

The end of Cross Compliance:

What does that mean for Compliance Requirements on Farm?

The Agriculture Transition is now well underway as England moves from the European Union's (EU) Common Agricultural Policy to Environmental Land Management schemes.

In England, Direct Payments are being phased out. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) has replaced the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) with delinked payments in 2024. This simplifies the payments as they are phased out. As the name suggests, delinked payment remove the link between payments and the land. Payments are being made between 2024 and 2027, but the payment amount will decrease each year as progressive reductions are applied. After 2027, these payments will stop completely.

The funds released are being redirected to a suite of new schemes including the Sustainable Farming Incentive, Countryside Stewardship and Landscape Recovery. Not all will be relevant to all farms, but it is important to keep abreast of what is available, and whether it makes sense on your farm, to ensure no opportunities are missed.

Delinking will also mean the end of the Cross Compliance regime. If you are a farmer or land manager and claimed rural payments between 2005 and 2023, you had to follow a set of rules called cross compliance, including standards of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAECs) and Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs). While cross compliance is ending, those who are farming will still have to comply with regulatory standards on the environment, animal and plant health, and animal welfare. These regulatory standards sit under domestic (UK and England) legislation and regulation, as well as some retained European legislation. Compliance will be monitored by the existing statutory bodies and regulated in a fair, proportionate and consistent way. This means, wherever possible, working with farmers to get it right and giving them opportunities to self-correct before taking formal action.

Table 1 below shows alignment between the previous Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions (GAECs) and Statutory Management Requirements (SMRs) under cross compliance, with the different pieces of underlying legislation, regulation or order that contain these requirements and continue to apply in 2024.

You can read the [Rules for Farmers and Land Managers](#) webpages on GOV.UK for further detail on what you must do and specific compliance requirements when you keep livestock or manage land. These are grouped by farming activities rather than individual regulations so you can find the ones that apply to you.

In addition, the [Farming Advisory Service](#) already provides detail on some of the different requirements that continue to apply on farm, such as Nutrient Management and Farming Rules for Water.

If you have any further questions please contact the [Farming Advisory Service](#).

Table 1: Previous GAEC and SMR requirements that existed under cross compliance, and the different pieces of underlying legislation, regulation or order that contain these requirements.

Previous GAEC or SMR	Underlying Legislation, Regulation or Order that contains specific requirements
GAEC 1: Establishment of buffer strips along watercourses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural Diffuse Pollution Regulations 2018 - Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) (England) Regulations 2010
GAEC 2: Water Abstraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water Resources Act 1991
GAEC 3: Groundwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016
GAEC 4: Providing minimum soil cover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no directly corresponding legislation providing for a minimum soil cover, however the Farming Rules for Water set out generalised soil cover and erosion measures where it may prevent agricultural diffuse pollution.
GAEC 5: Minimising soil erosion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural Diffuse Pollution (England) Regulations 2018
GAEC 6: Maintaining the level of organic matter in soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Crop Residues (Burning) Regulations 1993 - The Heather and Grass Burning (England) Regulations 2007 - The Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) (England) (No 2) Regulations 2006 - The Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999
GAEC 7a: Boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Hedgerow Regulations 1997¹
GAEC 7b: Public Rights of Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Highways Act 1980 - Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
GAEC 7c: Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Forestry Act 1967 - The Town and Country Planning Act 1990
GAEC 7d: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
GAEC 7e Monuments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979
SMR1: Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural Diffuse Pollution (England) Regulations 2018 - Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations 2015
SMR 2: Wild Birds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 - Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
SMR 3: Habitats and Species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 - Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulation 2017

<p>SMR 4: Food and feed law</p>	<p>UK Legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Animals and Animal Products (Examination for Residues and Maximum Residue Limits) (England and Scotland) Regulations 2015 - Food Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 - The Food Safety and Hygiene (England) Regulations 2013 - The Tuberculosis (England) Order 2014 <p>Enforcement powers provided by-</p> <p>The Animal Feed (Composition, Marketing and Use) (England) Regulations 2015;</p> <p>The Animal Feed (Hygiene, Sampling etc. and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2015;</p> <p>The Animal Feed (England) Regulations 2010</p> <p>Pesticides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/pesticides-in-food <p>Milk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/dairy-registration-and-inspections - https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/media/document/milk-hygiene-guide-for-milk-producers_0.pdf <p>Due to trading agreements with the EU, various EU rules also still apply to products for export-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regulation 852/2004 - Regulation, 853/2004 - Regulation 854/2004 - 852/853/854 – 2004 - Regulation 1107/2009 <p>Animal Feed Regulations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 183/2005 (feed hygiene). - 767/2009 (placing on the market and use of feed). - 1831/2003 (feed additives) - DIRECTIVE 2002/32/EC (undesirable substances in animal feed)
<p>SMR 5: Restrictions on the use of substances having hormonal or thyrostatic action and beta-agonists in farm animals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Animals and Animal Products (Examination for Residues and Maximum Residue Limits)(England and Scotland) Regulations 2015
<p>SMR 6: Pig identification and registration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pigs (Records, Identification and Movement) Order 2011
<p>SMR 7: Cattle identification and registration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Cattle Identification Regulations 2007

SMR 8: Sheep and goat identification	- Sheep and Goats (Records, Identification and Movement) (England) Order 2009
SMR 9: Prevention and control of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs)	- TSE (England) Regulations 2010
SMR 10: Plant Protection Products (PPPs)	- The Food and Environmental Protection Act 1985 - Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulation 2012
SMR 11 Welfare of calves	- The Animal Welfare Act 2006 - The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 - Mutilations (Permitted Procedures) (England) Regulations 2007
SMR 12: Welfare of pigs	- The Animal Welfare Act 2006 - The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 - Mutilations (Permitted Procedures) (England) Regulations 2007
SMR 13: Welfare of animals	- The Animal Welfare Act 2006 - The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 - Mutilations (Permitted Procedures) (England) Regulations 2007