



**Farming**  
Advice Service

## Welcome to the Farming Advice Service newsletter

Thank you for continuing to subscribe to our monthly newsletter. We hope we are providing you with a valuable service, but welcome any feedback or suggestions on topics you would like to see covered in future editions.

If you do not already receive the Farming Advice Service (FAS) newsletter straight to your inbox, but would like to, please email [bookings@farmingadvice.org.uk](mailto:bookings@farmingadvice.org.uk) with 'Register for newsletter' in the subject line. Alternatively, please visit [farmingadvice.org.uk](http://farmingadvice.org.uk) and enter your email address into the newsletter sign up box. Your details will not be shared with any third parties.

### Contact us

**FAS technical advice line: 03000 200 301**

[advice@farmingadvice.org.uk](mailto:advice@farmingadvice.org.uk)

[farmingadvice.org.uk](http://farmingadvice.org.uk)



We would be grateful if you could spare a few moments to complete this **short survey** about the new layout of the FAS newsletter

Please contact us with any feedback or suggestions on topics you would like to see in future editions

## March 2021 - Issue 61

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# Key dates

Below are details of the forthcoming key dates that you should be aware of.

<b>1 April</b>	You must not burn heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium on land, <b>other than in upland areas</b> , from this date. The burning season for land not in an upland area is from 1 November to 31 March. ( <a href="#">GAEC* 6</a> )
<b>16 April</b>	You must not burn heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium <b>in upland areas</b> from this date. The burning season for upland areas is from 1 October to 15 April. ( <a href="#">GAEC 6</a> )
<b>28 April</b>	If you hold a winter and/or all-year-round abstraction licence (the authorised period of abstraction does not fall wholly between 1 April to 31 October), the Environment Agency will ask you at the end of March 2021 to report your water abstraction return for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. You will need to submit your return by 28 April 2021. ( <a href="#">GAEC 2</a> )
<b>30 April</b>	If you are in a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ), 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. ( <a href="#">SMR** 1</a> )
<b>1 May</b>	You must not carry out hedge or tree coppicing, or hedge laying from this date. ( <a href="#">GAEC 7a</a> and <a href="#">GAEC 7c</a> ).
<b>17 May</b>	The deadline for Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) 2021 applications without penalty is midnight on 17 May (including young and new farmer applications). This is also the deadline to transfer entitlements and to have the land at your disposal. ( <a href="#">GOV.UK</a> )
<b>17 May</b>	The deadline for Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship revenue claims without penalty is midnight on 17 May. This is also the deadline to transfer entitlements and to have the land at your disposal. ( <a href="#">GOV.UK</a> )

In case you missed them...

<b>28 February</b>	If you are in an NVZ, this date marks the end of the quantity restrictions for applying organic manures with a high, readily available nitrogen content. This is subject to the <a href="#">Farming Rules for Water</a> being complied with and there is agronomic justification. ( <a href="#">SMR 1</a> )
<b>1 March</b>	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. ( <a href="#">GAEC 7a</a> and <a href="#">GAEC 7c</a> )
<b>18 March</b>	The BPS application window opened for 2021. ( <a href="#">BPS 2021</a> )
<b>18 March</b>	Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship revenue claim submission period opened for 2021. ( <a href="#">GOV.UK</a> )

For more details about the information provided in the key dates table, please visit the [Guide to cross compliance in England 2021](#), the [Rural Payments Agency key dates 2021](#) and [BPS 2021](#) pages of GOV.UK

\* GAEC = Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition

\*\* SMR = Statutory Management Requirement

## How can FAS help you?

### Free and confidential advice

FAS provides **free, confidential** advice on cross compliance requirements, some aspects of the Water Framework Directive (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 (such as silage, slurry and agricultural fuel oil (SSAFO), and waste exemptions) and regulations on the sustainable use of pesticides. The cross compliance rules apply to you if you are a Basic Payment Scheme (BPS), Countryside Stewardship or Environmental Stewardship claimant. FAS updates the farming sector on relevant Government farming policy that is applicable in England and the actions that can be taken to help farmers to be compliant with regulations.

