

# AgriBuzz - land management news

Issue 16 - winter 2014

Midlands edition

## Welcome to AgriBuzz

Welcome to AgriBuzz, our quarterly e-newsletter for farmers and land managers in the Midlands, keeping you up to date with information relevant to your agricultural business.

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www.ukagriculture.com

Stubble in winter

## Hot topics



### Exceptional weather – get prepared

Whether it be heavy or prolonged rainfall, snowfall or drought conditions, exceptional weather has a way of impacting all aspects of farming, disrupting the farming calendar throughout the year. Getting prepared now can help.

Think about how you will access land, spread or store your slurry and store your milk, access water for your livestock and crops for example. It is really important to plan ahead and build resilience into your business.

**Flooding** - Farmers and land managers need to be aware of flood risk and be able to plan ahead for extreme weather events. For example, if you can slow down and store excess water on your land to improve absorption, you can reduce the damage done to your soil and crops by runoff during heavy rain. You can also help reduce the risk of flooding on neighbouring farms and in built-up areas. On our website you can [check flood warnings and river levels](#), with current flood warnings and live flood warning maps being updated every 15 minutes. It is strongly recommended to make a [flood plan](#) and register with [Flood Warnings Direct](#) to receive flood warnings free by phone, text or email.

**Snowfall** - you may have difficulty in accessing land in times of snowfall and may be unable to spread your manures and slurries. Ensuring that you have the correct amount of appropriate storage or an alternative disposal method is essential. Spreading in winter not only wastes valuable nutrients and increases the risk of soil damage but it is also an offence to spread slurry during the closed periods in an NVZ.

**Drought** - It may seem a long way off until we may face drought conditions, however that's where getting prepared now can really help. Have you thought about [rainwater harvesting](#), or [building an irrigation reservoir](#), helping you to store winter water and avoid the uncertainties of summer abstraction licence restrictions.

A practical guide to [Weathering The Storm](#) is available and if you need further information or guidance, please [contact us](#).

**Did you know** - you can also use [WIYBY](#) to check if you are at risk of flooding



### Small sewage discharges – regulatory burden reduced

For owners of septic tanks and package treatment plants the regulatory burden has been reduced. From 1 January 2015 you won't be required to register an exemption for small sewage discharges provided you meet the [general binding rules](#) summarised below.

The discharge is to ground (not in a groundwater source protection zone 1 - check [here](#)) and is of 2m<sup>3</sup>/day or less from a septic tank or package treatment plant, or

the discharge is to surface water and is of 5m<sup>3</sup>/day or less from a package treatment plant (discharges from septic tanks are not allowed to surface water)

The discharge does not cause pollution

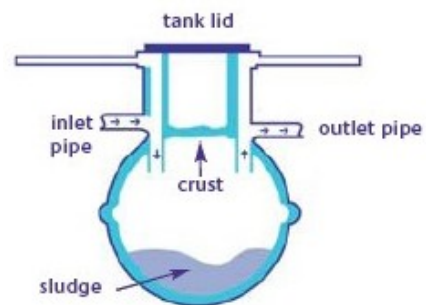
The septic tank or package treatment plant is maintained in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. (For septic tanks this includes regular emptying/desludging)

The sewage is only domestic (e.g. toilets/sinks/drains in a home or small business)

New discharges are not in or near to a designated sensitive area

If you cannot meet these requirements or you are discharging to ground in a groundwater source protection zone 1, you may need a permit. Please contact our [customer service line](#) who will check this and tell you what you need to do.

For further guidance [additional information](#) is available.



A modern septic tank

**Did you know?** You must empty your septic tank or package treatment plant whenever it becomes full and you should empty it at least once a year even if it's not full. The company you use to dispose of your waste sludge must be a [registered waste carrier](#).



# 2015 International Year of Soils



soils

## 2015 International Year of Soils

'The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself' – Franklin D Roosevelt

The 68<sup>th</sup> UN Assembly have declared 2015 the International Year of Soils (IYS).

The aims of IYS 2015 in summary is to:

Raise awareness of the importance of soil for human life.
Educate the public around soil and its impact/influence on food security, climate change, and ecosystem services.
Promote investment in managing soils sustainably.
Support research and initiatives to manage soils.

Further information can be found on the [IYS website](#).

In light of this here are the links to a few great guides to managing your soils:

<a href="#">Simply sustainable soils – a LEAF guide</a> including six simple steps for your soil: soil structure, drainage, compaction, organic matter status, pH and nutrients, biological health.	<a href="#">An Agricultural Lime Association (ALA) guide to good soil management</a> including three 'golden' basics: adequate drainage, correct level of compaction, appropriate pH.
<a href="#">Think Soils</a> – a practical guide to soil assessment, full of useful information and illustrations to help farmers, land managers and advisors.	<a href="#">Protecting our water, soil and air - a code of good agricultural practice</a> – a practical guide to help farmers, growers and land managers.

See the [events and diary dates](#) and [useful websites](#) sections below for some relevant events and further links.



