



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

The guide to cross compliance in England

2015

- Basic Payment Scheme
- Countryside Stewardship
- Entry Level Stewardship
- Higher Level Stewardship
- English Woodland Grant Scheme

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Introduction

What is cross compliance?

'Cross compliance' is a set of rules which tells applicants what they must (and must not) do to receive rural payments for:

- the Basic Payment Scheme
- Countryside Stewardship
- Entry Level Stewardship (including Organic Entry Level Stewardship and Uplands Entry Level Stewardship)
- Higher Level Stewardship (including Organic Higher Level Stewardship and Uplands Higher Level Stewardship, but not including HLS agreements that started before 1 January 2007)
- Woodland Management Grant and Farm Woodland Premium elements of English Woodland Grant Scheme.

Cross compliance is made up of 'Statutory Management Requirements' (SMRs) and 'Good Agricultural and Environmental Conditions' (GAECs). They are about:

- public, animal and plant health
- environment, climate change and good agricultural condition of land
- animal welfare.

Cross compliance and other legislation

This guide covers a variety of activities. In most cases, these are things that claimants should be doing anyway – under European and UK legislation – even if they don't apply for rural payments.

Where there are other rules about particular topics, we've said so in the 'More information' section of each GAEC and SMR. Claimants should follow this guidance if it applies to them but it doesn't form part of cross compliance and so won't affect payments for the above schemes.

Which rules apply to you?

Use this guide to work out which SMRs and GAECs apply to you, and what you need to do to follow them. Depending on the type of holding you have, you may not need to follow every SMR and GAEC.



Some GAECs and SMRs have this warning sign at the top of the page (see left). These are the rules that people often don't follow properly – and only realise when they get inspected and lose money. Take extra care when you read these and make sure you know exactly what you need to do.

For more information about common failures, see ['Cross compliance: 2013 inspection results.'](#)

Key dates in 2015

Things that claimants should (and shouldn't) do throughout the year.

January

- 1** You must start following the cross compliance rules from this date. This date is also officially the start of the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS).
- 1** 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** Beginning of the year for assessing the annual amount of livestock manure applied to your land. (SMR 1)
- 16** You can apply manufactured nitrogen fertilisers to grassland and tillage land from this date if conditions are suitable. (SMR 1)

February

- 1** 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** End of the quantity restrictions for application of organic manures with a high readily available nitrogen content. (SMR 1)

March

- 1** You must not cut hedgerows or trees from this date, but you can carry out hedge laying and coppicing from 1 March until 30 April. Orchards are not included in the ban. (GAEC 7A and 7C)
- 1** You must not cast up traditional hedgebanks from this date. (GAEC 7A)
- 31** 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 from 31 March. (GAEC 2)

April

- 1** You must not burn heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium on land, other than in upland areas, from this date. (GAEC 6)
- 1** 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** You must not burn heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium in upland areas from this date. (GAEC 6)
- 30** 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)

May

- 1** You must not carry out hedge-laying or coppicing from this date. (GAEC 7A)

August

- 1** If you have been granted a derogation by RPA, you may be able to cut hedgerows from this date. (GAEC 7A)
- 1** 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)

September

- 1** You can cut hedgerows and trees from this date. (GAEC 7A and 7C)
- 1** You can cast up traditional hedgebanks from this date. (GAEC 7A)
- 1** 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** Start of closed period for applying manufactured nitrogen fertilisers to tillage land. (SMR 1)
- 15** Start of closed period for applying manufactured nitrogen fertilisers to grassland. (SMR 1)
- 16** 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)

October

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

- 15** 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** 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)

November

- 1** You can burn heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium on land, other than in upland areas, from this date. (GAEC 6)
- 30** 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)

December

- 1** You need to carry out your annual inventory of sheep. (SMR 8)

What's new in 2015?

Under the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), some of the cross compliance rules are the same as in previous years, but some have changed.

The most obvious change is that all of the GAECs and most of the SMRs have been renumbered. Some GAECs have also been split or merged into other rules.

The main changes to GAECs and SMRs since 2014

These are just the main changes – claimants should read all of the guidance to make sure they understand all the rules and how they apply to their holding.

- What was SMR 3 (sewage sludge) and SMRs 13, 14 and 15 (control of foot and mouth disease, certain animal diseases and bluetongue) have been removed.
- What was GAEC 11 (control of weeds) and 12 (agricultural land which is not in agricultural production) have been removed. Instead, as part of the BPS eligibility rules, this agricultural land will need to be maintained so that it is kept clear of dense scrub.
- Some rules have been removed from the SMR for Wild Birds (SMR 2).
- Claimants no longer need to keep a Soil Protection Review (SPR). Instead, there are new rules for soils (GAEC 4, 5 and 6).
- The rule on sustainable use has been removed from SMR 10 (plant protection products).
- Under a new GAEC 7, rules for landscape features have changed. Changes to rules include:
 - boundary features such as hedgerows and stone walls will be covered under GAEC 7a. There will also be new rules for the protection of stone banks and earth banks.
 - a longer no trimming season will apply for hedges and trees, and will run from 1 March until 31 August inclusive. A derogation may be available to those wishing to sow oil seed rape or temporary grassland during August.
 - the exemption which allowed stone to be removed from stone walls to repair footpaths has been deleted.
 - tree protection rules which include felling licences and tree preservation orders will be included in a new GAEC 7. The no cutting period of 1 March to 31 August inclusive will also apply to trees. Orchards are not included in this ban.
 - the 'Scheduled Monuments' GAEC has been renamed 'Ancient Monuments'.

Read all of this guide to make sure you know which GAECs and SMRs apply to you.

Meeting the rules

Claimants must follow cross compliance for the whole calendar year. However, in certain circumstances they can get an 'exemption' or 'derogation' from particular rules.

The claimant is the person responsible for making sure the cross compliance rules are met. They must make sure that the following people also meet the rules:

- someone acting for them (or under their control) on their holding
- someone with access to the holding under the terms of an agreement.

These people could include contractors, employees or family members.

However, for those SMRs about the identification and traceability of animals, it is the person with day-to-day responsibility for the animals on the holding who is responsible for meeting the rules (even if they don't own the animals or the land that they graze on). Responsibility for the welfare of all farmed animals lies jointly with:

- the person who has day to day responsibility for the animals, and
- the owner of the animals.

The rules apply to all the land on a claimant's holding (including common land and land under a rural development scheme).

All land declared under Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) must comply with the cross compliance rules for the whole calendar year – whoever claims it.

Who is responsible for meeting the rules if land is transferred from one BPS claimant to another?

If you declare a land parcel on your BPS application and then transfer it to someone else in the same year, you may still be responsible for making sure the cross compliance rules are met on the land (even after the transfer).

If the person you've transferred the land to:

- is also a BPS claimant that year – after the transfer, they will become responsible for making sure the cross compliance rules are met on the land for the rest of the year (even though they didn't declare it on their BPS application).
- is NOT a BPS claimant that year – after the transfer, you are still responsible for making sure the cross compliance rules are met on the land. This is because all land declared under BPS must comply with the cross compliance rules for the whole calendar year, and you are the only BPS claimant.

If you've transferred land to someone else partway through a scheme year, and you're not sure who is responsible for meeting the cross compliance rules on the land, contact the Rural Payments Agency.

Exemptions

Sometimes, a claimant may be exempt from a particular rule. This means they don't have to meet that specific part of a GAEC and/or SMR.

Some examples of when an exemption could be used are if:

- there is a risk to human or animal health or safety
- a claimant needs to control or treat serious causes of harm to plant health
- there is a serious pest or weed infestation.

Claimants don't need to write to us in advance asking for an exemption but if they get inspected they must be able to prove how and why they used the exemption.

Exemptions can also be granted if work carried out under a statutory authority stops a claimant meeting one of the rules – for example, if a pipeline or railway is being built on their land. However, once the statutory authority has finished any work on the land, the claimant must return it to a state which meets cross compliance requirements.

We would not expect statutory bodies to have to use their statutory powers to get permission for access, or to carry out work, where voluntary consent already exists.

Depending on the circumstances, exemptions may last for a specific period of time only.

Derogations

Claimants can ask for a derogation from some GAECs in a number of different circumstances. We've explained in this guide in the text of the relevant GAEC where derogations may be available.

Some examples of when a derogation could be used are if:

- it would benefit the environment
- it would benefit livestock or crop production
- it would improve public or agricultural access.

If successful, this means that for a particular period of time, they wouldn't have to meet that specific rule.

Claimants must apply in writing for a derogation from the appropriate authority (contact details for the relevant authorities are on page 76). They should send all the available evidence (for example, photographs or diagrams) and include the land parcel numbers they want the derogation for. Correspondence should be clearly marked 'Cross compliance derogation'. They have to wait for written permission before carrying out any work.

Force majeure and exceptional circumstances

Sometimes a claimant might not be able to meet cross compliance due to 'force majeure' or exceptional circumstances. This could mean that we don't reduce their payments (for more information about penalties, read page 11).

'Force majeure' means exceptional circumstances, outside your control, the consequences of which, in spite of all due care, could not be avoided except at the cost of excessive sacrifice on your part.

Claimants in a 'force majeure' situation should contact the RPA to discuss their circumstances. This should be within 15 days of the date the exceptional circumstance took place (or the date they first become aware of the exceptional circumstance).

Penalties

Claimants may have their scheme payment(s) reduced if they don't meet the GAECs and SMRs which apply to their holding.

If a claimant doesn't meet (even by mistake) all the GAEC and SMR rules that apply to them, their scheme payment(s) may be reduced. Cross compliance penalties will apply to all the schemes which a claimant is involved in (read page 3 for a list of the schemes).

You must meet the rules across the whole agricultural area of your holding, regardless of the amount of land you entered into the schemes.

This includes common land which you exercise or hold rights of common over (including rights in gross). It also applies to all land including forestry for which payments are claimed under rural development schemes.

Negligent

Claimants may still get a penalty even if they didn't know that they hadn't followed the rules properly. We define cases like this as 'negligent' if the non-compliance falls below the standard of care expected of a competent claimant.

For negligent cases, payments will normally be reduced by 3% (for each non-compliance). However, this could range from 1% to 5% depending on the extent, severity, reoccurrence and permanence of the non-compliance.

If a claimant doesn't meet the same rule more than once in three consecutive calendar years, the penalty will get bigger. In these cases, the second time a penalty is applied it will be three times the size of the first penalty (even if that dates back to old SPS or rural development schemes).

This will keep happening if the claimant keeps breaking the same rule – until the penalty reaches 15%. After that, any more instances of non-compliance will be treated as 'intentional' (see below).

Intentional

For intentional cases, payments will normally be reduced by 20%. However, this may be reduced to 15%, or increased up to 100% depending on the extent, severity, reoccurrence and permanence of the non-compliance.

In some extreme cases, claimants may also be stopped from applying for the Basic Payment Scheme and/or rural development schemes in the following year.

A claimant may lose their whole payment if they don't allow one of our inspectors to carry out an inspection on the holding, (read pages 71 to 75 for more information about inspections).

GAEC 1: Establishment of buffer strips along watercourses



(previously GAECs 14 and 19)

You must protect watercourses against pollution and run-off from agricultural sources by maintaining buffer strips.

'Watercourses' are all surface waters, including coastal water, estuaries, lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, canals and field ditches. It includes temporarily dry watercourses.

What you must do

You must:

- take all reasonable steps to maintain a green cover on land within 2 metres of the centre of a watercourse or field ditch, or to land from the edge of the watercourse or field ditch to 1m on the landward side of the top of the bank. This rule does not apply to land forming part of a parcel of 2 hectares or less.
- produce and keep a map of your holding showing:
 - all surface waters and land within 10 metres of them
 - all springs, wells and boreholes on your holding or within 50 metres of the boundary and land within 50 metres of them
- update the map with any changes within 3 months from the date of change.

You can use the same map produced if your land is under Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs).

You must not:

- apply manufactured nitrogen within 2 metres of surface water
- apply organic manure within 50 metres of a spring, well or borehole
- apply organic manure (which is any nitrogen or phosphate fertiliser derived from animal, plant or human sources and includes livestock manure) within 10 metres of surface water. However, you can spread livestock manure within 10 metres of surface water if the land is managed for breeding wader birds or as a species-rich semi-natural grassland under certain restrictions. These are:
 - the land must be in an agri-environment scheme, or notified as a SSSI
 - the manure is not spread directly onto surface water, and
 - the total annual amount isn't more than 12.5 tonnes per hectare.

The limit is reduced to 6 metres if you apply slurry, sewage sludge or anaerobic digestate (which is the product of anaerobic digestion other than from the anaerobic digestion of sewage or material in a landfill) using precision equipment as follows:

- a trailing hose band spreader or a trailing shoe band spreader
- a shallow injector which injects the organic manure no deeper than 10 centimetres below the surface
- a dribble bar applicator.

Land in Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs)

If you have land under NVZs (SMR 1) and follow those rules, you will also meet the rules under this standard in respect of that land.

Cultivation and application of fertilisers or pesticides

You must not:

- cultivate or apply fertilisers or pesticides to land within 2 metres of the centre of a watercourse or field ditch, or to land from the edge of the watercourse or field ditch to 1 metre on the landward side of the top of the bank of a watercourse or field ditch.