England's domestic farming legislation requires an advisory system that covers cross compliance, water protection and aspects of pesticide use. In England, this is provided by the Farming Advice Service (FAS). The advice given to individual farmers must be **confidential** – that is, FAS **must not** disclose any personal or individual information, or data it obtains during its advisory activities.

### Getting in contact with the advice line

Farmers requiring telephone advice from FAS can contact the **Rural Services Helpline** on **03000 200 301** Monday to Friday between **08:30 and 17:00**. Our helpline is operating as normal and we continue to support farmers.

The Rural Services Helpline provides a single number for all **FAS, Rural Payments Agency, Animal and Plant Health Agency, Natural England and forestry** enquiries. By providing a single point of contact, the Government aims to make it simpler for farmers to access technical guidance on a range of topics, including cross compliance, agricultural payment schemes and animal health inspections.

You can also email enquiries to [advice@farmingadvice.org.uk](mailto:advice@farmingadvice.org.uk)



## Support and advice for Countryside Stewardship (CS) Mid Tier applicants

*Natural England, on behalf of the Rural Payments Agency (RPA), is providing support and advice for Countryside Stewardship Mid Tier scheme applicants through a series of free webinars and one-to-one advice sessions. The advice, which will be provided online, aims to help applicants develop a high-quality application for an agreement that will benefit the local environment and the farm business.*

For more information and to book your place, please refer to the Countryside Stewardship Mid Tier pages on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

There are several scheme changes for Countryside Stewardship agreements that will start on 1 January 2022. This support programme will provide information on these, and the land management and capital grant opportunities available through the

scheme. Applications for the Mid Tier scheme and Wildlife Offers can be submitted until 30 July 2021 (30 April for capital only applications).

If you have any Countryside Stewardship enquiries or would like to request an application pack, please call the RPA on 03000 200 301.



## Basic Payment Scheme applications 2021

The Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) 2021 application window opened on Thursday 18 March. You have until midnight on Monday 17 May to submit your application and supporting information. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has published information on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) about how to apply and the updates to the BPS in 2021.

You can find more information on the BPS 2021 page at [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk). The RPA has also produced [a blog on BPS applications](#).

# Farmers invited to take first step towards greener future with the Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot

The window is open for farmers to [express an interest](#) in taking part in the Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot.

Farmers are being encouraged to take part in the pilot of the Sustainable Farming Incentive – the next step in the Government’s landmark plans to reward farmers and land managers for sustainable farming practices.

The Sustainable Farming Incentive is the first in a package of three environmental land management schemes, which will provide a straightforward way for farmers to get paid for producing [public goods](#). These include cleaner water, cleaner air and carbon reduction.

All three schemes will be tailored to help farmers deliver environmental benefits on their land and be paid for doing so:

- The **Sustainable Farming Incentive** will pay farmers for environmentally sustainable actions – ones that are simple to do and that don’t require previous experience in agri-environment schemes. For example, The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) might pay farmers to manage and plant hedgerows to provide year-round food, shelter, and breeding cover for birds and insects.

- **Local Nature Recovery** will pay for actions such as creating, managing or restoring habitats, natural flood management and species management.
- **Landscape Recovery** will focus on landscape and ecosystem recovery through projects looking to achieve large-scale forest and woodland creation, peatland restoration or the creation and restoration of coastal habitats such as wetlands and salt marsh.

Defra will start to pilot the Sustainable Farming Incentive this year with an initial group of several hundred farmers. Then, in March 2022, the scheme will start to be rolled out to recipients of the [Basic Payment Scheme \(BPS\)](#).

## How the Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot will work

The [full details](#) of the new scheme were published on Wednesday 10 March and [expressions of interest](#) for the pilot opened on Monday 15 March. The first pilot agreements will start in October 2021.

The Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot will build on what Defra is learning

through the [tests and trials](#), which started in 2018.

Tests and trials focus on trying out individual parts of the future scheme, such as land management plans or different payment methods – whereas the pilot will test a working version of the scheme from start to finish.

