livestock kept on your farm during the previous calendar year and calculated the amount of nitrogen they produced. You must also record the number and type of livestock in a building or hardstanding during the previous storage period. (SMR 1)

1 May: You must not carry out hedge or tree coppicing or hedge laying from this date. (GAEC 7a and 7c)

1 May: Crop diversification period and EFA period for nitrogen fixing crops begins (until 30 June) (BPS guidance)

30 June: End of crop diversification 'cropping' period and end of EFA fallow period. (BPS guidance)

1 Aug: If you have been granted a derogation by RPA, you may be able to cut or trim hedges throughout August, to sow oilseed rape or temporary grassland. (GAEC 7a)

1 Aug: Start of closed period for applying organic manure with a high readily available nitrogen content (for example, slurry, poultry manures or liquid digested sewage sludge) to tillage land on shallow or sandy soils except where crops will be sown on or before 15 September. (SMR 1)

20 Aug: EFA catch crops must be established by this date (and retained until at least 14 October) (BPS guidance)

1 Sept: You can cut or trim hedges and trees from this date. (GAEC 7a and 7c)

1 Sept: Start of closed period for applying organic manure with a high readily available nitrogen content (for example, slurry, poultry manures or liquid digested sewage sludge) to grassland on shallow or sandy soils. (SMR 1)

1 Sept: Start of closed period for applying manufactured nitrogen fertilisers to tillage land. (SMR 1)

15 Sept: Start of closed period for applying manufactured nitrogen fertilisers to grassland. (SMR 1)

16 Sept: Start of closed period for applying organic manure with a high readily available nitrogen content (for example, slurry, poultry manures or liquid digested sewage sludge) to tillage land on shallow or sandy soils which have been sown with crops on or before 15 September. (SMR 1)

1 Oct: You can burn heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium on land in upland areas from this date. (GAEC 6)

1 Oct: Start of closed period for applying organic manure with a high readily available nitrogen content (for example, slurry, poultry manures or liquid digested sewage sludge) to tillage land on soils which are not shallow or sandy. (SMR 1)

1 Oct: EFA cover crops must be established by this date (and retained until at least 15 January). (BPS guidance)

14 Oct: EFA catch crops must be retained until at least this date. (BPS guidance)

15 Oct: Start of closed period for applying organic manure with a high readily available nitrogen content (for example, slurry, poultry manures or liquid digested sewage sludge) to grassland on soils which are not shallow or sandy. (SMR 1)

31 Oct: If you hold a summer water abstraction licence (authorising abstraction wholly within the months of April to October), the Environment Agency will make actual abstraction return forms available to you from 31 October. You then have 28 days to send your readings to the Environment Agency. (GAEC 2)

1 Nov: You can burn heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium on land, other than in upland areas, from this date. (GAEC 6)

30 Nov: If you have a two-part tariff agreement for your water abstraction licence, expect to receive your second part charge after 30 November. (GAEC 2)

1 Dec: BPS payment window opens. (BPS guidance)

1 Dec: You need to carry out your annual inventory of sheep and goats. (SMR 8)

31 Dec: Official end of the BPS scheme year. (BPS guidance)