Fertilisers include: inorganic and organic fertiliser, organic manures, lime, slurry, sewage sludge, slag, trace elements, calcified seaweed and human waste (this list is not exhaustive).

Pesticides mean anything used for destroying pests and include herbicides, fungicides, insecticides and other biocides.

This rule will not be breached if:

- you have used pesticides for spot application of herbicides to control the spread of any weeds
- you are establishing a green cover where one does not exist and the land is part of a field which is being newly created (by merger or division)
- you are establishing a green cover where one does not exist and the land was previously outside the scope of cross compliance
- you have been granted a derogation by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. You must apply to RPA in writing for a derogation and wait for written permission before carrying out any work, adhering to any conditions attached.

Public rights of way

Public rights of way may form part of the 1 metre or 2 metres 'protection zone' margins along hedges and watercourses. When they do, the rules of this GAEC still apply but shouldn't limit public access.

More information

Contact the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) for more information about derogations which may be available.

There is more guidance online – search for 'Cross compliance: soil protection standards' at www.gov.uk. This guidance is also available on paper from the RPA.

Advice on locating and managing buffer strips is available from Catchment Sensitive Farming officers, Natural England advisers, Campaign for the Farmed Environment and other advisers.

Contact

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777
Environment Agency: 03708 506 506

GAEC 2: Water abstraction

(Previously GAEC 18)

You must have a licence from the Environment Agency (EA) to take (abstract) more than 20 cubic metres (4,400 gallons) of water, from an inland or underground source for irrigation, in a single day.

What you must do

- You must have a licence from the Environment Agency (EA) to take (abstract) more than 20 cubic metres (4,400 gallons) of water, from an inland or underground source for irrigation, in a single day.
- Once you have an [abstraction licence](#) (issued by the EA) you must comply with its conditions when abstracting water for irrigation purposes.
- You don't need a licence if you abstract 20 cubic metres (4,400 gallons) or less in a period of 24 hours, 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.

More information

There is more guidance available online about [water management: abstract or impound water](#).

Contact

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

Environment Agency: 03708 506 506

GAEC 3: Groundwater

(Previously GAEC 20)

You must have a permit from the Environment Agency (EA) before you release (discharge) any substance that may harm or pollute groundwater, unless that discharge is an activity that is exempt.

‘Groundwater’ means all water below the surface of the ground in the saturation zone, that is, below the water table, and in direct contact with the ground or subsoil.

Examples of pollutants are:

- used and waste sheep dip
- pesticide washings
- solvents, mineral oil
- diesel
- sewage
- trade effluent
- certain biocides.

What you must do

You must:

- get a permit before carrying out any activity that pollutes or has the potential to pollute groundwater, unless it is an exempt or excluded groundwater activity. You can [obtain a permit](#) or advice from the EA.
- comply with the conditions of any permit or notice from the EA.

Other guidance

You should also follow the Environment Agency’s guidance on [‘Groundwater protection: Principles and practice’](#).

More information

The appendix for groundwater (GAEC 3) is available on GOV.UK. Search for ‘Cross compliance: guidance for 2015’ at www.gov.uk.

Contact

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

Environment Agency: 03708 506 506

GAEC 4: Minimum soil cover

You must have a minimum soil cover.

What you must do

You must take all reasonable steps to protect soil by having a minimum soil cover unless there is an agronomic justification for not doing so, or where establishing a cover would conflict with requirements under GAEC 5. Minimum soil cover must be provided by any of the following:

- vegetative cover from all types of crop, grass and herbaceous forage
- cover crops and leguminous and nitrogen fixing crops (green manures)
- game cover and crops planted for biodiversity
- trees, coppice, fruit crops, hops, nursery crops, vines
- overwintered stubble from combinable crops
- other stubbles and crop residues such as vegetable, maize and sugar beet.

Acceptable agronomic reasons for not providing cover include:

- the land is being prepared as a seedbed, and the land is sown within 14 days of preparation, where weather conditions allow
- managed land used for pest, disease and weed control including for example, land that has been cultivated or ploughed to prevent weeds going to seed.
- land used for the installation and maintenance of field drains
- areas created for agri-environment schemes or greening, or for the purpose of establishing habitat conditions beneficial to biodiversity or wildlife
- the land is heathland to which restoration techniques are being applied
- heather and grass burning (see GAEC 6)
- land used for outdoor pig or poultry production or overwintered livestock where it is not reasonably practicable to maintain cover due to the actions of the animals
- land where the action of frost on the land over winter is used to break down the soil naturally to create a seedbed for spring cropping
- peatland that is bare for historic reasons
- land which is bare for the purposes of removing turf for non-fuel purposes.

For other reasons not listed here, contact RPA to apply for a derogation.

Other guidance

There is more guidance online – search for ‘Cross compliance: soil protection standards’ at www.gov.uk. This guidance is also available on paper from the RPA.

Contact RPA for information about soil cover derogations which may be available.

Contact

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

GAEC 5: Minimum land management reflecting site specific conditions to limit erosion

You must have minimum land management which reflects site specific conditions in order to limit erosion.

What you must do

You must put measures in place to limit soil and bankside erosion caused, for example, by:

- cropping practices and cropping structures
- livestock management, including outdoor pigs and poultry, causing overgrazing and poaching
- wind
- vehicles, trailers and machinery.

Where soil compaction may cause soil erosion, you must, where appropriate, cultivate post-harvest land and late harvested crops using primary cultivation methods like ploughing. Information on other primary cultivation methods is available in 'Cross compliance: soil protection standards'.

You could lose some of your scheme payments if erosion is over a single area greater than 1 hectare, or caused by livestock trampling along a continuous stretch of more than 20 metres long and 2 metres wide of a watercourse.

Examples of appropriate measures to limit soil erosion are provided in 'Cross compliance: soil protection standards' (see below).

Other guidance

There is more guidance online – search for 'Cross compliance: soil protection standards' at www.gov.uk. This guidance is also available on paper from the RPA.

Contact

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

GAEC 6: Maintenance of soil organic matter level through appropriate practices, including a ban on burning arable stubble, except for plant health reasons

You must maintain your soil organic matter through appropriate practices. Burning of arable stubble is not allowed except for plant health reasons.

What you must do

You must:

- not burn crop stubble except for plant health reasons. Where burning is needed for plant health reasons, you must meet the Crop Residues (Burning) Regulations (1993) (Regulations 4(b), and 5)
- comply with the Heather and Grass Burning Regulations (2007) (Regulations 5(2) and 6(1) (a))
- comply with the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (EIA) (2006) (Regulations 4, 9, 26 and 28) and the Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (England and Wales) Regulations (1999) (Regulations 4(1) and 22). You can't plough, cultivate or intensify species-rich and semi-natural habitats so as to keep organic matter and carbon levels in soils.

Crop Residues (Burning) Regulations 1993

To meet these you must not burn:

- cereal straw
- cereal stubble
- residues of oilseed rape
- residues of field beans harvested dry
- residues of peas harvested dry.

You must also meet the rules set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations if you burn linseed residues.

Burning is allowed for plant health reasons where a notice is served under the Plant Health (England) Order 2005.

Heather and Grass Burning Regulations (2007)

To meet these you must:

- not burn heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium outside the burning season. The burning season is from 1 October to 15 April for uplands, and from 1 November to 31 March for other land
- have enough people and equipment to control burning
- take all reasonable precautions not to injure or damage any neighboring land, or any person or thing on it.

Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (EIA) (2006)

To meet these you must:

- not carry out projects on uncultivated land when thresholds or screening notices apply
- not begin or carry out a project on uncultivated land without permission from Natural England
- not breach a stop notice
- meet a remediation notice.

For forestry you must:

- not carry out afforestation on agricultural land or deforestation projects on existing woodland unless you have permission from the Forestry Commission (FC)
- comply with enforcement notices to stop work
- meet consent and enforcement notices given by the FC.

Other guidance

There is more guidance online – search for ‘Cross compliance: soil protection standards’ at www.gov.uk. This guidance is also available on paper from the RPA.

Contact

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

Natural England: 0345 600 3078

GAEC 7a: Boundaries

(Previously GAECs 13, 14 and 15)



You must protect boundary features, such as hedgerows, stone walls, earth banks and stone banks because they're important landscape features.

What you must do

A. Hedgerows

The rules on hedgerows apply to any hedge growing in, or adjacent to, any land which forms part of your holding and which has:

- a continuous length of at least 20 metres, or is part of any such length, or
- a continuous length of less than 20 metres where it meets (at an intersection or junction) another hedgerow at each end.

Any gap of 20 metres or less and any gap resulting from a breach of the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 will be treated as part of the hedgerow.

You must:

- take all reasonable steps to keep a green cover on land within 2 metres of the centre of a hedgerow.

You must not:

- cultivate or apply fertilisers or pesticides to land within 2 metres of the centre of a hedgerow. Fertilisers include: inorganic and organic fertiliser, organic manures, lime, slurry, sewage sludge, slag, trace elements, calcified seaweed and human waste (not an exhaustive list).

Pesticides mean anything used for destroying pests and include herbicides, fungicides, insecticides and other biocides.

You won't break these rules if you've used pesticides for spot application, or you've cultivated land for one of these reasons:

- to establish a green cover where one doesn't exist and the land is part of a field which is being newly created (whether by merger or division)
- to establish a green cover where one doesn't exist and the land was previously outside the scope of cross compliance.

These rules do not apply:

- to land either side of a hedgerow which is less than 5 years old (you'll need to keep documentary evidence to prove this)
- to land forming part of a parcel of 2 hectares or less, as measured within permanent boundary features

- to land on the side of any hedgerow which is facing away from a dwelling where the hedgerow marks a boundary of the curtilage of the dwelling
- to the casting up of a traditional hedgebank between 1 September and the last day of February (inclusive).

Cutting, trimming and removal

You must not cut or trim a hedgerow between 1 March and 31 August (inclusive) unless:

- the hedgerow overhangs a highway, road or footpath over which there is a public or private right of way and the overhanging hedgerow obstructs the passage of, or is a danger to, vehicles, pedestrians or horse riders
- the hedgerow is dead, diseased, damaged or insecurely rooted and because of its condition, it or part of it, is likely to cause danger by falling on to a highway, road or footpath; or obstructs the view of drivers or the light from a public lamp
- it is to carry out hedge-laying or coppicing during the period 1 March to 30 April (inclusive)
- it is to trim a newly laid hedgerow by hand, within 6 months of it being laid
- you have received written permission from the Secretary of State for the Environment to cut or trim during the month of August for the purposes of sowing oil seed rape or temporary grassland during the same August.

You must not remove all or part of a hedgerow unless you have told your local authority (or National Park Authority if your land is in a National Park) in writing of your proposal, and have:

- received written permission to carry out the removal; or
- have received no reply from the authority within 42 days of your notification.

The removal must be carried out in accordance with the proposal specified in the hedgerow removal notice and the hedgerow must be removed within the period of 2 years from the date on the hedgerow removal notice.

The cutting, trimming and removal rules do not apply:

- to hedgerows within the curtilage of a dwelling-house
- to the side of any hedgerow facing a dwelling-house when the hedgerow marks the boundary of the curtilage of the dwelling-house.

B. Stone Walls, Earth Banks and Stone Banks

Rules for stone walls, earth banks and stone banks apply if:

- it has a continuous length of at least 10 metres; or
- it has a continuous length of less than 10 metres which meets another boundary at each end; or
- it has a continuous length of less than 10 metres which forms an enclosure

An earth bank is a mound without a hedgerow, distinct from the surrounding land form.

A stone bank is an earth bank faced with natural stone.

GAEC 7a

You must not:

- remove existing stone walls, earth banks and stone banks
- remove earth or stone from an existing stone wall, stone bank or earth bank.

The rules in section B don't apply if you:

- widen an existing gateway in a stone wall, earth bank or stone bank to allow machinery or livestock access. The gateway should be no wider than 10 metres and the newly created ends finished to a vertical face
- repair another stone wall, earth bank or stone bank on your holding which is in a better condition than the one you remove the stone or earth from
- have written permission from the Secretary of State to do so, in order to enhance the environment, improve public or agricultural access, or for reasons relating to livestock or crop production.

Other guidance

You should read the 'Hedgerows Regulations 1997: A Guide to the Law and Good Practice'. To get a free copy email: farmland.conservaion@defra.gsi.gov.uk.

More information

There is also more guidance online about '[Countryside hedgerows: regulation and management](#)'.

Contact RPA for information about hedgerow derogations which may be available.

Contact

Natural England: 0345 600 3078

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

Defra helpline: 0345 933 5577

GAEC 7b: Public Rights of Way

(Previously GAEC 8)

Public rights of way (public footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic) must be kept open and accessible because they are important landscape features.

What you must do

You must:

- not obstruct public rights of way
- make good the surface of cross field footpaths and bridleways to not less than the minimum width within 14 days of the first disturbance if you are sowing a crop, or within 24 hours in all other circumstances. Minimum widths are 1 metre for footpaths and 2 metres for bridleways
- maintain stiles, gates and similar structures in a condition that makes them safe and reasonably easy to use
- indicate the route of a reinstated cross-field footpath or bridleway so that it's visible on the ground and is at least the minimum width of the recorded route.