## Derbyshire Derwent Catchment Partnership – launch of farming group

The water environment is affected by every activity that takes place on land as well as through our actions in abstracting, using and returning water to rivers, the ground and the sea. Coordinated action at the catchment level by all those who use water or influence land management is the best way to look after this precious resource. This requires engagement and delivery by stakeholders, supported by the Environment Agency and other organisations. This is particularly important when trying to address the significant pressures placed on the water environment by diffuse pollution from both agricultural and urban sources, and widespread, historical alterations to the natural form of channels. Defra has established the [Catchment Based Approach](#) nationally to support this.

In the Derbyshire Derwent catchment the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust host the [Derbyshire Derwent Catchment Partnership](#). There are five focus groups that include: Farming, Uplands, Wildlife, Climate Change and Flooding and Public Engagement. The intention is for these groups to identify priorities and projects related to the issues and for the steering group to identify where these projects overlap and we can identify funding opportunities.

The Derbyshire Derwent farming group met for the first time in January 2015 and includes representatives from: Environment Agency, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, NFU East Midlands Region, L A Sharpe Ltd, Natural England, National Trust, Severn Trent Water, Old Waltonians Fishing Club, Chatsworth, Matlock Angling club and Derwent FFC.



An example of improvement work – a dedicated cattle drinking point

**Have your say** - The Derbyshire Derwent catchment is a part of The [Humber River Basin Management Plan](#) (RBMP). The Humber RBMP sets out ecological status objectives for waterbodies and the measures needed to improve rivers, lakes, estuaries, coasts and groundwater for the Humber Catchment. You are invited to have your say on the objectives and actions proposed for this catchment. The RBMP consultation is open until 10 April 2015.

There are two ways to respond; Either in detail via the [consultations page](#) or you can add your comments to a response being prepared by [Blueprint for Water](#).

Further detailed information about the ecological status of your local brook or river can be found

Currently the group is looking for funding opportunities to support best practice projects for agricultural land in the catchment. These include Landfill Tax bids, Heritage Life funded projects, working with Severn Trent Water (small land based bids for land management), and Environment Agency funding. Activities considered include waterside fencing, dedicated cattle drinking solutions, fertiliser and pesticide management advice and wetland and river restoration projects. If you would like further information or are interested in applying for funding for improvement work on your farm please [contact us](#).

by using the [Catchment Data Explorer](#).

These catchment partnerships have been formed all over the country and also include one for the River Trent from Derby to the Humber estuary, for the Idle and Torne catchment and for the River Soar catchment. To find out more please visit the [Catchment Based Approach](#) website or [contact us](#).

## Events and diary dates

Event	Date(s)
<p><a href="#">National Sheep Association central region winter fair</a> With a theme of 'Helping sheep farmers move forward'. Competitions and seminars running throughout the day. Adults £5 / Free (NSA member) / Agricultural students &amp; under 16's free of charge.</p>	<p>29 January 2013 - 10am - 4.30pm Bakewell Market, Derbyshire, DE45 1AH</p>
<p><a href="#">Soil biology and organic matter workshop</a> A line-up of excellent speakers sharing valuable information in a practical and informative way so you will be inspired to look at your soils in a very different way. Including the biological basis of soil health and function, organic matter and its effect on soil structure and crop yield, and cover cropping - opportunities in a rotation to improve soil and control weeds.</p> <p>A joint event by the Soil &amp; Water Management Centre and Catchment Sensitive Farming This event is free and lunch is provided. BASIS points available. To book a place please visit the <a href="#">website</a> or call 0300 0601695 quoting EMWS241.</p>	<p>30 January 2015 - 9am - 1pm Buckminster Barn, Back Street, Buckminster, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG33 5RS</p>
<p><a href="#">Green Futures 2015 – East Midlands</a> This years programme will include; -Cross Compliance requirements for 2015 - Farming Advice Service -Greening, the rules and land management - Farming Advice Service -The new Agri-environment Scheme - Natural England -Local update and topical issues - Environment Agency Free to attend. BASIS and NRoSO CPD points are available for attendees. Book your place by emailing the <a href="#">Farming Advice Service</a> or call them on 0345 3451302.</p>	<p>2 February 2015 - 7.30pm - 9.30pm Bluebell Inn, Tissington, Derbyshire, DE6 1NH</p> <p>4 February 2015 - 11am - 1pm Louth Golf Club, Louth, Lincolnshire, LN11 9LJ</p> <p>9 February 2015 - 2pm - 4pm Newark Showground, NG24 2NY</p> <p>11 February 2015 - 7.30pm - 9.30pm Springfields Conference Centre, Spalding, PE12 6ET</p> <p>12 February 2015 - 7.30pm - 9.30pm Kilworth Springs Golf Club, North Kilworth, Leicestershire, LE17 6HJ</p> <p>17 February 2015 - 2pm - 4pm Whitterbury Hall, Towcester, Northants, NN12 8QH</p> <p>18 February 2015 - 11am - 1pm Elsham Golf Club, Elsham, North Lincolnshire, DN20 0LS</p>

