

April 2012 - e-news issue 02

Welcome to the 2nd Farming Advice Service newsletter.

This newsletter covers the new GAEC19 requirements, changes to the Nmax limits, as well as important information about converting permanent pasture. We hope you find this newsletter helpful. If you have any comments or if you have any ideas for topics you'd like us to cover, please get in touch.

- Email: bookings@farmingadvice.org.uk
- Telephone: 0845 345 1302
- Website: www.defra.gov.uk/farming-advice

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Risk maps are not just for NVZs - GAEC 19

As mentioned in the January 2012 newsletter, there is a new GAEC for Cross Compliance: GAEC 19 – no spread zones, effective from 01 January 2012. The aim of these rules is to protect water against

pollution and run-off from agricultural sources.

Historically, only those farmers within Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) had rules applied to the way they managed spreading of fertilizers near watercourses. However, the **new GAEC19 rules apply to ALL Single Payment Scheme claimants.**

GAEC 19 has rules about the distance of spreading manufactured fertilizer and organic manure near watercourses. In addition to these, the new GAEC19 requires all farmers who **apply organic manure to develop a risk map.** If you are in an NVZ, you should already be meeting the requirements.

This new requirement was introduced during the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) health check in 2010, but it has been deferred until now. The EU Commission changed the GAEC framework to include the establishment of buffer strips along watercourses. This is mandatory for all member states, and effectively introduces some NVZ-type requirements to all land.

The full GAEC19 requirements can be found in your 2012 Cross Compliance handbook, or on the RPA website [here](#).

We have developed a technical article to help you develop a risk map. This is available on the FAS website [here](#).

NVZs: Assessing compliance with Nmax limits

There have been important changes to the Nmax limit for grasslands, as well as the livestock manure nitrogen efficiency values, effective from 01 January 2012. Remember that these must be used when assessing compliance with Nmax limits.

Nmax limit for grassland

The Nmax limit for grassland has **reduced** from 330 to 300 kg nitrogen per hectare. This is the **maximum amount of nitrogen that can be applied as manufactured fertiliser and manure nitrogen**

available for crop uptake (as defined by manure nitrogen efficiency values - see below), on average, over the whole grassland area of the farm.

Manure nitrogen efficiency values

The livestock manure nitrogen efficiency values that must be used in the Nmax compliance calculation have increased – these updated values must be used when calculating the supply of crop available nitrogen from livestock manure applications made after 01 January 2012. This means that more of the nitrogen from applied livestock manures will now be considered as available for crop uptake, which will reduce the potential amount of additional manufactured fertiliser that can then be applied. The updated values are given below.

Manure type	Crop available nitrogen (% of total nitrogen applied) until 1st January 2012	Crop available nitrogen (% of total nitrogen applied) from 1st January 2012
Cattle slurry	20%	35%
Pig slurry	25%	45%
Poultry manure or litter	20%	30%
Other livestock manures	10%	10%

PLANET (www.planet4farmers.co.uk), the nutrient management software tool developed by ADAS, is **free** to farmers and will help you to assess your compliance. PLANET has a facility that calculates compliance with the Nmax limit for each Nmax crop type grown on the farm (see NVZ guidance leaflet 3, Table 5). The PLANET Nmax facility helps NVZ compliant planning of nitrogen use at the start of the growing season, and helps show compliance with the Nmax rule at the end of the season. The current version of PLANET (v3.1) is being updated to include the mandatory changes described above, and a new version will be released in spring 2012. Registered PLANET users will be informed when the new version is available for download and on a DVD.

Think twice before converting permanent pasture

We are required under European legislation to maintain the level of permanent pasture in the UK and the European Commission has proposed that this requirement continues beyond the next CAP Reform. If permanent pasture reduces beyond a certain level, we may have to introduce new cross compliance rules to control the level of pasture. This means that you may have to return land back to permanent pasture in the future.

It is important that you use the correct land use code for permanent pasture as we use this to show the European Commission how much pasture there is in the UK. In particular, you remember that:

- you should change a temporary grass land use code to a permanent pasture code once the land has been down to grass or herbaceous forage on six consecutive SPS applications. This applies even if the grass has been reseeded during this time.
- land does not have to be grazed to be considered to be permanent pasture.

Cross compliance failures for 2011 published

The Rural Payments Agency has published the annual statistics on the 2011 cross compliance inspection results, including common failures. Figures show the total number of failures found in 2011 was 2,046, slightly up on 2010. The highest numbers of breaches were among cattle keepers for failing to report the deaths or movements of their animals. Across all agricultural sectors, but particularly for cattle and sheep farmers, failure to keep adequate records was a major cause.

To view the news release and the inspection statistics then please click [here](#).

Register for text message updates

If you haven't already registered for text messages, we recommend you do! We use text messages to get relevant information to farmers quickly. We send text messages as a reminder of approaching key dates, or in response to current events (e.g. flooding). We also signpost to key information and raise awareness of local events. To register for text message updates, please email bookings@farmingadvice.org.uk with 'Register for text updates' in the subject line, and include your name and mobile phone number in the message. Your details provided will not be shared with any third parties.

Key dates

01 April	You must not burn heather or grass on land, other than in upland areas, from this date. (GAEC 10)
01 April	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 18)
16 April	You must not burn heather or grass in upland areas from this date. (GAEC 10)
30 April	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 4)
01 May	You must not carry out hedge-laying or coppicing of hedgerows from this date. (GAEC 15)