These rules apply to visible public rights of way only. This includes any rights of way which would be visible if it wasn't for breaches of the rules.

More information

There is more information online about [Public rights of way: landowner responsibilities](#).

Contact

You should contact your local authority.

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

GAEC 7c: Trees

(Previously GAEC 16)

You may need to get a licence from the Forestry Commission if you want to cut down (fell) a tree. You must check if a tree has a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and meet any conditions of the TPO. You must also follow the rules about when you can trim or cut trees.

What you must do

You must:

- follow the Forestry Commission's rules by applying for a licence to fell a tree, where a licence is required
- contact your local planning authority if the tree has a preservation order or is in a conservation area
- comply with licence conditions, restocking notices, enforcement notices or directions served on you.

You must not:

- fell a tree without a felling licence if a licence is required
- cut down, wilfully damage or destroy, uproot, top or lop any tree protected by a TPO without written consent from your local planning authority
- cut down, wilfully damage or destroy, uproot, top or lop any tree located in a conservation area without giving 42 days written notice to your local planning authority
- cut or trim a tree on your farm between 1 March and 31 August (inclusive) each year, except where the tree:
 - overhangs a highway, or any other road or footpath, endangering or obstructing vehicles, pedestrians or horse-riders
 - obstructs or interferes with the view of drivers of vehicles or the light from a public lamp
 - is dead, diseased, damaged or insecurely rooted, and is a risk to human safety;
 - is in an orchard, or
 - the Secretary of State has given written permission to do so in order to enhance the environment, improve public or agricultural access, or for reasons relating to livestock or crop production.

More information

You should read the Forestry Commission's rules about ['Felling licences'](#).

[Applications for felling licences](#) can be made online.

[Local planning guidance on TPOs](#) is available online.

Contact

Forestry Commission: 0300 067 4070

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

GAEC 7d: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)

(Previously GAEC 6)

You must not damage or destroy SSSIs. SSSI status is placed on land which, following a legal process, is judged to have special flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features.

Check online if your land is in an [SSSI](#).

If you owned or occupied the land at the time it became a SSSI, you will probably already know that it is an SSSI. If this not the case, Natural England will ordinarily have contacted you about the land's status.

You must:

- obtain Natural England's (NE's) consent in writing before carrying out, causing or permitting any specified operation listed in SSSI legal documents and identified as likely to damage the special interest features of the area (unless that operation is carried out in accordance with the terms of a management agreement that provides consent for the operations)
- comply with all management notices served by NE or any terms of any restoration order served by a court.

A management notice is different to a management agreement as it legally obliges the recipient to carry out certain activities; a restoration order requires operations for the purpose of restoring an SSSI to its former condition.

You must not:

- intentionally or recklessly destroy or damage any of the SSSIs special interest features (flora, fauna, geological or physiological features), or disturb any fauna that are a special interest feature.

This rule can apply to actions that take place outside the SSSI itself but which have the same consequences for the SSSI.

You will not break any of these rules if you have reasonable excuse to carry out certain operations, for example:

- you have planning permission to carry out the work
- you have consent from a public body or statutory authority
- it is an emergency operation (provided that Natural England is told as soon as possible after the emergency).

These rules apply to all SSSIs. Where the land is also classed as a European Site (Special Protection Area or Special Area of Conservation) and these rules are breached the non-compliance will also be considered under the relevant requirement of SMR 2 (Wild birds) or SMR 3 (Habitats and species).

More information

There is more information about [SSSIs](#) online.

Contact

Natural England: 0345 600 3078

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

Forestry Commission: 0300 067 4000

GAEC 7e: Ancient Monuments

(Previously GAEC 7)

Ancient Monuments are nationally important sites that have been given legal protection by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport due to their archaeological or historic interest.

Check the [National Heritage List](#) to see if you have a listed 'scheduled monument'.

Or, you can check the Historic Environment Record held by your local authority.

What you must do

You must not:

- without prior written scheduled monument consent from the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport:
 - demolish, destroy, damage, remove, repair, alter or add to a Scheduled Monument
 - complete flooding or tipping operations on land in, on or under a Scheduled Monument.

You must:

- comply with the conditions attached to any consent granted by the Secretary of State

You may not have broken these rules if:

- you took all reasonable precautions, and exercised all due diligence, to avoid or prevent any damage to the monument, or
- the works were urgently necessary in the interests of health or safety and that written notice for the works was given to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport as soon as reasonably possible.

More information

Department for Culture Media and Sport have also published more guidance online about [‘Scheduled monuments’](#).

Contact

Historic England (formerly known as English Heritage): 0370 333 1181

SMR 1: Reduce water pollution in Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs)



(Previously SMR 4)

Claimants with land in NVZs must help to reduce water pollution by using and storing fertiliser and manure carefully.

Check if your land is in a [nitrate vulnerable zones](#).

What you must do

Your scheme payments may be affected if you don't comply with the following rules.

A. Where you can't spread fertilisers

Before you spread manures, manufactured fertilisers or other nitrogen-containing materials, you must inspect conditions in the field to assess the risk of run-off to surface water. If you spread organic manure you must produce a risk map of your holding (see 'Records to keep in NVZs').

To decide if there is a significant risk you should account for:

- the slope of the land, especially if over 12°
- ground cover
- proximity to surface water
- weather conditions
- soil type and condition
- the presence of land drains.

You must not spread:

- if you identify a significant risk of runoff getting into surface water
- manufactured fertiliser within 2 metres of surface water
- organic manure within 50 metres from a spring, well or borehole
- organic manure within 10 metres of surface water
- if a field is waterlogged, flooded, snow covered, or has been frozen for more than 12 hours in the previous 24 hours
- in closed periods – see 'Restrictions on spreading organic manures'.

If you use precision manure-spreading equipment such as band spreaders, shallow injectors or dribble bar applicators, you may spread manure up to 6 metres from surface water.

SMR 1

On Sites of Special Scientific Interest and agri-environment scheme land which is used for breeding wader birds or as species-rich semi-natural grassland, you can spread solid manure within 10 metres of a surface water if:

- it is spread between 1 June and 31 October inclusive
- it is not spread directly onto surface water
- the total annual amount does not exceed 12.5 tonnes per hectare (t/ha).

B. How much nitrogen you can spread in NVZs?

There is a limit on the amount of crop-available nitrogen from organic manure and manufactured fertiliser that you can apply to most crops in any 12 month period (the N max limit).

You must make sure the average nitrogen application rate in kilograms per hectare (kg N/ha) does not exceed the N max limit for that crop type.

Table 4: The N max limits

| Crop | N max limit (kg N/ha) | Standard crop yield (t/ha) |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Wheat, autumn or early winter sown | 220 | 8 |
| Wheat, spring sown | 180 | 7 |
| Barley, winter | 180 | 6.5 |
| Barley, spring | 150 | 5.5 |
| Oilseed rape, winter | 250 | 3.5 |
| Sugar beet | 120 | n/a |
| Potatoes | 270 | n/a |
| Forage maize | 150 | n/a |
| Field beans | 0 | n/a |
| Peas | 0 | n/a |
| Grass | 300 | n/a |
| Group 1 | | |
| Asparagus, carrots, radishes, swedes, individually or in any combination | 180 | n/a |
| Group 2 | | |
| Celery, courgettes, dwarf beans, lettuce, onions, parsnips, runner beans, sweetcorn, turnips - individually or in any combination | 280 | n/a |

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| Group 3 | | |
| Beetroot, brussels sprouts, cabbage, calabrese, cauliflower, leeks - individually or in any combination | 370 | n/a |

Adjustments you can make to your nitrogen limit (N max):

- For wheat and barley, you can apply an additional 20kg N/ha for every tonne that expected yield exceeds the standard yield shown in the table.
- If you've applied straw for mulching or paper sludge to the previous or current crop, you can apply an additional 80kg N/ha.
- You can apply an additional 40kg N/ha to milling wheat varieties.
- For autumn or early winter sown wheat and barley, you can apply an additional 20kg N/ha on fields with a shallow soil type (not shallow soils over sandstone).
- The N max limit for winter-sown oilseed rape is 250 kg N/ha. This includes the amount of up to 30kg N/ha allowed as an exemption to the closed period for manufactured nitrogen fertiliser. You can increase this by an additional 30kg N/ha for every half tonne that the expected yield exceeds the standard yield.
- Where grass is grown to achieve a protein content of at least 16% of the dried product, you can apply nitrogen up to the level recommended by a 'FACTS-qualified' adviser. In this case, if the land is not irrigated, you may not apply more than 500kg N/ha. If the land is irrigated, you may not apply more than 700kg N/ha. In the second and any subsequent years that you make any adjustments, you must give FACTS-qualified advisers the results of soil analyses from representative autumn samples taken between 1 September and 31 October to include in the N demand calculation.
- You can apply an additional 40kg N/ha to grass that is cut at least 3 times in a year.

C. How much livestock manure you can apply in NVZs

There is a limit of 170kg/ha on the amount of nitrogen in livestock manure that can be applied (directly by grazing livestock or by spreading) on your holding per calendar year. This limit applies as an average across your holding. It is separate from the field limit of 250kg/ha of total N load from organic fertilisers.

You'll need to calculate the amount of nitrogen applied to your land from these sources and plan so that you do not exceed the limit.

As a grassland claimant, if you meet certain criteria and agree to some additional land management, fertiliser planning and record keeping conditions, you can apply for a derogation that allows you to increase this limit to 250kg per hectare of nitrogen from grazing livestock per year. Get help to calculate the amount of nitrogen produced by your livestock - search for 'Spreading Nitrogen fertilisers and Organic manures' at www.gov.uk.

D. Limits on spreading all organic manure in NVZs

The most nitrogen (total N) from organic manures you can spread on any given hectare in any 12 month period is 250kg.

SMR 1

This does not include N contained in livestock manures deposited by grazing animals.

Alternatively, if you only use compost that does not contain any manure and which has been produced in accordance with the PAS100 protocol, you can apply:

- up to 500 kg N/ha every 2 years as mulch or worked into the ground
- up to 1,000 kg N/ha every 4 years (only as mulch and in an orchard growing fruit of the genera Malus, Prunus or Pyrus).

E. Restrictions on spreading organic manures

You must not spread organic manures with a high readily available N content (where more than 30% of the total N content is readily available to the crop) in the following periods:

| | Grassland | Tillage land |
|------------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Sandy or shallow soils | 1 Sep to 31 Dec | 1 Aug to 31 Dec |
| All other soils | 15 Oct to 31 Jan | 1 Oct to 31 Jan |

If you are in an NVZ designated for the first time in 2013, you do not have to keep to these closed periods until after July 2015. If a crop is sown on sandy or shallow tillage land on or before 15 September, you may apply organic manure between 1 August and 15 September inclusive.

If you are an organic claimant, or you are formally converting to organic status, you can apply organic manure up to a maximum rate of 150 kg N/ha during the closed period to:

- winter oilseed rape and grass (between the start of the closed period and the end of October)
- asparagus, brassica, overwintered salad onions, parsley and bulb onions (between the start of the closed period and the end of February)
- other crops if you have written advice from a FACTS-qualified adviser.

From the end of the closed period until the end of February, you must not spread more than 30 m³/ha of slurry or 8 tonnes/ha of poultry manure in a single application. You must allow at least 3 weeks between each individual application. If you are in an NVZ designated for the first time in 2013, this does not apply until January or February 2016, depending on your soil type.

You must only spread slurry using equipment that has a low spreading trajectory (ie less than 4 metres from the ground). There is an exception if you use equipment that spreads slurry at a maximum rate of not more than 1 millimetre per hour when operating continuously.

If you are spreading on bare soil or stubble (except if it's been sown with seed), then you must:

- incorporate poultry manure, slurry and liquid digested sludge as soon as practicable and within 24 hours at the most
- incorporate any other organic manure (unless it has been spread as a mulch on sandy soil) as soon as practicable and within 24 hours if the land is sloping and within 50 metres of surface water that could receive its run-off.

You do not have to incorporate slurry and liquid digested sludge if it's been applied using a trailing hose, trailing shoe or dribble bar band spreader, or an injector.

F. Restrictions on spreading manufactured fertiliser N in NVZs

You must not spread manufactured nitrogen fertiliser in the following periods:

- Grassland - 15 September to 15 January
- Tillage land - 1 September to 15 January

However, you may apply manufactured fertiliser during these closed periods to the following crops, up to a maximum permitted rate:

- winter oilseed rape
- asparagus
- brassica
- grass
- overwintered salad onions
- parsley
- bulb onions

Applications to other crops during the closed period are permitted if you have written advice from a FACTS-qualified adviser.

G. How to plan your nitrogen applications in NVZs

You must plan all applications of nitrogen from organic manures and manufactured fertilisers to each crop in each field (including grass).