## Who is eligible for the pilot

Defra would like to involve several hundred farmers in the first phase of the Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot, from a range of farm types from across England.

For the first phase of piloting, a farmer is only eligible if they:

- Are a recipient of the BPS and registered on the [Rural Payments Agency](#) system.
- Enter land parcels (fields) into the pilot that do not have an existing agri-environment agreement on them.
- Have management control of the land for the duration of the pilot. They must either own the land with management control or have a tenancy of enough length to implement their pilot agreement (including the landlord’s permission if required).
- Enter land parcels that are in England.
- Enter land parcels that are not common land.

Later, Defra is planning to extend eligibility to include farmers who aren’t eligible for, or don’t claim, BPS. Also, specific farm types not eligible for the first phase, such as farms on common land, might also be added.

## How to take part

If you would like to take part in the Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot, you have to submit a short, simple [online expression of interest form](#) by 23:59 hours on 11 April 2021. You will find out from 24 May 2021 if your expression of interest has been successful or not.

Defra will then invite farmers from a mix of farms and locations to make a pilot application. If they are oversubscribed, farmers will be selected at random instead.

People who have been invited to apply will then need to prepare their full application. If they’re eligible, they will then enter into a pilot agreement.

The first agreements will begin in October 2021.

For more information about the **Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot**, please [click here](#).

# Public rights of way – a reminder of the requirements

Many farmers will have land with public rights of way (PROW), which fall into the following categories:

- footpaths;
- bridleways;
- restricted byways;
- byways open to all traffic (BOATs).



If you own or occupy agricultural land with a PROW, there are several rules you need to be aware of. Below are a few of the key rules you need to comply with. If you are a Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) claimant, you must comply with these cross compliance requirements or you could receive a reduction in your payments.

Full guidance is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

## PROW management during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

The restrictions brought in during the COVID-19 pandemic have increased the number of people using PROWs in many places. If you are a landowner, you do not have legal rights to block PROWs, but there are some temporary measures that you may consider introducing:

- Displaying notices that encourage the public to consider using alternative routes that do not pass through gardens and farmyards;
- Offering an alternative route around gardens and farmyards (only where it is safe to do so). You must gain permission from relevant landowners and make sure the route is safe for users and livestock. You must continue to maintain the original PROW.
- Tying gates open so walkers do not need to touch them.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) understands that the increase in the number of visitors to PROWs is causing issues. Natural England is working to refresh the [countryside code](#) further, which will be released in the coming months. It will be promoted nationally through the press and at a local level to reach as many people as possible.

## Please keep PROWs on your land clear of obstructions

It is important for you to keep routes visible and clear of obstructions – such as fences, encroaching crops (other than grass) and barbed wire. This also includes making sure that vegetation does not encroach onto the route from the sides or above. Obstructing a PROW intentionally is a criminal offence and the highway authority has the right to demand that you remove any obstructions.

## Check the guidance before replacing a stile or gate

Styles and gates must be maintained so they are safe and easy to use. You can claim 25% (or sometimes more) from the highway authority for replacement work. Some authorities provide materials, while others may carry out the work themselves.

Where a stile needs replacing, please always consult the highway authority first to decide if this should be replaced with a gap or a gate. If you are considering adding a new structure on a PROW, then you must seek permission from the highway authority. Unauthorised structures will be classed as obstructions and may be removed by the highway authority at your expense.

## Stay up to date with restrictions on livestock and agriculture

Some animals are considered potentially dangerous to be kept on land that is crossed by a PROW and you could be prosecuted if they are. For example, you should carefully consider the temperament of a bull before putting it in a field with public access. For more information, please visit the [HSE website](#).

## Pesticide use on a PROW

When applying pesticides, please ensure that you refer to HSE [Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products](#) before undertaking any work.

If you need to spray land crossed by a PROW, then use pesticides approved for such use and follow the product instructions. If members of the public are using the PROW, then spraying must be stopped.