<p><a href="#">Green Futures 2015 – West Midlands</a>  This years programme will include;  -Cross compliance 2015 &amp; inspection issues - Farming Advice Service  -CAP Reform &amp; claiming for the Basic Payment Scheme online - NFU &amp; CLA  -Key actions to help improve water quality - Environment Agency  -The new land management schemes - Natural England  -Pollinator strategy at farm level - Campaign for the Farmed Environment  -Local issues - Catchment Sensitive Farming  Free to attend. BASIS and NRoSO CPD points are available for attendees.  Book your place by emailing the <a href="#">Herefordshire Rural Hub</a> or call them on 01432 870024.</p>	<p>29 January 2015 2pm - 4pm  Cleobury Mortimer Golf Club, DY14 8HQ</p> <p>29 January 2015 7pm - 9pm  YFC Centre, Hawford, Worcestershire, WR3 7SG</p> <p>3 February 2015 2pm - 4pm  New Cattle Market, Hereford, HR4 9HX</p> <p>3 February 2015 7pm - 9pm  New Cattle Market, Hereford, HR4 9HX</p> <p>19 February 2015 2pm - 4pm  Staffordshire County Showground, ST18 0BD</p> <p>19 February 2015 7pm - 9pm  Rudyard Hotel, Staffordshire, ST13 8RN</p> <p>26 February 2015 2pm - 4pm  Stratford Livestock Market, Warwickshire, CV37 8LE</p> <p>26 February 2015 7pm - 9pm  Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh Park, CV8 2LZ</p>
<p><a href="#">Nutrient Planning workshop</a>  -An introduction to nutrient management planning  -Links to NVZ's, cross compliance and record keeping  -A wiser use of organic manures  -Tried &amp; Tested nutrient planning system.  This CFE event is free to attend, booking essential.  To book your place, please email <a href="#">Fay or Barney Parker</a> or call them on 01636 676107 / 07788 293348.</p>	<p>10 February 2015 10.30am - 2.30pm  Tealby Village Hall, 2 Beck Hill, Horncastle, LN8 3XS</p>
<p><a href="#">Green cover &amp; soils workshop</a>  -Greening &amp; ecological focus areas  -Soils; new cross compliance requirements for 2015  -Green cover; establishment and management  -Products available  This CFE event is free to attend, booking essential.  To book your place, please email <a href="#">Fay or Barney Parker</a> or call them on 01636 676107 / 07788 293348.</p>	<p>17 February 2015 10.30am - 2.30pm  Norfolk House Farm, Gedney Drove End, PE12 9PB</p>
<p><a href="#">Nitrogen Management for Arable Farmers</a>  Nutrient management experts from ADAS will discuss the latest thinking on nitrogen management. Including how to vary application rates and timings in response to crop and field variability, as well as nitrogen loss risk (via leaching and volatilisation). This event is free to attend.  To book a place please visit the <a href="#">website</a>.</p>	<p>26 February 2015 - 9am - 1pm  Buckminster Barn, Back Street, Buckminster, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG33 5RS</p>
<p>AgriBuzz - Issue 17 - Spring 2015  Please <a href="#">email us</a> with any content ideas, stories or photos.</p>	<p>April 2015</p>

## Useful websites

<a href="#">GOV.UK - Agriculture</a>	Relevant information covering the whole sector.
<a href="#">GOV.UK - Publications catalogue</a>	Download the current and previous issues of AgriBuzz as a PDF document. Search for 'AgriBuzz' as the publications title.
<a href="#">Environment Agency – What's in your back yard?</a>	Use our interactive maps to find out more about the environment where you live. Including proposed NVZ designation, aquifer designation, groundwater source protection zones, flood maps and river quality.
<a href="#">GOV.UK - Managing soil types</a>	This guide provides information on how to identify the 5 main soil types, outlines the main characteristics of each soil type and how to maintain good soil structure. It also explains how to assess soil structure and organic content and protect soil from erosion, organic matter decline, compaction and contamination.
<a href="#">Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF)</a>	CSF is a scheme run by Natural England in partnership with the Environment Agency and Defra. The GOV.UK website provides information on how to get free advice and training to reduce diffuse water pollution from farming and claim grants under the Capital Grant Scheme.
<a href="#">Campaign for the Farmed Environment</a>	An industry wide campaign that recognises the importance of managing the farmed environment voluntarily. Including how to take part, online record and advice area.
<a href="#">Farming Advice Service</a>	Provides advice on subjects including; cross compliance, 'greening', water use and quality, pesticide use, including Integrated Pest Management planning, to help you improve the economic and environmental performance of your farm.
<a href="#">Voluntary Initiative</a>	Relevant advice and guidance from a programme developed to minimise the environmental impacts from pesticides.
<a href="#">GOV.UK – Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform</a>	Find out about implementation of the new CAP regulations in England, including advice on 'greening' measures and online applications.
<a href="#">GOV.UK - NVZ</a>	NVZ guidance and information. Including access to the leaflets and publications, and the regional boundary maps.

## Contact us

Please [email us](#) if you need any information or advice, or have any feedback or ideas for the next issue of the AgriBuzz. Alternatively call the customer service line: 03708 506 506 quoting 'AgriBuzz'.

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