Your plan must show that you've taken the following 4 steps:

1. calculate the amount of nitrogen in the soil that is likely to be available for uptake by the crop during the growing season (the soil nitrogen supply)
2. calculate the optimum amount of nitrogen that should be applied to the crop, taking into account the soil nitrogen supply (the crop nitrogen requirement)
3. calculate the amount of nitrogen, from any planned applications of organic manure, that is likely to be available for crop uptake in the growing season in which it is spread (the crop available nitrogen)
4. calculate the amount of manufactured fertiliser required.

The year for applying fertiliser to permanent grassland begins on 1 January. Before you apply any nitrogen fertiliser to permanent grassland, you must complete steps 1 and 2, and prepare a plan for the spreading of any nitrogen fertiliser for that growing season.

For any other crop (including temporary grass) you must complete steps 1 and 2 and prepare a plan for the spreading of any nitrogen fertiliser for that growing season. You must do this before you apply any nitrogen fertiliser (whether manufactured or organic) for the first time to the crop or to a field in which you intend to plant a crop.

You must also carry out steps 3 and 4 before each occasion when you spread fertiliser.

SMR 1

When working out how much nitrogen is available for crop uptake from applications of livestock manure, you must:

- establish the total amount of nitrogen in the manure using the standard values in Table 35 of the 'standard values tables' or by sampling and analysis
- calculate the amount of crop-available nitrogen using the minimum percentages provided in Table 36.

These tables are at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/267685/nvz-guidance-blank-completion-data-tables-201312.xlsm.

For applications of other organic manure, you must work out the total amount of nitrogen and the amount of crop-available nitrogen using the manufacturer or supplier's technical analyses.

If these technical analyses are not available, use the values given in the [Fertiliser Manual \(RB209\)](#). The manual refers to the total amount of nitrogen as 'total nitrogen'. It refers to crop-available nitrogen as 'nitrogen available to the next crop'.

In either case, you can use values obtained by sampling and analysis of the manure if you prefer to.

You must not apply organic manure to crops for which there is an N max value if you have not used one of these methods to work out how much crop-available nitrogen it contains.

You must keep a copy of this plan for 5 years.

H. Records to keep in NVZs

The size of your holding

- You must keep an up-to-date record of the total size of your holding and update it within a month if it changes. The total size excludes surface waters, any hardstanding, buildings, roads or any woodland, unless that woodland is used for grazing.
- You must keep all records for 5 years.

Risk map

You must produce and keep a map of your holding that shows:

- each field, and its area in hectares
- areas with sandy or shallow soils
- land with a slope greater than 12 degrees
- land drains (except if they are sealed and impermeable)
- sites suitable for temporary field heaps (if you intend to use them to store manure)
- land that has a low run-off risk (if you intend to use it for spreading during the storage period to reduce your storage capacity requirement)
- all surface waters on your holding and land within 10 metres of them
- all springs, wells and boreholes on your holding, and within 50 metres of the boundary of your holding, and land within 50 metres of them.

You must update the map with any changes within 3 months of the date of the change. The map must be kept for 5 years.

Field records

For each crop in each field, you must record the following within one week.

When sowing a crop (if you intend to spread nitrogen fertiliser):

- the type of crop and the date of sowing.

When spreading organic manure:

- the area spread
- the quantity spread
- the date of spreading
- the method of spreading
- the type of manure
- the total N content
- the amount of nitrogen that was available to the crop.

When spreading manufactured fertiliser:

- the date of spreading
- the amount of nitrogen spread.

Also record the yield of any arable crop on which nitrogen fertiliser has been used.

Make sure you also keep evidence of:

- the soil N supply and method of assessment
- the crop N requirement and the source of information you used to calculate it
- any written advice from a FACTS-qualified adviser.

All records must be kept for 5 years.

I. Livestock calculations

If you use livestock manure on your holding, you must complete a record by 30 April showing for the previous year the numbers of livestock kept on your holding, the category and number of days each animal spent on your holding.

You can find the livestock categories and the amount of nitrogen they produce by downloading the blank 'claimant completion' and 'standard values' tables. They are available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/267685/nvz-guidance-blank-completion-data-tables-201312.xlsm

You must also complete a record by 30 April showing for the previous year:

- your calculations showing that you have kept within the whole farm N limit
- your calculation of the amount of nitrogen produced by livestock
- a copy of your sampling and analysis of manures and soils and/or output from software (for example, ENCASH).

All records must be kept for 5 years.

J. Imports and exports of manure

Within one week, you must record details of any imports or exports of livestock manure:

- its type and amount
- the total nitrogen content of any import
- the date it was brought onto or sent off your holding
- the name and address of the supplier or recipient
- a contingency plan you will follow if an agreement for a person to accept an export of livestock manure fails.

If you don't know the N content of imported manure, you must find this out (by analysis or calculation) as soon as reasonably practicable, and then record it within a week.

All records must be kept for 5 years.

K. Exemptions from NVZ spreading limits

Greenhouses

In general, NVZ rules do not apply to land inside greenhouses. Greenhouses include both glasshouses and polytunnels, in which crops are grown under cover in an enclosed space. However, if land is exposed to the open air at any time (for example, if you uncover a polytunnel) the rules apply for the whole of that year.

If the size of your holding changes, but the change only affects an area covered by greenhouses, you do not need to update your map and records. However, you still need to follow the rules on manure storage and recording the size of your holding and any rules applying to land outside the greenhouses.

Low intensity farm

You are a low intensity claimant if all of the following apply to you:

- at least 80% of your land is grassland
- no more than 100kg N/ha per year is applied as organic manure (including any N in manure applied directly to the field by animals)
- you spread no more than 90kg N/ha per year as manufactured fertiliser
- you do not bring any organic manure onto your holding.

If you are a low-intensity claimant, you do not have to keep a record of your actual applications of manufactured fertiliser and organic manure to crops in each field, but you must still plan your nutrient use.

When calculating your fertiliser application rate you must exclude any area of your holding where you do not spread any fertiliser or work the soil (for example on rough grazing areas).

L. Storing organic manures

Storage capacity and type

You must have sufficient facilities to store all slurry produced on your holding and all poultry

manure produced in a yard or building from:

- 1 October to 1 April (6 months) in the case of pigs and poultry
- 1 October to 1 March (5 months) in any other case.

Slurry stores must, additionally, have the capacity to store:

- all rainfall expected to enter the store during the storage period (including rainfall runoff from elsewhere)
- any wash water or other liquids that enter the store during that period.

If you have poultry manure or other types of solid organic manure or bedding contaminated with organic manure, you must store them in one of the following:

- in a vessel
- on an impermeable base, with appropriate collection and containment of runoff
- in a roofed building or
- in an appropriately located temporary field heap.

M. Construction standards for manure stores

If you build a new facility for storing organic manure (ie slurry stores or impermeable bases for solid manure) and/or if you substantially reconstruct or enlarge your existing facilities, you must:

- comply with standards set down in the SSAFO Regulations
- tell your local Environment Agency office in writing at least 14 days before you begin to construct it.

N. Temporary storage of solid manures in field heaps

You must:

- make sure your field heap is at least 10 metres from any surface water (including ditches) or land drain, or 30 metres if the land slopes at 12 degrees or more
- make sure the location of any field heap is not liable to being waterlogged or flooded
- locate field heaps at least 50 metres from a spring well or borehole
- move any field heap at least every 12 months
- leave a 2 year gap before returning to the same site
- keep a record of the sites used for field heaps and the dates of use.

When you prepare your risk map, it must show the location of temporary field heaps.

Temporary field heaps must:

- be solid enough to be stacked in a free-standing heap
- not give rise to free drainage from within the stacked material
- be covered with an impermeable material if they contain poultry manure without bedding or litter
- occupy as small a surface area as is practically required to support the mass of the heap and prevent it from collapsing.

O. Record keeping for storage of manure

Record the actual capacity of the storage facilities on your farm and update any changes to this within 1 week.

You need to record:

- your calculation of the volume of manure that will be produced by the anticipated number of livestock kept in a building or on hard standing during the storage period
- your calculation showing the amount of storage you need
- any changes in volume due to introducing livestock onto your farm for the first time (within 1 month of the change).

By 30 April each year make a record of:

- the numbers of livestock in each category kept in buildings or on hard standing during the previous storage period
- any imports or exports of poultry manure or slurry during the most recent storage period
- the dates for start and end of use and locations of any field sites used for storing solid manure

All records must be kept for 5 years.

P. Silage making and storage of silage and slurries

You must notify your local Environment Agency office in writing about a new, substantially enlarged, or substantially reconstructed installation at least 14 days before work constructing the new or improved installation is to begin.

You must:

- notify your local Environment Agency office of the place where field silage is to be made at least 14 days before that site is first used
- make sure that installations meet requirements for capacity, durability, maintenance and safety zones, are built in accordance with the relevant construction standards, and field silage site rules are met
- comply with any notices served by the Environment Agency that require improvements to be made to an installation or field silage site if the Agency doesn't consider them to be suitable
- carry out regular inspections of installations and make timely repairs where necessary.

You must not carry out separation of slurry into its solid and liquid fractions unless it is done mechanically or on an impermeable surface where the liquid fraction drains into a suitable container.

Other guidance

All claimants in NVZs must follow Defra's ['Guidance on complying with the rules for Nitrate Vulnerable Zones in England for 2013 to 2016'](#).

Contact the Environment Agency for information about NVZ derogations which may be available.

Contact

Environment Agency: 03708 506 506

SMR 2: Wild birds

(Previously SMR 1)

You must protect all wild birds, their eggs and nests. Extra rules apply if you have land classified as a Special Protection Area (SPA).

For the purposes of this SMR, a ‘wild bird’ is ‘any bird of a species which is ordinarily resident in, or is a visitor to, the European territory of any member state in a wild state, but does not include poultry or, except in sections 5 and 16, any game bird.’ This is the same meaning as in section 27 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Any bird shown to have been bred in captivity is not subject to these requirements unless it has been lawfully released into the wild as part of a repopulation or reintroduction programme.

In England, Special Protection Areas (SPA) are always designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

What you must do

For land classified as a SPA you must:

- get Natural England’s consent in writing before carrying out, causing or permitting any specified operation listed in a SSSI’s legal documents, or listed within a special nature conservation order, unless that operation is already covered by a management agreement, scheme or notice.
- comply with all management notices served by Natural England. A management notice is different from a management agreement as it legally obliges the recipient to carry out certain activities.
- comply with the terms of any restoration order served by a court. This applies where the purpose of the notice or restoration order is to protect or restore the special interest features of the area or otherwise restore the land to its former condition as may be so specified.

You must not:

- intentionally or recklessly destroy or damage the special interest features of the area or disturb any bird that is a special interest feature (this requirement can apply to actions that take place other than on the SPA itself but which have the same consequences).

‘Special interest features’ of an area are interpreted as the notified interest features of the Site of Special Scientific Interest that are also relevant to the Special Protection Area (SPA).

- You will not break the rules for a SPA if you have a reasonable excuse. A ‘reasonable excuse’ may include the following:
 - planning permission to carry out the work
 - consent from a public body or statutory authority that has complied with its duty to consult Natural England before giving the consent
 - it is an emergency operation (provided that Natural England is told as soon as possible after the emergency).

More information

The list of wild birds that you must not disturb while nesting is published with this guide on GOV.UK. Search for 'Cross compliance: guidance for 2015' (contained in Schedule 1 to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981).

You can find out if your land is in a SPA by contacting Natural England, or by searching the Nature on the Map website at www.natureonthemap.org.uk.

Contacts

Natural England: 0345 600 3078

RSPB: 01767 680 541

SMR 3: Habitats and species

(Previously SMR 5)

You must protect species of flora and fauna. Extra rules apply if you have land designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Check if your land is in a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) at www.natureonthemap.org.uk or by contacting Natural England.

What you must do

You must not:

- deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot or destroy a wild plant of a 'European protected species'.

The list of European protected species is available in the appendix for SMR 3 (see More information).

You will not break this rule if you are operating under a licence issued by Natural England to undertake authorised action, or can rely on a legal defence provided in the Habitats Regulations.

In England, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are always designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

On land designated as a SAC you must:

- get Natural England's consent in writing before carrying out, causing or permitting any specified operation listed in a Site of Special Scientific Interest's (SSSIs) legal documents, or listed within a special nature conservation order, unless that operation is carried out in accordance with a management agreement, scheme or notice.

A specified operation is one which has been identified as likely to damage the special interest features of the area. This information forms part of the notification package for SSSIs.

You must comply with all management notices served by Natural England.

A management notice is different from a management agreement as it legally obliges the recipient to carry out certain activities.

You must comply with the terms of any restoration order served by a court. This applies where the purpose of the notice or restoration order is to protect or restore the special interest features of the area or otherwise restore the land to its former condition as may be so specified.

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You must not:

- intentionally or recklessly destroy or damage the special interest features of the area or disturb any protected flora or fauna that are a special interest feature. (This rule can apply to actions that take place other than on the SAC itself but which have the same consequences).

‘Special interest features’ of an area are interpreted as the notified interest features of the Site of Special Scientific Interest that are also relevant to the Special Area of Conservation.

You will not break the rules for a SAC if you have a ‘reasonable excuse’. A ‘reasonable excuse’ may include the following:

- planning permission to carry out the work
- consent from a public body or statutory authority that has complied with its duty to consult Natural England before giving the consent
- it is an emergency operation (provided that Natural England is told as soon as possible after the emergency).