## Byways and field edge paths

You must not cultivate (such as plough, or apply pesticides or fertiliser) any BOATs or restricted byways. The same applies to footpaths or bridleways that follow a field edge. Some PROWs may have a recorded legal width that must be adhered to. This can be checked on the definitive statement that accompanies the definitive map for PROWs held by the local highway authority. However, where it is not recorded, the following standard widths will apply:

- 1.5 metres for a field-edge footpath;
- 3 metres for a field-edge bridleway, BOAT or restricted byway.



## Reinstate ploughed cross-field PROWs

Cultivating a cross-field footpath or bridleway should be avoided. If cultivation is necessary, you must make sure they remain visible on the ground, either to the legal recorded width, or, if this is not recorded, to a minimum width of 1 metre for a footpath and 2 metres for a bridleway. They should be reasonable to use 14 days after the first cultivation. After this 14 days, if any further cultivation is required, the PROW should be reasonable to use after 24 hours.

## Find out how to create, close, upgrade, downgrade or re-route a PROW

Highway authorities can make certain changes to the PROW network in their areas.

You can agree to create a new PROW or apply to your highway authority to make an order extinguishing, diverting, upgrading or downgrading a footpath, bridleway or restricted byway in some circumstances. More information can be obtained from the rights of way section of your highway authority. More information about making changes to the legal status of a PROW can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

# Updating your details held by the Rural Payments service

The [Rural Payments service](https://www.gov.uk/rural-payments-service) is the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) online registration system for farmers, animal keepers, and rural traders and businesses. It is important that your details held by the Rural Payment service are kept up to date as these are what will be used to contact you about important issues.

The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has produced a step-by-step guide on how to register and update your details on the Rural Payments service on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

This page is also where any planned maintenance dates for the Rural Payments service are published, so it is important to keep checking it.

There have been some recent updates to the Rural Payments service. These include making sure that the registered email address is being used by only one person. This makes it easier to identify the person getting in contact. For more information on this, please visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

# FAS webinar recordings

From December 2020 to March 2021, the Farming Advice Service hosted six webinars on different themes such as the Farming Rules for Water and the agricultural transition plan. Each of the webinars was recorded and you can watch them for free on our website by clicking on the links below.

- [Farming Rules for Water.](#)
- [Nitrate Vulnerable Zones.](#)
- [Cross compliance and greening update – what's new for 2021?](#)
- [Heading towards net zero emissions in agriculture.](#)
- [The agricultural transition – existing farm support schemes.](#)
- [The agricultural transition – future farm support schemes.](#)



# Nitrate Vulnerable Zones –

## records you should have in place by 30 April



Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) are areas designated as being at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution. They account for approximately 55% of agricultural land in England. Towards the end of 2020, The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) undertook a review of the designated NVZ areas in England and concluded that the designations for 2017-2020 will remain the same for 2021-2024. You can use the interactive map on [GOV.UK](https://gov.uk) to find out if any of your land is within a designated NVZ, if it is, you will need to comply with the NVZ rules. Record keeping is an important part of the NVZ rules. This article details the livestock and grassland records that you should have in place by 30 April each year.

### Deadline reminders

#### Returns if you were granted an NVZ grassland derogation in 2020

If you held an NVZ [grassland derogation](#) for 2020, you are required to submit a [fertiliser account](#) to the Environment Agency by 30 April 2021. This will include details of your farming practices and fertiliser use for the period 1 January to 31 December 2020, showing:

- the total agricultural area in hectares of the derogated holding;
- the number and category of livestock kept on your farm;
- the amount and type of livestock manure imported to or exported from your farm;
- the weight (tonnes) and nitrogen content of all manufactured nitrogen fertiliser stocks kept on, imported to or exported from your farm.

You can download the Defra standard value tables to help with these records [here](#). You can submit your records electronically by email ([regaware@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:regaware@environment-agency.gov.uk)).

For more information, please visit [GOV.UK](https://gov.uk).

#### Livestock manure N farm limit

By 30 April, you must complete a calculation to show you have kept within the livestock manure N farm limit for the previous calendar year.

The nitrogen (N) content of livestock manure that can be applied on your holding (directly by grazing livestock or by spreading) is limited to 170kg/ha/calendar year (unless you hold a grassland derogation).

