Greening Update for 2018
Greening Requirements 2018

There are changes to the Greening requirements for 2018, most of which are now known, although some further small changes could still be made.

Three basic Greening rules to be followed for 30% of BPS:-

1. **Protection of Permanent Grassland** - in England the percentage of permanent grassland, compared to the agricultural area, must not fall by more than 5%. Therefore this is **not** a farm level rule.

2. **Crop diversification** (minimum parcel area 0.01 ha).

3. **Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs)** (minimum parcel area 0.01 ha).

• **Organic land** is exempt from Greening (still gets payment)
  - for mixed holdings organic / conventional portions split
  - claimants can chose not to use organic exemption.
Some significant changes to the Greening rules for 2018 but many of the requirements are unchanged from 2017:

**Permanent Grassland**
If the percentage of permanent grassland in England – relative to the area of agricultural land – falls by more than 5%, farmers who have cultivated permanent grassland may have to re-instate it.

Permanent grassland covered by the Wild Birds and / or Habitats Directive (Natura 2000) can not be cultivated. Other permanent grassland must get a screening decision from Natural England before being cultivated or improved if it hasn’t been cultivated for 15 years or if it is semi-natural grassland or another semi-natural area.
Greening Requirements 2018

Some significant changes to the Greening rules for 2018 but many of the requirements are unchanged from 2017:

**Crop Diversification on Arable Land**

- Farmers with 10 ha or more of arable land need to grow at least 2 or 3 different crops on it.
- 10 to 30 ha must have at least 2 different crops with the area of the largest crop being no more than 75% of the arable area.
- 30 ha plus must have at least 3 different crops with the area of the largest crop being no more than 75% of the arable area and the combined area of the two largest crops being no more than 95% of the arable land.
- Crop Diversification exemptions are available in 2018 and may include additional exemptions to those available in 2017.
Some significant changes to the Greening rules for 2018 relating to Ecological Focus Areas (EFA) on arable land:

Farmers with more than 15 ha of arable land must have EFA options that add up to at least 5% of the arable area on their farm.

The EFA options available for 2018 are:

- Buffer strips and Field margins
- Catch Crops
- Cover Crops
- Nitrogen Fixing Crops
- Fallow land
- Hedges and Trees in a line

EFA exemptions will be available in 2018.
Some significant changes to the Greening rules for 2018 relating to Ecological Focus Areas (EFA) on arable land:

- Ban on all plant protection products to EFA Nitrogen Fixing Crops, Fallow area, Catch Crops and Cover Crops.
- Extension on Catch Crop period to 8 weeks from 20 Aug-14 Oct 18
- Cover Crop period remains unchanged from 1 Oct 18-15 Jan 19.
- EFA Hedge option extended to include Trees in a line.
- EFA Buffer Strip option (previously next to watercourses) extended to include Field Margins.
Ban on Plant Protection Products

The ban includes seed treatments, herbicides, fungicides, insecticides, desiccants and plant growth regulators.

It applies to different EFA options for different periods of time:

- Nitrogen Fixing Crops from sowing to harvest so will affect crops sown in autumn 2017 for harvest in 2018 (and any lucerne /clover crops previously treated with PPP’s)
- Fallow from 1st January to 30th June 2018 inclusive
- Catch Crops from 20th August to 14th October 2018
- Cover Crops from 1st October 2018 to 15th January 2019
- PPP’s can still be used on Nitrogen Fixing Crops, Fallow, Catch and Cover crops used for Crop Diversification
Buffer strips and Field Margins are linear features – their length is recorded and then converted into an EFA area.

An EFA Buffer strip must be all of the following:-
• At least 1 metre wide (edge to edge)
• Next to arable land (or within 5 m of it) and on the arable side of a watercourse
• Next to a watercourse or parallel with (and on a slope leading to) a watercourse

Farmers can count a maximum of 2 EFA Buffer strips on each side of a watercourse. One of these must be adjacent to the watercourse – the other can be in the field.
EFA Buffer Strip

1 metre minimum width

Cross compliance requirement and also an EFA Buffer Strip
Buffer Strips and Field Margins are linear features – their length is recorded and then converted into an EFA area.

An EFA Field Margin must be:

• An uncultivated margin around the perimeter of fields against the permanent parcel boundary or surrounding internal landscape features within the parcel.

• It must not be used for crop production although it can be grazed or cut as long as there is a difference between it and the adjoining agricultural land.

EFA Buffer Strips and Field Margins can overlap the cross compliance buffers required to protect hedges and surface water.
EFA Field Margin

1 metre EFA Field Margin

2 metre cross compliance from centre of hedge
EFA Field Margins
EFA Field Margins

EFA Field Margin?

> 1 metre Yes
EFA Field Margins

EFA Field Margin?

< 1 metre No
Catch Crops and Cover Crops must use a mix of at least 1 cereal and 1 non-cereal species from the lists below:

- Cereal: Barley, Oats, Rye
- Non Cereal: Lucerne, Mustard, Oil Radish, Phacelia, Vetch

Or grass or leguminous crops or a mix of both can be counted as either an EFA Catch or Cover Crop, as long as it was under sown in the previous crop and is visible and dense enough to cover the ground by the start of the Catch or Cover Crop periods which are:

- Catch Crops from 20th August to 14th October 2018
- Cover Crops from 1st October 2018 to 15th January 2019

Catch and Cover Crops can be grazed by animals after their retention period has ended.
To count as an EFA, Fallow land must be kept fallow from 1st January to 30 June 2018.