More information

The [appendix for habitats and species \(SMR 3\)](#) is available on GOV.UK.

Contacts

Natural England: 0345 600 3078

SMR 4: Food and feed law



(Previously SMR 11)

You must make sure that the production of food for human consumption and the production of food or feed that's fed to food-producing animals is safe.

What you must do

Food and feed safety

You must meet the minimum standards of food and feed safety, withdrawal and recall, by:

- not placing unsafe food or unsafe feed on the market. Unsafe food is food which is harmful to human health or unfit for human consumption. Unsafe feed is feed deemed to have an adverse effect on human or animal health or feed which makes the food that comes from food-producing animals unsafe for human consumption
- not feeding unsafe feed to animals
- withdrawing, recalling and destroying unsafe food or unsafe feed if you believe you have supplied it
- telling consumers of the reason for withdrawal of the food or feed if it may have reached them
- telling your local authority and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) if the food/feed which you have supplied or intend to sell could be harmful to health, and the actions you have taken to prevent risks to the final consumer.

In the case of feedstuffs containing veterinary medicinal products or specified feed additives (coccidiostats, histomonostats and additives authorised to promote growth) at levels greater than their prescribed or authorised levels, or feedstuffs contaminated with such products, which may be harmful to health, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) should also be informed.

Traceability

You must show traceability of inputs to your farm (for example food, feed, food producing animals and any other substance intended or expected to be incorporated into a feed), and any products leaving your farm, showing the:

- name and address of supplier / business supplied
- type and quantity of inputs / products
- date of delivery / leaving premises

This information must be stored in a format which is readily available and you must produce it when requested.

Food and feed hygiene

You must:

- store and handle feed, waste and hazardous substances (any substances that have the potential to cause an adverse effect on human health or animal health) separately and securely, to stop contamination and distribution errors
- act on results of official controls and sample analyses

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- keep storage areas and containers clean and dry, and implement appropriate pest-control measures where necessary. Take particular care when cleaning storage areas and containers which are used to contain medicated and non-medicated feed
- store seed properly and in such a way that it is not accessible to animals
- use feed additives, veterinary medicinal products and biocides correctly (with dosage, application and storage as stated on the label or as prescribed. This includes making sure that the food you produce does not contain residues of pesticides or veterinary medicinal products that are higher than the permitted maximum residue level for the pesticide used or the maximum residue limit for the medicine used)
- handle medicated and non-medicated feeds separately
- make sure the on-farm feed distribution system ensures that the right feed is sent to the right destination. During distribution and feeding, feed must be handled in such a way as to ensure that contamination does not occur from contaminated storage areas and equipment
- take adequate measures to stop the introduction and spread of contagious diseases transmissible to humans through food, such as abiding by the statutory herd testing for bovine tuberculosis and pre-movement TB testing of animals; compliance with any notice and instruction; not moving animals subject to movement restrictions; taking precautionary measures when introducing new animals; reporting suspected disease outbreaks to the competent authority
- periodically clean on-farm feed transport vehicles and feeding equipment, in particular when used to deliver and distribute medicated feed
- use feed from places that are registered or approved by your local authority (and VMD for specified feed additives)
- take appropriate remedial action when informed of problems identified during official controls
- keep records of:
 - veterinary medicinal products or other treatments given to your animals (including treatment dates and withdrawal periods)
 - plant protection products and biocides
 - results of analyses carried out on samples taken that have importance for human or animal health
 - reports on checks on animals and animal products
 - use of genetically modified seeds in feed production.

These rules don't apply to producers selling small amounts of primary products to final consumers or to local shops selling directly to final consumers.

Raw milk

If you're a producer of raw milk (milk produced by the secretion of the mammary gland of farmed animals that has not been heated to more than 40°C or undergone any treatment that has an equivalent effect), or handle raw milk or produce colostrum, you must meet the rules about raw milk and colostrum. Specifically you must:

- make sure that raw milk and colostrum comes from animals that:
 - are in a good general state of health
 - show no sign of disease that might result in the contamination of milk or colostrum

(in particular, not suffering from any infection of the genital tract with discharge, enteritis with diarrhoea and fever, or a recognisable inflammation of the udder)

- do not have any udder wound likely to affect the milk or colostrum
 - are not within the prescribed withdrawal period following the administration of authorised products or substances
 - have not been given any unauthorised substances or products
- make sure that raw milk and colostrum comes from animals belonging to herds/holdings which have disease-free status for tuberculosis and brucellosis.

If your herd or holding is not disease-free you may sell raw milk from your non-reactor animals if:

- you are selling to a wholesaler who will heat treat the milk before marketing it for human consumption, or
- the raw milk is from sheep or goats (that do not show a positive reaction to tests for brucellosis or which have been vaccinated against it) and is intended to be made into cheese that has a maturation period of at least two months if authorised by the competent authority.

You must make sure that raw milk and colostrum from any animal not complying with these requirements is not placed on the market for human consumption.

You must also:

- effectively isolate animals that are infected or suspected of being infected with brucellosis or tuberculosis, so that there is no adverse effect on other animals' milk
- make sure that milking equipment and the premises where raw milk and colostrum are stored, handled or cooled are located and constructed to limit the risk of contamination of milk and colostrum
- make sure that premises used for the storage of raw milk and colostrum:
 - are protected against vermin, including birds and birds' nests, and adequately separated from premises where animals are housed
 - have suitable refrigeration equipment in order to meet the post-milking cooling rules
- make sure the surfaces of equipment that come into contact with raw milk or colostrum are easy to clean and disinfect (where this is necessary)
- clean (and disinfect where necessary) the surfaces of equipment that come into contact with raw milk or colostrum after each use, and maintain equipment in a sound condition
- carry out milking hygienically, especially making sure that:
 - before milking starts the teats, udder and adjacent parts are clean
 - you satisfactorily identify animals undergoing any medical treatment which is likely to transfer residues to the milk or colostrum
 - raw milk or colostrum from any animals that are still within the withdrawal period after receiving medication is not used for human consumption
- hold raw milk in a clean place, designed and equipped to avoid contamination, immediately after milking. The milk must be cooled immediately to:
 - not more than 8°C if it is collected daily, or
 - not more than 6°C if it is not collected daily.

You will not break the rule to cool raw milk immediately after milking if the milk is going to

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be processed within 2 hours of milking, or you have received permission from the competent authority because of the dairy products that will be made from this milk.

You must:

- hold colostrum in a clean place, designed and equipped to avoid contamination, immediately after milking. Colostrum must be stored separately and be cooled immediately to:
 - not more than 8°C if it is collected daily, or
 - not more than 6°C if it is not collected daily

Or it must be frozen.

Eggs

If you're an egg producer you must keep eggs clean and dry, free of strong odours, protected from shocks and out of direct sunshine.

Other guidance

You must follow the rules about food and feed safety, including reporting of incidents, on the Food Standards Agency website at www.food.gov.uk.

More information

Read the Animal and Plant Health Agency's detailed guidance on raw milk called '[Milk hygiene on the dairy farm – a practical guide for milk producers](#)'.

Contact

Food Standards Agency: 020 7276 8829

SMR 5: Restrictions on the use of substances having hormonal or thyrostatic action and beta-agonists in farm animals

(Previously SMR 10)

It is illegal to use substances that have a hormonal or thyrostatic action and beta-agonists for growth promotion in stock farming. Some substances can be used for authorised therapeutic purposes only, but these must be administered only by a veterinarian, who must record details of the treatment in a register/record book.

What you must do

Other than the therapeutic exemptions allowed (for the use of veterinary medicines containing testosterone, progesterone, allyl trenbolone and beta-agonists, and having oestrogenic, androgenic or gestagenic action), you must not use these restricted substances:

- thyrostatic substances
- stilbenes, stilbene derivatives, their salts and esters
- oestradiol 17 β and its ester-like derivatives
- substances having oestrogenic, androgenic or gestogenic action, and beta-agonists.

You must not:

- give food-producing animals restricted substances
- have on your farm, place on the market or send to slaughter for human consumption any animal that has been given any restricted substance
- place on the market meat or any other animal product from an animal that has been given any restricted substance
- have substances on your farm containing beta-agonists to induce tocolysis in cows when calving (for example, clenbuterol hydrochloride).

You must:

- take note of the correct withdrawal periods if your food-producing animals have been given any of the restricted substances in line with the permitted exceptions. Your veterinary surgeon can advise on the withdrawal periods for prescribed veterinary medicines
- show to inspectors veterinary medicinal records about restricted substances on request.

More information

The Product Information Database is on the Veterinary Medicines Directorate website at www.gov.uk/vmd. It contains the most up to date information on medicines authorised for use in farm animals in the UK. The database includes any withdrawal periods.

Contact

Veterinary Medicines Directorate: 01932 336911

SMR 6: Pig identification and registration



Identifying your animals and keeping accurate records helps movements of pigs to be traced. In the event of a disease outbreak it is important that we know where animals have moved from and to.

What you must do

A. Register your holding details with RPA and the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

You will need a County Parish Holding number (CPH), which identifies the land where the pigs will be kept. To apply for a CPH you need to contact the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) customer registration helpline on 0345 603 7777.

You must then contact APHA to let them know you will be keeping pigs.

Once pigs are on your holding for the first time you need to register that with APHA (even if it is just one pig or a pet pig).

By law you should do this no later than 30 days of receiving pigs for the first time (or beforehand).

When your pig(s) is/are registered, a herd mark will be automatically created for you. You must use this to identify your pigs when they move off your holding.

Herd marks for pigs are 1 or 2 letters followed by 4 digits, for example A1234 or AB1234.

B. Identify animals correctly before they leave your holding

You can identify your pig by an eartag, tattoo or (double) slap marks.

Pigs under 12 months old can move:

- between holdings with a temporary paint mark
- to slaughter with an ear tag, tattoo or double slap marks
- to any type of market with an ear tag, tattoo or double slap marks
- to a show or exhibition with an ear tag, tattoo or double slap marks - with an individual identification number.

Pigs over 12 months old

- These pigs can only move between holdings, to any type of market or to slaughter with an ear tag, tattoo or double slap marks bearing your Defra herdmark.
- Your Defra herdmark must be applied to a pig before it moves off your holding.
- Moves to a show or exhibition, for breeding purposes, to an AI Centre or for intra-community trade or export must be with a tag, tattoo or slap marks, and must include a unique individual identifying number for each animal.

C. Pre-notifying movements before you move pigs and making sure they travel with a movement document/haulier summary

- Moves must be pre-notified. There's a limited exception for moves to markets – see below.
- It's important to plan your pig moves in advance.
- Pig movements must always be accompanied by a printed movement document (Haulier Summary/Movement Document), generated from the eAML2 online system or provided by the bureau service.
- If you are using the bureau service, you will need to allow time for your Haulier Summary/Movement Document (HS/MD) to arrive through the post.
- The requisite numbers of the HS/MD must accompany the consignment as follows:
 - if the receiving keeper does not use eAML2 or have access to a computer, you will need to print a copy for him to retain and another for him to send to Meat and Livestock Commercial Services Limited (MLCSL) to confirm his receipt of the animals
 - if the receiving keeper confirms receipt of the pigs to the bureau via phone he will only require one copy, to keep for his records.
- On the date of dispatch, you load the pigs and give the HS/MD(s) to the haulier. You should then confirm details via SMS text or online.
- Pig movements to a market (or collection centre) that you require to move 'on the day' do not have to be pre-notified.
- You can complete a hand written paper copy of the HS/MD (copies available from markets and MLCSL).
- You can only move animals to market in this way if the market or collection centre will send the details electronically via the eAML2 system for both the move from the farm and confirmation of the arrival at the market, on the day the pigs arrive.
- You must make sure the market can do this before moving the animals without pre-notification. They must receive and retain confirmation from the market when this is done, in the form of a completed HS/MD.

There are additional exceptions from the pre-notification requirement where:

- you are moving any pigs to a veterinary practice for emergency treatment
- you are moving any pigs to a show without knowing which holding the pigs will move to after the show. In this case you must notify the eAML2 system online or the eAML2 Bureau Service operated by MLCSL within 3 days of the move from the show.

If you are sending any pigs to a port for consignment outside Great Britain, you must either notify the eAML2 system online or send a copy of the haulier summary or movement documents to the eAML2 Bureau Service within 3 days of the pigs leaving the holding.

You must confirm receipt of any pigs moved onto your holding within 3 days of their arrival by one of the following methods:

- reporting the completion of the move on the eAML2 movement system
- sending a copy of the HS/MD to the eAML2 bureau (at the address on the form)
- providing the information on the HS/MD to them over the phone or by fax.