The limit applies as an average across your holding. It is recommended that you plan a year ahead to make sure you do not exceed this limit. You must use standard values to work out how much nitrogen is produced by the livestock on your farm or brought onto your farm. These standard values can be found in the '[blank field records and standard values tables](#)' on GOV.UK.

#### Livestock records

By 30 April, you must record the following information for the previous calendar year:

- the area of your holding in hectares;
- the number and type of livestock kept on your farm during the previous year together with the number of days each animal spent on the holding;
- a calculation of the amount of nitrogen produced by these animals and volume of manure produced during the storage period. The storage period for pigs and poultry is from 1 October to 1 April (inclusive) and for cattle, sheep, goats, deer and horses it is from 1 October to 1 March (inclusive);

- any imports/exports of livestock manure;
- a copy of your sampling and analysis of manures and/or output from software (for example, ENCASH);
- the dates and locations of any field sites used for storing manure.

**You must keep these records for at least 5 years**

#### Grassland management

By 30 April, you must have records on how any grassland was managed (cut or grazed) in the previous calendar year.

**You can use the following resources to find more information on record-keeping requirements for land located in an NVZ:**

- the [September 2020 FAS newsletter](#), which includes a summary of the records required;
- the [NVZ webinar](#) delivered by Briony Burge in December 2020, which includes an overview of the requirements if you have land in an NVZ;
- the FAS [NVZ: Back to basics](#) article, which has an overview of the NVZ requirements;
- a [handy guide to record keeping](#) in an NVZ was produced by Briony Burge of Creedy Associates Ltd in conjunction with Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) and Wessex Water.

# Water abstraction reminders

*As we near the start of the irrigation season, the Environment Agency is encouraging all irrigators to make sure they fully understand all the conditions of their licence(s). They should ensure that abstractions are only taken from authorised locations and during licensed periods, volumes are not exceeded and accurate records are kept of meter readings. Those who have licences with compensation discharges and re-abstraction conditions should ensure that water is released at the same time as abstraction is taking place.*

[Under Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition \(GAEC\) 2: Water abstraction](#), you must have a licence from the Environment Agency to take (abstract) more than 20 cubic metres (4,400 gallons) of water from an inland surface water (such as rivers, streams, lakes or springs) or underground source for irrigation in a 24-hour period. Once you have an abstraction licence, you must comply with its conditions. You do not need a licence if you abstract 20 cubic metres or less in a 24-hour period, provided your abstraction is part of a single operation. If you abstract from the same source at multiple points, the exemption only applies if the combined total of all abstractions is 20 cubic metres or less a day.

The deadline for receiving applications for previously exempt activities (including trickle irrigation) closed last year (30 June 2020). Any abstraction undertaken after that date without a valid application having been submitted by the deadline will be unlawful and will [require a new application](#). This should be submitted through the normal licensing process before any further abstraction can take place.

More information on water abstraction (including links) is available in the [FAS water abstraction poster](#).