- Fallow land must be located on arable land
- The minimum area of EFA Fallow is 0.01 ha with a minimum width of 2 metres
- Areas occupied by the following can not count as EFA Fallow:
  - bales of hay or straw
  - silage
  - manure
  - farm machinery

Temporary grass can be used as EFA Fallow and then grazed or cut after 30 June 2018
Managing EFA Fallow Land

During the EFA Fallow period (1 January to 30 June 2018) farmers can do the following on their fallow land:

- Carry out land drainage work.
- Sow wild bird seed mixes and / or nectar or pollen sources.
- Top green cover or previous crop residue.
- Sow grass for reasons other than agricultural production.
- Plough the ground – as long as it is only to prepare for sowing grass, wild bird seed mixes and / or nectar / pollen sources.

Farmers must not:

- Harvest or graze the EFA Fallow area.
- Plant or sow any crop (apart from those allowed above).
- Apply fertiliser or manure unless required by sown grass, wild bird seed mixes and / or nectar / pollen sources.
- Apply plant protection products during the fallow period.
EFA Nitrogen Fixing Crops

• Nitrogen Fixing Crops may be grown on their own or in mixtures with other crops providing the nitrogen fixing crops make up at least 51% of the plants in the field.

• The minimum area of Nitrogen Fixing Crops is 0.01 ha.

• Plant Protection Products can not be applied to EFA Nitrogen Fixing Crops during the period from sowing to harvest.
EFA Hedges or Trees in Line

- only count if they are on or within 5 metres of arable land along their longest edge at the BPS claimants disposal.
- must be a continuous length of at least 20 metres and gaps can be included in the length if each gap is less than 20 metres long.
- must be a single row of trees situated on the boundary line of the parcel and must consist of a minimum of 3 trees.
- can be any width or height but they must be maintained for the whole year in line with cross compliance rules.
- Newly planted hedges or Trees in Line can also count for EFA if they are in the ground when a BPS application is made and meet the minimum length rules.
EFA Hedges and Trees in Line

- EFA Hedges or Trees in Line next to EFA Fallow Land, Nitrogen Fixing Crops or Catch and Cover Crops require an area reduction to be made to the EFA area declared in the field.

- The EFA area of the Fallow, Nitrogen Fixing Crop or Catch and Cover Crop must be reduced by 2.5 square metres for each metre length of EFA Hedge or Trees in Line in the field.
### EFA Options converted to EFA Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Area it is worth for EFA</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hedges and Trees in Line</td>
<td>1 metre length = 10 sq. metres</td>
<td>If only counting one side: 1 metre = 5 sq. metre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffer Strip and Field Margins</td>
<td>1 metre length = 9 sq. metres</td>
<td>1 metre minimum width next to field boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nitrogen Fixing Crops</td>
<td>1 ha = 0.7 ha</td>
<td>No pesticide applications allowed from sowing onwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallow</td>
<td>1 ha = 1 ha</td>
<td>Different management periods for EFA v Crop Diversification. No pesticide application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catch &amp; Cover Crops</td>
<td>1 ha = 0.3 ha</td>
<td>Can only use species from published short list of options. No pesticide application</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ecological Focus Areas

How to make up the minimum 5% EFA?

• Try to keep things simple.

• Aim to have a safety margin in case of inspection.

• Look at what EFA area is already present on farm:
  • Fallow (ELS field corners / wild bird cover etc.)
  • Hedges and Trees in Line
  • Buffers next to water and Field Margins
  • Use Catch or Cover Crops in autumn 18 if short of EFA

• Make sure all the EFA options used are located on or within 5 metres of arable land.

• Ensure that the EFA declared on the BPS application is a minimum of 5% of the arable area.
Ecological Focus Areas

10 ha square arable field with hedge on all 4 sides

Hedge length 1265 m x 5 m (hedge EFA) = 0.63 ha of EFA
Ecological Focus Areas

10 ha square arable field with 1 m buffer strip on all 4 sides

Buffer strip length 1265 m x 9 m (buffer strip EFA) = 1.14 ha of EFA
Ecological Focus Areas

10 ha square arable field with 1 m buffer strip and a hedge on all 4 sides

Hedge length 1265 m x 5 m (hedge EFA) = 0.63 ha of EFA
Buffer strip length 1265 m x 9 m (buffer strip EFA) = 1.14 ha of EFA

Total EFA area = 1.77 ha
Measuring EFAs

Need to measure the lengths of hedges, trees in line, buffer strips and field margins to enter onto your 2018 BPS application.

- Measure the area of Fallow, Nitrogen Fixing Crops, Catch Crops and Cover Crops.
- Make use of digital mapping tools to measure lengths of features such as:
  - Magic
  - Google Earth
  - Gatekeeper Mapping
Measuring EFAs

Measurement Result
Distance: 862.5 Metres

Double click to finish drawing and see the measurement result.

All measurements are indicative only and should not be used for official purposes.
Measuring EFAs

Measurement Result

Distance: 862.5 Metres

Double click to finish drawing and see the measurement result.

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Measuring EFAs
Measuring EFAs

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Measurement Tools
- Reuse Graphics:

Measurement Result
- Perimeter: 405.8 Metres
- Area: 6,636.2 Sq Metres

Double-click to finish drawing and see the measurement result.

All measurements are indicative only and should not be used for official purposes.
Some significant changes to the Greening rules for 2018 but many of the requirements are unchanged from 2017:

- 2018 BPS & Greening guidance should be available in Feb 2018.
- Further small changes may be made to Greening in 2018 as a result of recent CAP Regulation changes.
- Crop diversification requirements are very similar to the 2017 rules.
- EFA remains at a minimum of 5% of the arable area but significant changes to some options.
- The ban on plant protection products on nitrogen fixing crops now makes these impractical to use as EFA for most farmers.
- The extension of Buffer Strips to include Field Margins is likely to help many farmers meet their EFA requirement.
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