D. Completing and maintaining on-farm records

You must keep a holding movement record in the following simple format:

| The Pigs (Records, Identification and Movement) Order 2011 | | | | |
|---|--|----------------|---|--|
| Name and address of the person keeping the record | | | | |
| Date of movement | The identification number (1), or temporary mark | Number of pigs | Holding from which moved | Holding to which moved |
| 01/10/2014 | B1234 | 5 | - My holding - Full address - CPH | - Mr xxx - New holding - Full address - CPH |

(1) In the case of a movement to shows, Artificial Insemination (AI) centres or for export, the record must include each pig's unique individual identification number. In all cases:

- You must record each movement of a pig on or off the holding in this document within 36 hours of the movement.
- Once a year, you need to record the maximum number of pigs normally on the holding and the actual number of pigs on the holding on that date.
- You need to keep this record for 3 years after you stop keeping pigs.
- Your records must be available on request for inspection by RPA / APHA / local authorities.
- They may make an on-farm visit or may ask that your records are sent in for inspection.
- This record can be kept in hard copy or electronic form. If you keep your records in electronic form, you must be able to provide a hard copy of your record on request.
- You can view a chronological list of the pdfs of each movement on the eAML2 system. These can act as your holding movement record (as they contain the same information described in the table above) but you must make them available to an inspector on request.
- You are responsible for the accuracy of the holding movement records in whatever format they're kept.

Other guidance

All keepers should read and follow the rules in ['A guide for pig keepers'](#) on www.gov.uk.

More information

There is also more information at eAML2 website: www.eaml2.org.uk

To get a CPH number, call the RPA on 0345 603 7777.

Contact

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

RPA Livestock ID Helpline: 0345 050 9876

Animal and Plant Health Agency: 01932 341111

eAML2 movement reporting service helpline: 0844 335 8400

SMR 7: Cattle identification and registration



Keepers must identify their cattle, including bison and buffalo. They must keep accurate records about their animals and notify cattle births, movements and deaths.

What you must do

A. Identifying your animals with official cattle ear tags

Each animal needs one primary and one secondary ear tag, both showing the same unique individual identification number.

You cannot move a calf off a holding without the correct ear tags in place and without a passport (except in exceptional circumstances on welfare grounds, in which case you must apply for a movement licence by contacting British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS)).

| Calf type | Deadline for fitting first tag | Deadline for fitting second tag | Deadline for getting passport application to BCMS |
|-----------|---|---|---|
| Dairy | Within 36 hours of birth | Up to 20 days from birth | Within 27 days of birth |
| Beef | Up to 20 days from birth | Up to 20 days from birth | Within 27 days of birth |
| Bison | Within 9 months of birth or before weaning, whichever is sooner | Within 9 months of birth or before weaning, whichever is sooner | Within 7 days of birth |

You must not apply an ear tag to an animal if it has previously been used to identify a different animal, or apply an ear tag to an animal if the ear tag number has already been used on a different animal.

Replace a lost, damaged or illegible tag

You must get a replacement tag and fit it soon as possible, no later than 28 days after you notice the loss or damage.

For cattle imported from outside the EU

Within 20 days of the animal leaving the border inspection post, you must remove any original ear tags and replace them with approved UK ear tags.

B. Registering your animals – calf births and cattle brought in from outside Great Britain

When a calf is born you must apply for a cattle passport within the legal deadlines set out in the table above.

If an imported animal will be slaughtered within 15 days of arrival, you don't need to apply for a GB passport.

If this isn't the case, you must send BCMS an application for a cattle passport with the required supporting documentation.

You must apply using form CPP16, 'Animals imported into Great Britain: apply for cattle passports'.

For cattle imported from inside the EU, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or Northern Ireland

Within 15 days of the animal arriving at your holding, send these documents to BCMS:

- completed form CPP16 or CPP16W
- any original EU passport that came with the animal
- an export health certificate.

For cattle imported from outside the EU

Within 15 days of tagging the animal you must apply for a passport by sending BCMS the completed form CPP16 or CPP16W and health certificate.

C. Movements and deaths

Cattle keepers can move animals as long as:

- each animal has both of its official tags and a valid cattle passport
- they comply with the general licence conditions in England (published at www.gov.uk/government/publications/cattle-movement-general-licence-for-the-movement-of-cattle)
- no standstills or other movement restrictions are in force.

Whenever you move cattle, you must:

- update your holding register within 36 hours
- tell BCMS about the movement within 3 days. If you use the post, rather than reporting online or by phone, bear in mind that this is the deadline for BCMS receiving the information, not for sending it
- record the movement on each animal's passport - before the animal leaves the holding (for off movements), or within 36 hours of the animal's arrival on the holding (for on movements).

Animals without a passport and cattle born or reared in the UK before August 1996 are subject to restrictions and you'll need to get a special licence to move them.

What counts as a movement?

Whenever cattle move off one holding and on to a different one:

- their keeper at the departure holding must report and record an ‘off movement’
- their keeper at the destination holding must report and record an ‘on movement’.

A ‘holding’ above includes other farms, markets, abattoirs, showgrounds and collection centres.

Who reports movements and deaths?

You or your registered agent can report movements.

As a keeper, you are still legally responsible for movements being notified on time, even if you use an agent.

You must report the death of any cattle on your holding. The information must arrive with BCMS within 7 days of the death.

You must also update your holding register within 7 days.

Reporting cattle deaths on your holding

You must either:

- report online or by phone, then return the animal’s registration document (for example its passport) to arrive with BCMS within 7 days of the date of death
- report by completing and returning the animal’s registration document (for example its passport) to BCMS within 7 days of the date of the death.

If you report a death on your holding online or by phone, you don’t need to fill in the ‘Death details’ section of the passport before you send it to BCMS. If the animal has a single-page passport, you must tick the box to indicate that you have reported the death electronically.

Report animals slaughtered on the holding

If an animal is slaughtered on your holding by a vet or abattoir operator and then taken to an abattoir for dressing, you must complete the death details section in the passport and send it with the animal to the abattoir. The passport must show that the animal died on the farm.

Lost or stolen animals

If an animal is lost or stolen, you must:

- post the animal’s passport or certificate of registration to arrive with BCMS within 7 days of becoming aware of the loss or theft.

D. Completing and maintaining on-farm records (holding register)

As a cattle keeper, you must keep a holding register for your cattle. The register includes specific information about each of your animals.

What to record in your register?

The register must contain the following details for each animal:

- its ear tag number
- its date of birth
- its sex
- its breed
- the dam's ear tag number
- the date of any movement it makes on and off your holding (including movements to or from any other holding you occupy)
- details of where it has moved from or to (record either the CPH number or the name and address of the keeper)
- its date of death.

You must also record these events:

- births
- movements on or off your holding (even if you don't have to report to the Cattle Tracing System, for example because the movement was to a linked holding)
- deaths
- replacement tags for cattle born before 1 January 1998, where the number is changed.

Deadlines for updating the holding register

You should complete your records as soon as you can after the event concerned. You must complete them within:

- 36 hours in the case of movement on or off a holding
- 7 days for the birth of a dairy animal
- 30 days for the birth of all other cattle
- 7 days of death
- 36 hours of replacing ear tags where the identification number is changed.

How long to keep your records?

Holding registers must be retained for 10 years from the end of the calendar year in which the last entry was made. Other registers (eg those kept at markets) must be retained for 3 years from the end of that year.

More information

The extracts of information on this page have been taken from ['Guidance on keeping cattle, bison and buffalo in Great Britain'](#).

Contact

Defra Livestock Identification Helpline: 0345 050 9876.

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) helpline: 0345 050 1234

SMR 8: Sheep and goat identification



You must identify your animals and keep accurate records to allow movements of sheep and goats to be traced. In the event of a disease outbreak, it's important that we know where animals have moved from and to.

What you must do

A. Identify your animals correctly

You must identify your sheep and goats within:

- six months of birth if housed overnight
- nine months of birth if not housed overnight, or
- whenever they move off the holding of birth if this is sooner than the above.

If you keep them for longer than 12 months you must apply two identifiers (typically ear tags). Both will bear the same unique individual ID number. For sheep, one tag must be electronic.

There are many types to suit various breeds, sizes and ages of the animal. They include ear tags, a ruminal bolus and pastern (leg band).

You must not alter, obliterate or deface any means of identification attached to an animal. However you may apply additional management information as long the legibility of the UK flock mark or UK unique individual identification number is not affected.

B. Lost tags

You must replace illegible, damaged or lost tags within 28 days of the illegibility, damage, or loss being spotted by you. Illegibility includes an electronic tag that will not transmit its number when scanned.

C. Completing and maintaining on-farm records (flock/herd holding register)

All sheep and goat keepers are required to keep a record of the following information:

- your holding details
- tag replacements
- all sheep and goat movements on and off your holding
- for animals identified from 2010:
 - the tags applied (unique individual identification numbers for individually identified animals and the flock/herd marks for slaughter animals)
 - date of identification
 - year of birth (on holding of birth only)
 - month/year of deaths (where known)
 - breed and genotype (if known)
- annual count of animals on your holding as at 1 December each year

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To help you do this accurately, Defra provides a [sheep and goat holding register](#).

You can keep the register on paper or electronically as a book, file or spreadsheet.

You need a separate holding register for each different holding if you keep sheep and goats in different holdings.

You must keep your on-farm records up to date and for at least 3 years after the last animal in it has left the holding.

Other guidance

All keepers should read and follow '[Sheep and goats identification and recording: guidance for keepers in England](#)'.

More information

More information is available about '[Sheep and goats identification, registration and movement](#)' on www.gov.uk.

The Animal Reporting and Movement Service (ARAMS) website provides details about movement reporting for sheep, goats and deer within England: www.arams.co.uk

Contact

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

Rural Payments Agency Livestock Identification Helpline: 0345 050 9876

Animal and Plant Health Agency: 01932 341111

ARAMS movement reporting service: 0844 573 0137

SMR 9: Prevention and control of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs)

(Previously SMR 12)

You must minimise the risk posed to human and animal health by certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs).

What you must do

You must not:

Feed animal protein or any feeding stuff that contains animal protein to ruminants, for example:

- cattle, bison, buffalo
- sheep, goats
- deer, antelope, wildebeest
- camelids.

With the exception of the following (subject to required sourcing and processing - for example, it can't be catering waste):

- milk, milk-based products and colostrums
- eggs and egg products
- gelatine from non-ruminants
- hydrolysed proteins derived from non-ruminants or from ruminant hides and skins
- liquid milk replacers for unweaned ruminants containing fishmeal, if registered by Defra.

You must not:

- Feed products containing banned proteins to any farmed animals, or mix banned proteins with feedstuffs. 'Banned proteins' are processed animal protein (with specific exemptions – see paragraph below) and gelatine from ruminants for example beef gelatine (including in surplus food).
- Use restricted proteins to produce feed for non-ruminants unless you've received authorisation from Defra. 'Restricted proteins' are animal proteins restricted to non-ruminant feed production: fishmeal, blood products of non-ruminant origin, dicalcium phosphate and tricalcium phosphate of animal origin. This includes processed animal proteins of non-ruminant origin, including pig and poultry meal, for aquaculture animals.
- Use feed products containing restricted proteins on a farm where there are ruminants present unless you're registered with Defra.

For bovine animals born or reared in the United Kingdom before 1 August 1996, you must not:

- export them
- move them without an AHVLA licence
- place them on the market or export any products from these animals
- place on the market or export first generation offspring or the semen, ova or embryos of

SMR 9

cattle, sheep or goats (of any age), without meeting the documentation requirements and restrictions which apply to the sale or export of these products.

If you know or suspect that one of your animals or carcasses is infected with a TSE you must:

- tell the duty veterinary officer of your local Animal and Plant Health Agency office at once
- meet movement restrictions, or slaughter, destruction or other orders, or answer questions to identify animals at risk.

More information

There is more guidance online in the policy [‘Protecting animal health and preventing disease, including in trade’](#).

Contact

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

Animal and Plant Health Agency: 0345 601 4858

SMR 10: Plant Protection Products (PPPs)



(Previously SMR 9)

You must follow strict controls over the use of pesticides as they can harm people, wildlife and the environment.

What you must do

You must:

- follow good plant protection practice including the Health and Safety Executive's [Code of Practice for using Plant Protection Products](#)
- use only plant protection products with a valid UK authorisation or parallel trade permit
- meet the conditions and rules on the product label, in the authorisation, permit or in any extension of use.

Other guidance

You should read the Health and Safety Executive's guidance in the ['Code of Practice for using Plant Protection Products'](#).

Contact

Defra helpline: 0345 933 557

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

Health and Safety Agency (Advisory Team): 0300 003 1747

SMR 11: Welfare of calves

(Previously SMR 16)

You must protect the welfare of calves (bovine animals up to six months old) by meeting minimum standards for their care and husbandry.

What you must do

You must also meet the rules for the welfare of farmed animals in SMR13.