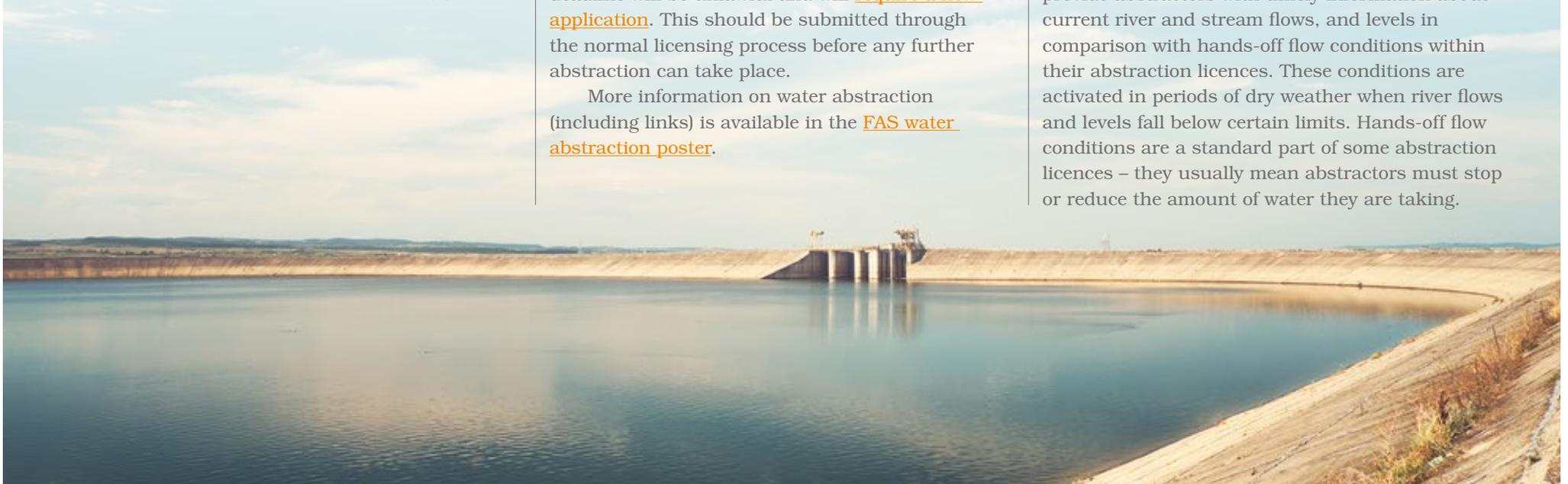
## Water abstraction returns (2020/2021 winter and all-year-round)

If you hold a winter and all-year-round abstraction licence (the authorised period of abstraction does not fall wholly between 1 April to 31 October), the Environment Agency will ask you at the end of March to report your water abstraction return for the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. You will need to submit your return by 28 April 2021.

## Irrigation prospects and dry weather management

The Environment Agency's initial irrigation prospects across England are good – see the [FAS Technical Articles page](#). An update will be provided towards the end of April – the beginning of a typical irrigation season. The latest information on river flows and groundwater levels is on [GOV.UK](#).

The Environment Agency will continue to provide abstractors with timely information about current river and stream flows, and levels in comparison with hands-off flow conditions within their abstraction licences. These conditions are activated in periods of dry weather when river flows and levels fall below certain limits. Hands-off flow conditions are a standard part of some abstraction licences – they usually mean abstractors must stop or reduce the amount of water they are taking.



# Cross compliance inspections – common breaches and guidance



*If you are claiming Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) payments, or have an Environmental Stewardship (ES) or Countryside Stewardship (CS) agreement, you should be aware that you may be subject to a cross compliance inspection. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) and the Animal Plant and Health Agency (APHA) are required to undertake separate cross compliance inspections on 1% of claimants of BPS. APHA will only inspect claimants keeping farm animals. In this article, we summarise the common Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAEC) and Statutory Management Requirements (SMR) non-compliances that are found during inspections and where you can read more information to reduce the risk of not complying with the rules.*

## The inspection process

During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, inspectors are following the Government guidelines and adhering to social distancing rules at all times. Inspectors will call before their visit to explain the arrangements and to find out if there are any issues or vulnerabilities they should be aware of.

Usually, you will not always receive advance warning of these visits and it could happen more than once in a year. If you are given advance warning by the RPA or APHA, it is likely to be less than 48 hours before the inspection and they will provide you with a list of the records the inspector will need to check.

When an inspector arrives they will tell you what is involved and what you need to do. You must co-operate with the inspector, and provide help and equipment to allow checks to be made safely.

At the end of the inspection, the inspector will explain to you what has been found. If anything is wrong, the RPA will send more information to you to explain how it affects your claim(s). This will be in writing and will be sent within 3 months of the date of the inspection. If you refuse to allow an inspector on your land or do not co-operate, you could lose all of your payment(s).