You must:

- inspect all housed calves at least twice a day, and those kept outside at least once a day. Any calf which appears to be ill or injured must be treated appropriately without delay, and veterinary advice must be obtained as soon as possible for any calf which is not responding to the stock-keeper's care. Where necessary, sick or injured calves must be isolated in adequate accommodation with dry, comfortable bedding
- make sure that the accommodation for calves is constructed in such a way as to allow each of your calves to stand up, turn around, lie down, rest and groom itself without difficulty
- ensure that materials used for the construction of calf accommodation, and in particular of boxes and equipment with which calves may come into contact, must not be harmful to the calves and must be capable of being thoroughly cleaned and disinfected
- ensure that electrical circuits and equipment are installed in accordance with current national rules so as to avoid electric shocks
- provide insulation, heating and ventilation of the building to ensure that air circulation, dust level, temperature, relative air humidity and gas concentrations are kept within limits which are not harmful to the calves
- inspect all automated or mechanical equipment essential for the calves' health and well-being at least once daily. Where defects are discovered, they must be rectified immediately; or, if this is impossible, appropriate steps must be taken to safeguard the health and well-being of the calves until the defect has been rectified, notably by using alternative methods of feeding and maintaining a satisfactory environment.
- provide an appropriate back-up system where an artificial ventilation system is used, to guarantee sufficient air renewal to preserve the health and well-being of the calves in the event of failure of the system, and an alarm system to warn the stock-keeper of the breakdown. The alarm system must be tested regularly
- ensure that feeding and watering equipment is designed, constructed, placed and maintained so that contamination of the calves' feed and water is minimised
- make sure that individual stalls or pens:
 - meet the minimum width (at least equal to the height of the calf at the withers, when measured in the standing position)
 - meet the minimum length (at least equal to the body length of the calf, measured from the tip of the nose to the rear of the pin bone (tuber ischii) multiplied by 1.1)
 - have perforated walls which allow the calves to see and have physical contact with one another (unless the holding has fewer than six calves, in which case these rules do not apply. In addition, the requirement for perforated walls does not apply to sick animals being isolated)

- make sure that when kept in a group, each calf has its minimum allowance of free floor space, as in the following table.

| Live weight of calf | Minimum amount of unobstructed floor space |
|----------------------------|---|
| Less than 150 kg | At least 1.5 square metres |
| Between 150 and 200 kg | At least 2 square metres |
| 200 kg or more | At least 3 square metres |

- provide flooring for calves in buildings that is:
 - smooth, but not slippery
 - designed so there's no injury or suffering to calves standing or lying on it
 - suitable for the size and weight of the calves
 - forms a rigid, even and stable surface.
- keep all housed calves on, or at all times give them access to, a clean, comfortable, adequately drained lying area which does not adversely affect the calves
- give all calves less than 2 weeks old suitable bedding
- provide artificial lighting for calves kept in an artificially lit building, for as long as they would otherwise have natural light available between 9am and 5pm. In addition, suitable lighting, fixed or portable and strong enough to allow the calves to be inspected at any time, must be available
- properly clean and disinfect calf housing, pens, utensils and equipment to prevent cross-infection and the build-up of disease-carrying organisms; and remove dung, urine and uneaten or spilt food as often as necessary to minimise smells and avoid attracting flies or rodents
- feed all weaned calves at least twice a day
- make sure when feeding group-housed calves that each calf:
 - can feed at the same time as the others in the feeding group, or
 - has continuous access to feed, or
 - is fed by an automatic feeding system
- make sure all calves have access to a sufficient quantity of fresh water or be able to satisfy their fluid intake needs by drinking other liquids
- provide your calves with fresh drinking water at all times in hot weather conditions or when they are ill
- provide all calves with an appropriate diet adapted to their age, weight and behavioural and physiological needs, to promote good health and welfare. Give all calves food that contains enough iron to keep an average blood haemoglobin level of 4.5 mmol/litre
- give the set minimum daily ration of fibrous food for each calf over 2 weeks old. The minimum daily fibrous food ration rises in line with the growth of the calf; starting at 100g at two weeks old and rising to 250g at 20 weeks (and continuing to 20 weeks)
- make sure that each calf gets bovine colostrum as soon as possible after it's born and in any case within the first 6 hours of life.

SMR 11

You must not:

- tether your calves
- muzzle your calves
- keep a calf in an individual stall or pen after the age of 8 weeks (unless it needs to be isolated to receive treatment on the advice of a veterinary surgeon).

You won't break the rule about tethering calves if the tethers are put on to group-housed calves, for up to 1 hour, when you are feeding them milk or milk substitute.

Any tether must be regularly inspected and adjusted as necessary to ensure a comfortable fit. Each tether mustn't cause pain or injury to the calf, must be designed to avoid the risk of strangulation or injury and allow it to lie down, rest, stand up and groom itself without difficulty.

Other guidance

You should follow the rules about calves in the ['Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock: Cattle'](#).

Contact

Animal and Plant Health Agency: 01932 341111

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

Defra helpline: 0345 933 557

SMR 12: Welfare of pigs

(Previously SMR 17)

You must protect the welfare of pigs by meeting minimum standards for their care and husbandry.

What you must do

You must:

- make sure that each pig can turn around without difficulty at all times, including while tethered (where this is allowed)
- make sure that the accommodation for your pigs allows them to:
 - stand up, lie down and rest without difficulty
 - have a clean, comfortable and adequately drained place to rest (with clean, dry bedding, not harmful to the pigs, where appropriate)
 - see other pigs (unless the pig is isolated for veterinary reasons or for farrowing)
 - keep a comfortable temperature
 - have enough space for all of them to lie down comfortably at the same time.
- make sure that individual stalls or pens meet the minimum size rules except for:
 - a female pig for the period between seven days before the predicted day of her farrowing and the day on which her piglets are weaned (including any piglets fostered by her)
 - keeping a pig in a stall or pen for veterinary purposes
 - keeping a pig in a stall or pen for the purposes of servicing, artificial insemination or collecting semen
 - keeping a pig in a stall or pen while it is fed
 - keeping a pig in a stall or pen for the purposes of marking, washing or weighing it
 - keeping a pig in a stall or pen while its accommodation is being cleaned
 - keeping a pig in a stall or pen while it is waiting to be loaded for transportation.

The period during which you keep a pig in isolation as above must not be longer than needed for that purpose. The requirements for a minimum size of stall or pen also do not apply if it is one that the pig can enter or leave when it wants. In this case the stall must be entered from another stall or pen where the pig is normally kept, and does comply with the minimum standards.

- provide flooring for pigs kept in buildings that is:
 - smooth but not slippery
 - suitable for the size and weight of the pigs
 - rigid, even and stable, if there's no litter
 - designed, constructed and kept so there's no injury or suffering to the pigs standing or lying on it
- provide flooring of the correct measurements for openings and slats if you use concrete slatted floors. This applies for all pigs kept in groups. More information on these measurements is in the following table:

SMR 12

| Type | Definition | Maximum width of openings | Tolerance | Acceptable maximum width of openings | Minimum width of slats |
|--------|---|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Piglet | Pig from birth to weaning | 11mm | No tolerance | 11mm | 50mm |
| Weaner | Pig from weaning to the age of 10 weeks | 14mm | 10-14mm +/- 2mm | 16mm | 50mm |
| Rearer | Pig from the age of ten weeks to slaughter or service | 18mm | 14-18mm +/- 3mm | 21mm | 80mm |
| Gilt | Female pig between service and first farrowing | 20mm | 14-20mm +/- 3mm | 23mm | 80mm |
| Sow | Female pig after the first farrowing | 20mm | 14-20mm +/- 3mm | 23mm | 80mm |
| Boar | Male pig after puberty, intended for breeding | 20mm | 14-20mm +/- 3mm | 23mm | 80mm |

- provide artificial lighting of at least 40 lux for at least 8 hours each day, for pigs kept in an artificially lit building
- give permanent access to enough manipulable material to allow proper investigation and manipulation, for example, straw, hay, wood, sawdust, mushroom compost, peat or a mixture, which doesn't upset the health of your animals
- take measures to stop fighting which goes beyond normal behaviour; if you keep pigs together, you must separate pigs that show persistent aggression or are victims of aggression
- make sure that when feeding group-housed pigs, each pig:
 - can feed at the same time as the others in the feeding group, or
 - has continuous access to feed, or
 - is fed by an automatic feeding system.
- give all pigs over 2 weeks old a permanent supply of fresh drinking water.

You must also meet the rules for the welfare of farmed animals in SMR13.

You must not:

- tether pigs at any time unless it is for veterinary purposes. Any tether must be regularly checked and altered to make sure it doesn't cause pain or injury, and allows the pig to lie down, rest, stand up and groom itself
- keep pigs in the high temperature/high humidity environment known as the 'sweat box system'
- expose your pigs to constant or sudden noise, or levels at or above 85 decibels in any building where they're kept.

For piglets (pigs from birth to weaning)

You must:

- give the piglets heat and a dry and comfortable lying area where all of them can rest at the same time, if using a farrowing crate system
- make sure that part of the total floor where you keep the piglets is big enough to allow the animals to rest together at the same time and is solid, covered with a mat or littered with suitable material
- give the piglets enough space to suckle without difficulty if you use a farrowing crate.

You must not wean piglets from the sow at less than 28 days (unless there's a risk of harm to the welfare or health of the dam or piglets).

However, you won't break the rule about weaning piglets if they're weaned up to 7 days earlier, if you move them to housing which you empty, thoroughly clean and disinfect before you introduce a new group and which is separate from housing where you keep sows.

For sows (female pigs after the first farrowing) and gilts (female pigs intended for breeding, after puberty and before farrowing)

You must make sure that each female pig after service, when kept in groups, has:

- its minimum allowance of clear floor space. The amount of unobstructed floor space must be at least:
 - 1.64 square metres for each gilt
 - 2.25 square metres for each sow
- continuous solid floor. If the animals are kept in groups of fewer than six, the unobstructed floor area must be increased by 10%. If the animals are kept in groups of 40 or more, the unobstructed floor area can be reduced by 10%. Part of the floor area must be continuous solid floor:
 - at least 0.95 square metres for each gilt
 - at least 1.3 square metres for each sow

Up to 15% of the solid floor area may be reserved for drainage openings.

- pens of correct size. The sides of the pens must be greater than 2.8 metres in length when there are six in the group. The sides of the pens must be at least 2.4 metres in length when there are fewer than six in the group.

SMR 12

You must also:

- treat pregnant sows and gilts against internal and external parasites, if necessary
- thoroughly clean pregnant sows and gilts before they're put in farrowing crates
- give sows and gilts enough nesting material in the week before expected farrowing (unless it's not practical because of the slurry system you use)
- provide a clear area behind the sow or gilt during farrowing
- provide a way of protecting the piglets, such as farrowing rails, if you keep sows loose in farrowing pens
- use a feeding system that makes sure each sow or gilt gets enough food even when other pigs are competing for food
- give all dry pregnant sows and gilts enough bulky or high-fibre food, as well as high-energy food, to meet their hunger and need to chew
- keep sows and gilts in groups (except between 7 days before the predicted day of farrowing and the day on which the weaning of piglets is complete)

You won't break the rule about keeping sows and gilts in groups if they're kept on holdings of fewer than 10 sows if the individual accommodation meets the rules for pig accommodation.

For boars (male pigs after puberty) intended for breeding

You must:

- place and build boar pens to allow the boars to turn around and to hear, see and smell other pigs
- give clean resting areas in the boar pens and make sure that the lying area is dry and comfortable
- make sure that each boar has its minimum allowance of clear floor space. Each adult boar must have at least six square metres of unobstructed floor space. If also used for natural service, the floor area must be at least ten square metres and free of obstacles.

For weaners (pigs from weaning to the age of 10 weeks) and rearing pigs (pigs from the age of 10 weeks until slaughter or service)

You must:

- make sure that each weaner or rearing pig, kept in groups, has its minimum allowance of clear floor space, as set out in the following table:

| Average weight of pigs in the group (kilograms) | Minimum unobstructed floor space (square metres) |
|--|---|
| 10 or less | 0.15 |
| Greater than 10 but less than or equal to 20 | 0.20 |
| Greater than 20 but less than or equal to 30 | 0.30 |
| Greater than 30 but less than or equal to 50 | 0.40 |
| Greater than 50 but less than or equal to 85 | 0.55 |
| Greater than 85 but less than or equal to 110 | 0.65 |
| Greater than 110 | 1.00 |

- put pigs in groups as soon as possible after weaning and keep the groups stable with as little mixing as possible
- allow the animals to escape and hide from unfamiliar pigs if necessary. This must be done at as young an age as possible, preferably before or up to a week after weaning.

You must not:

- use tranquilising medicines to help with mixing, unless there are exceptional circumstances on the advice of a vet.

Other guidance

You should follow the rules in the [‘Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock: Pigs’](#).

Contact

Animal and Plant Health Agency: 01932 341111

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

Defra helpline: 0345 933 557

SMR 13: Animal welfare



(Previously SMR 18)

You must protect the welfare of farmed animals by setting minimum standards for their care and husbandry.

This SMR applies to any species kept for farming purposes.

What you must do

Inspection

- You must make sure that your animals are looked after by enough staff with the right skills and knowledge.
- Your animals must be inspected thoroughly at least once a day if your husbandry system depends on frequent human attention and in other systems as often as necessary to avoid suffering.
- Ill or injured animals must be cared for immediately, and if they do not respond to this care then you must seek veterinary advice.
- Sick or injured animals must be isolated in suitable accommodation with dry comfortable bedding, if necessary.

On-farm records

You must make a record of:

- any medicinal treatment given to your animals. Keep these records for at least 3 years from the date of the treatment and make them available to any authorised person at inspection (or when otherwise asked for)
- the number of deaths found when the animals are inspected. Keep these records for at least 3 years from the date of the relevant inspection and make them available to any authorised person at inspection (or when otherwise asked for).

Accommodation

- Your animals must have enough space to avoid unnecessary stress, if they are continuously or regularly tethered or confined, and also allow them to show their normal behaviour in line with established experience and scientific knowledge.
- You must not restrict your animals' freedom of movement if this causes them unnecessary suffering or injury.
- Materials for animals' accommodation must be capable of being thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.
- Accommodation must be built and maintained so that there are no sharp edges or protrusions which could injure your animals. You must not use materials and/or equipment for accommodation purposes that is harmful to your animals.
- Air circulation, dust levels, temperature, relative air humidity and gas concentrations must be kept within limits that will not harm your animals.

- Artificial lighting must be provided if there is not sufficient natural light in a building. You must not keep animals in permanent darkness or without an appropriate rest period from artificial lighting.
- You must check automated and/or mechanical equipment that is essential for the health and well-being of your animals at least once a day and put right any faults immediately (or take appropriate steps to protect the health and well-being of your animals until you can get the fault put right).
- You must provide an appropriate back-up to the main system if your animals' health and well-being depends upon artificial ventilation, and have an alarm to warn you if the ventilation system fails. Inspect and test these at least once every 7 days.

Feed and water

- Your animals must be fed a wholesome diet, making sure that they have access to feed at intervals appropriate to their needs (and, in any case, at least once a day).
- You must not give your animals food or liquid in any way, or containing any substance, that could cause them unnecessary harm, or administer any substance to your animals which is harmful to their health or welfare.
- All animals must have access to a suitable water supply and enough fresh drinking water or other fluid each day.
- Any contamination of food and water and the harmful effects of competition between animals for food and water must be minimised through the design and location of feeding and watering equipment.

Mutilations and breeding procedures

You must not:

- carry out any mutilation or intervention on your animals, unless the action is classed as a 'permitted procedure' (many of these have conditions attached, including the need to be reasonably justified and be a measure of 'last resort'). Advice on these procedures is available in the relevant [Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock for each species](#), which should be read in conjunction with the [Mutilations \(Permitted Procedures\) \(England\) Regulations 2007 \(as amended in 2010\)](#).
- carry out breeding procedures (either natural or artificial) that cause, or are likely to cause, harm to your animals
- keep animals for farming purposes unless it can be reasonably expected that the normal breed characteristics (genetic and physical) mean that they can be kept without harm to their health and welfare.

Animals kept outdoors

You must:

- give animals not kept in buildings access to a well-drained lying area at all times
- protect them from the weather, predators and other risks to their health.

Other guidance

You should follow the rules in the relevant [‘Codes of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock’](#).

Contact

Animal and Plant Health Agency: 01932 341111

Defra helpline: 0345 933 557

Rural Payments Agency: 0345 603 7777

Inspections

To check that claimants are following cross compliance properly, we visit a certain percentage of holdings each year.

Each scheme year, there will be cross compliance inspections on:

- 1% of claimants who claim Basic Payment Scheme (BPS)
- 1% of claimants who have a rural development agreement.

Claimants won't always receive advance warning of these visits and it could happen more than once in a year. If we do give advance warning, it's likely to be less than 48 hours before the inspection.

Claimants must co-operate with the inspector, giving help and equipment to allow checks to be made safely. Claimants who refuse to allow an inspector on their land, or who don't co-operate, could lose all of their payment(s).

When an inspector arrives they will tell the claimant what's involved and what they need to do.

At the end of the inspection, the inspector will explain to the claimant what they've found. If they find anything wrong, RPA will send more information to the claimant to explain how it affects their claim(s). This will be in writing and will be sent within 3 months of the date of the inspection.

Who makes inspections?

Depending on which GAECs and SMRs apply to their holding(s), claimants may be inspected by one or more Competent Control Authority inspector(s) from:

- Rural Payments Agency
- Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).

They will use any necessary information from the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission, Natural England, and Veterinary Medicines Directorate.

There is more information below about what each organisation will look for when they inspect a holding.

More information can also be found in the 'Verifiable Standards' on the ['cross compliance: inspections'](http://www.gov.uk) page on www.gov.uk.

Rural Payments Agency (RPA)

Inspecting land and facilities

The inspector will make a full physical inspection of the land – taking measurements where appropriate.

Food and/or feed producers, and – as in the majority of cases – claimants who give feed to food-producing animals, will be asked to show the inspector all storage areas for food, biocides and plant protection products (where these apply).

This is to make sure that:

- the claimant has taken adequate measures to prevent food and feed contamination
- the claimant is following food and feed hygiene rules.

The inspector will also, where necessary, check that the claimant is following the correct processes; for example, withdrawing food and feed that has not met safety rules from the market.

Inspecting users of plant protection products (PPPs)

The inspector will check that:

- any plant protection products (PPPs) are authorised
- there is a permit for any parallel-traded products
- all PPPs are used in accordance with the conditions on the label.

Storage facilities will also be inspected, to make sure that the claimant is complying with the storage requirements on the product label.

Where necessary, the inspector will also make sure that enough 'buffer zones' are in place on the holding to protect watercourses.

Inspecting livestock keepers

The inspector will ask to see all livestock housing areas, and the claimant will need to provide suitable labour and safe handling facilities. The inspection will include checks to make sure that:

- cattle on the farm match the animals recorded on the Cattle Tracing System and that they are properly tagged and registered
- sheep and goats are identified in line with the rules – and that the number of animals matches the annual inventory return
- pigs are marked in line with the rules:
 - pig marking equipment is being maintained correctly
 - the number of animals matches the stocktake
- the restricted feed rules have been met
- the claimant is adhering to any movement restrictions or other notices
- the claimant is aware of the requirement to tell Defra of suspected disease outbreaks.

To find out what livestock records an inspector will ask to see, read the 'Checking records' section below.

Inspecting dairy claimants

The inspector will make additional hygiene checks of livestock, dairy facilities and routines, and milk storage and records.

Inspecting egg producers

The inspector will make additional checks to make sure that eggs are kept hygienically.

Inspecting groundwater

The inspector will check that:

- any hazardous substances (for example, pesticides or sheep dip) and non-hazardous pollutants are stored and used in line with codes of good practice
- the claimant is not knowingly permitting a 'groundwater activity' involving hazardous substances and/or non-hazardous pollutants unless they have obtained and/or are meeting the conditions of a permit from the Environment Agency
- the claimant is meeting the terms of any permit issued to them in the permitted application area.

Inspecting for nitrates rules

If the holding is in a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone, the inspector will check:

- silage and slurry storage structures
- field silage sites
- field activities
- any temporary field storage of solid manure.

If the holding is not in a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone, the inspector will check field activities for compliance with the no spread zones.

Inspecting water abstraction licences

The inspector will check for a water abstraction licence (where applicable) and that the claimant is meeting its conditions.

This usually involves:

- reading the water meter
- checking the meter calibration certificate
- seeing where the water is taken from and where it's used.

If a claimant needs to abstract water during the inspection and their licence has a Locally Prescribed Flow condition, the inspector will need to check the structure and may take a flow reading.

Checking records

The inspector will need to examine farm records (in digital and/or paper format), for a number of the GAECs and SMRs.

For farms in a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone, the inspector will want to see records which must include:

- the size of the farm
- projected livestock numbers, and nitrogen production and loading calculations
- actual livestock numbers, and manure production and slurry storage calculations
- organic manure-spreading risk map
- locations of temporary field manure storage sites, and dates used
- nitrogen spreading four-stage plan

- field records of when and where nitrogen fertiliser is spread, and if necessary the maximum nitrogen (N max) calculation
- records of imports/exports of livestock manures
- documents covering new, substantially enlarged, or substantially reconstructed silos, slurry stores and field silage sites.

For animal records, the inspector will check:

- that movement records, both on and off the holding, for cattle, pigs, sheep and goats, are up to date and that movement documents are correctly filled in and kept
- that the annual inventory for sheep and goats and/or pigs is filled in and can be reconciled
- that the herd register and/or flock register is filled in correctly and is up to date
- that there are systems for tracing animal products and/or feed – for example, receipts and/or invoices for inputs onto the farm, and products when they leave the farm
- veterinary medicinal records.

Other records the inspector may need to examine include:

- plant protection and biocidal products' records of usage
- Local Environment Risk Assessment for Pesticides (LERAP) records
- water abstraction records
- permits for any on-farm discharge of hazardous substances or non-hazardous pollutants and the records of materials applied to the permitted area (material, quantity and dates applied)
- map for no spread zones.

Other documents

The inspector may also need to see other documents. For land, this may include:

- a burning licence
- a Certificate of Competence for using plant protection products
- a felling licence
- a special nature conservation order or management notice
- English Heritage consent to carry out an operation on a scheduled monument
- local authority permission to remove a hedgerow
- local authority written consent regarding trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO)
- local authority written consent to permanently or temporarily divert a visible public right of way
- management prescriptions
- Natural England consent or licence for operations on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Natural England or Forestry Commission screening notice and/or remediation notice and/or consent about any Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
- copies of any analyses of the nitrogen content of livestock manure, if used
- any written advice from a FACTS-qualified adviser.

For animals, this may include:

- Animal Movement Licensing System (AMLS) documents
- auction slips, invoices, Central Point Recording Centre (CPRC) lists and fallen stock receipts
- a letter of authorisation from Animal and Plant Health Agency to use restricted proteins and/or feed products containing restricted proteins
- records of analysis and/or samples carried out on any livestock or feed
- records of analysis and/or samples carried out for producing milk
- records of routine and pre-movement tuberculosis (TB) tests.

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

The inspector will expect to:

- see all animals in their normal rearing environment
- see that any back-up system is working if animals' health and well-being depends upon artificial ventilation; and how the alarm system works if the ventilation system fails
- be able to examine specific animals on request
- take as evidence, where required, any samples, carcasses, photographs and/or other evidence to support both compliance and non-compliance.

Also, the inspector will:

- inspect veterinary medicine and mortality records
- check any other records that may support compliance with the rules
- ask whether there has been a known or suspected outbreak of a notifiable disease (as listed under the disease control requirements) on your premises during the year.

For calves, the inspector will need to take:

- pen and/or stall measurements
- blood samples, if any of the calves appear anaemic on first inspection.

For pigs, the inspector will need to measure:

- light intensity in pens from a sample of age groups present
- pens and/or stalls from a sample of age groups present, for all fattening pigs and boars
- pens, stalls, slat widths and/or slat openings.

Animal and Plant Health Agency also carry out inspection of restricted substances on behalf of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate . In these cases, the inspector will:

- inspect a sample of animals for signs of the use of banned substances, such as growth promoters
- select one or more suitable animals and carry out sampling of blood and/or urine; or send samples of animal feed or bulk milk for laboratory analysis
- inspect medicines stores and medicines records, including invoices about the purchase of medicines.

More information

Contact RPA

Customer Service Centre (CSC): 0345 603 7777 (Monday to Friday 8.30am – 5pm, closed on weekends and public holidays).

RPA Livestock Identification Helpline: 0345 050 9876

Email: csc@rpa.gsi.gov.uk

Address:

Rural Payments Agency

PO Box 300

Sheffield

S95 1AA

Please quote your Single Business Identifier (SBI) for all enquiries.

To complain to RPA, write, email or telephone. Full guidance about how to complain or appeal is available online.

Contact British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS)

BCMS helpline: 0345 050 1234

Address:

BCMS

Curwen Road, Workington

CA14 2DD

Other useful contacts

Animal and Plant Health Agency

01932 341111

Animal Reporting and Movement Service (ARAMS)

0844 573 0137

Defra helpline

0345 933 5577

eAML2 movement reporting service helpline

0844 335 8400

Environment Agency

03708 506 506

Food Standards Agency

020 7276 8829

Forestry Commission national office

0300 067 4000

Health and Safety Agency – Advisory Team

0300 003 1747

Historic England (formerly known as English Heritage)
0370 333 1181

Natural England
0345 600 3078

RSPB UK HQ
01767 680 541

Veterinary Medicines Directorate
01932 336911

The Farming Advice Service – if you need help

The Farming Advice Service (FAS) is funded by Defra to provide free, confidential advice to farmers and farming industry advisers to help them understand and meet requirements for cross compliance, ‘greening’ and, from 1 January 2015, water protection and the sustainable use of pesticides.

Call their helpline on 0345 345 1302 or search for more information on the [Farming Advice Service](#) online.

Legal notice

This guidance is not the law. It’s designed to help you comply with cross compliance. For more information, or to read the legislation, go to www.gov.uk and search ‘cross compliance’. For legal advice, contact a legal professional.

The main EU regulations relating to cross compliance are as follows (this list is not exhaustive):

- Regulation 1306/2013
- Regulation 640/2014
- Regulation 809/2014

You can also refer to ‘The Common Agricultural Policy (Control and Enforcement, Cross-Compliance, Scrutiny of Transactions and Appeals) Regulations 2014’ which sets out all the GAECs.

If the regulations or our interpretation of them change, we will publish more information to let you know.

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This document/publication is also available on our website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cross-compliance-guidance-for-2015>

Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to us at webmaster.rpa@rpa.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/cap-reform
www.gov.uk/defra

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