Cross compliance SMR/ GAEC requirement	Common breaches	Recommendations for further information
<a href="#">SMR 1: Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZ)</a>	Incomplete records and temporary field heaps positioned in a high-risk location.	<a href="#">The FAS website</a> has a suite of resources (webinar recording, newsletters and a technical article). Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) has also produced <a href="#">a handy guide</a> to NVZ and record keeping.
<a href="#">SMR 4: Food and feed law</a>	Failure to ensure that the bovine tuberculosis (bTB) testing intervals for eligible animals are being complied with. Aspects of this control measure are covered by specific standards for raw milk.	The <a href="#">TB advisory service</a> offers free advice for cattle farmers in high-risk and edge areas.  You can also use the <a href="#">TB hub</a> that has free resources such as podcasts and FAQs.
<a href="#">SMR 7: Cattle identification and registration</a>	Failure to report movement and/or death, loss of ear tags or animals not found in farm records.	FAS has produced a <a href="#">technical article</a> on top tips for cattle identification and registration.

Cross compliance SMR/ GAEC requirement	Common breaches	Recommendations for further information
<a href="#">SMR 8: Sheep and goat identification</a>	Missing records (such as movements, date of birth, deaths and annual inventory).	FAS has produced a <a href="#">technical article</a> on top tips for sheep and goat identification and registration.
<a href="#">SMR 13: Animal welfare</a>	Insufficient skilled staff to prevent animal welfare problems from occurring. Delays in treating sick animals, and missing records for medicine and mortality. Insufficient feed/water supply.	It is against the law to neglect livestock and fail to provide for their basic needs. You can read about the requirements under SMR 13 in the <a href="#">October 2020 FAS newsletter</a> .
<a href="#">GAEC 1: Establishment of buffer strips along watercourses</a>	No holding maps showing nearby surface waters (within 10 metres); nearby springs, wells and boreholes (within 50 metres); or the boundary of the holding.	There is no particular standard for your holding map, providing it shows the necessary information. For example, it could be hand drawn as it is not required to be to scale.  You can also use <a href="#">MAGIC</a> maps, or the Environment Agency's <a href="#">Check for Drinking Water Safeguard Zones and NVZs map</a> .  The Catchment Sensitive Farming guide <a href="#">Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) Record Keeping and My Farm Business</a> includes examples of how to create risk maps that would be acceptable for SMR 1 and GAEC 1.
<a href="#">GAEC 7a: Boundaries</a>	Applying pesticide or fertiliser, not taking all reasonable steps to maintain a green cover, or cultivating within the 2-metre protection zone of a hedgerow.	The rules on boundaries are set out on <a href="#">GOV.UK</a> .  <a href="#">Championing the Farmed Environment (CFE)</a> has lots of resources on its website, including information on the benefits of <a href="#">maintaining a field boundary</a> .
<a href="#">GAEC 7b: Public Rights of Way</a>	A public right of way has been wilfully obstructed.	You can read more about the public rights of way requirements on <a href="#">page 5</a> of this newsletter.  The full rules are detailed on <a href="#">GOV.UK</a> .

FAS can provide free advice to those looking for further assistance in understanding the requirements of specific GAECs and SMRs. Please call **03000 200 301** Monday to Friday between **8.30am** and **5pm** or email [advice@farmingadvice.org.uk](mailto:advice@farmingadvice.org.uk). Please be aware that advice provided by FAS is completely confidential and will not be shared with any other organisation.

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## Sign up to FAS services



### Get the latest updates by following FAS on Twitter

Follow us on [@DefraFAS](https://twitter.com/DefraFAS) for up-to-the-minute updates on publications, events and industry information.



### Subscribe to the free FAS Newsletter

If you don't already receive the FREE monthly FAS newsletter, please email [bookings@farmingadvice.org.uk](mailto:bookings@farmingadvice.org.uk) with **'Register for newsletter'** in the subject line. Alternatively, please visit [farmingadvice.org.uk](http://farmingadvice.org.uk) and enter your email address into the newsletter sign up box.

In line with data protection regulations, such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018, FAS has updated its privacy policy to explain how your data is kept safe.

To view the policy, please visit [www.farmingadvice.org.uk/events/privacy/](http://www.farmingadvice.org.uk/events/privacy/)