

November 2014 - e-news issue 17

Welcome to the Farming Advice Service newsletter

If you would like to sign-up to receive the Farming Advice Service (FAS) newsletter straight to your inbox, please email bookings@farmingadvice.org.uk with 'Register for newsletter' in the subject line. Your details will not be shared with any third parties.

We hope you find the information in this issue helpful. If you have any comments or ideas for topics you'd like us to cover, please let us know.

FAS technical advice line:

Telephone: 0345 345 1302

Email: advice@farmingadvice.org.uk

Website: www.gov.uk/government/groups/farming-advice-service

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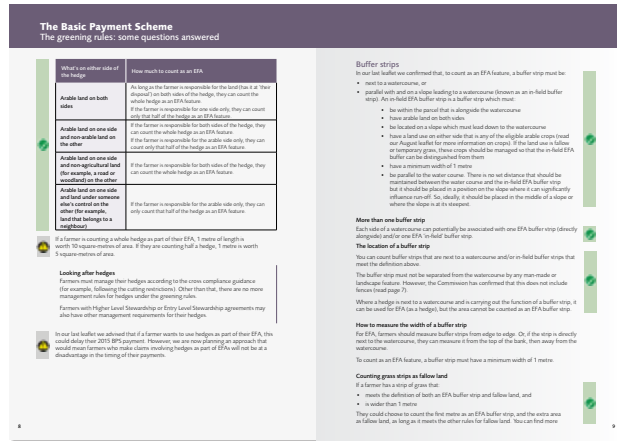
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Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) update: October 2014

On 28 October, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) released the latest CAP guidance. The document called 'The new Common Agricultural Policy schemes in England: October 2014 update' can be downloaded from the [GOV.UK website](http://GOV.UK) and is a follow up to CAP update leaflets published in April and August 2014. Each of the CAP Reform Countdown leaflets is designed to build on the one before it and is intended to be read as part of a series of updates.

The latest document has been posted to all Single Payment Scheme (SPS) and Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) land-based claimants during November. Another leaflet will be published before the end of 2014 to clarify any issues that remain unresolved.

The latest leaflet includes vital information for new and young farmers, explaining how they could be eligible for new Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) entitlements from the 'national reserve'. Young farmers can also find out whether they are eligible to claim a top-up payment worth up to 25 per cent of the average value of their entitlements.

Most existing SPS customers will qualify for BPS, but some operating certain non-agricultural businesses will not be eligible. The leaflet provides further detail around the 'active

farmer' requirements of the scheme and definitions of those who may not be eligible.

The leaflet also includes more information about hedges and how they can be counted as Ecological Focus Areas (EFA). Rules around the width, length, height and location of hedges are all covered.

FAS recently hosted a CAP 2015 update webinar for advisers, in partnership with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). If you were unable to attend on the day, please [click here](#) to view a recording of the webinar. When viewing the webinar, please do so in conjunction with reading the latest CAP guidance. We have also held a series of events for farmers to cover the CAP 2015 changes – all events are advertised on our [event calendar](#) so keep an eye out for forthcoming events in your region.

You can also sign up to receive updates from the [CAP reform blog](#).

If you have questions about greening or changes to cross compliance rules for 2015, please contact the FAS advice line on 0345 345 1302 or email advice@farmingadvice.org.uk

FAS is a government-funded service, providing **independent and confidential advice**. Further information can be found on our [website](#).

Farming Advice Service in 2015



The Farming Advice Service (FAS) updates the farming sector on EU and Defra policy, explaining not only the requirements under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and other EU directives, national legislation and policies, but also their objectives and the actions which help meet compliance. We will continue to provide free, confidential advice on cross compliance and the greening requirements in the next CAP round and from 1st January 2015, we will also be offering advice on the European Directives on both water protection (Water Framework Directive) and Sustainable Use (of Pesticides) Directive.

For further information, please visit our [website](#) or call 0345 345 1302. Please note that the FAS website has a new address - www.gov.uk/government/groups/farming-advice-service

Soil management requirements in 2015

Cross compliance will continue in 2015 under the new CAP, but there will be some changes. If you claim the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) or have a Rural Development Programme land-based agreement, you will have to meet the new cross compliance rules.

There will be new rules for soils that will replace the current GAEC 1 (Soil Protection Review), which is being removed. A new set of national minimum standard rules – which are outcome focused and require no paperwork – will be used instead. These will mean that more emphasis is put on actually farming the land rather than keeping a paper log. They will be:

GAEC 4

Minimum soil cover

Farmers must protect soil by having a minimum soil cover – except where there is an agronomic justification for not doing so, or where establishing a cover would conflict with requirements under GAEC 5. Information on acceptable agronomic justifications and soil cover will be in the soils guidance available later this year.

GAEC 5

Minimum land management reflecting site specific conditions to limit erosion

Farmers 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 compaction may cause soil erosion, farmers must, where appropriate, cultivate post-harvest land and late harvested crops using primary cultivation methods such as ploughing. Alternative primary cultivation methods will be included in the soils guidance.

A reduction in a farmer's agricultural payments could happen where erosion is over a single area greater than 1 hectare, or along a continuous stretch of more than 20 metres long

and 2 metres wide of a bankside or a watercourse. Examples of appropriate measures to limit soil erosion will be provided in the soils guidance later this year.

GAEC 6

Maintenance of soil organic matter level

Farmers must:

- not burn crop stubble, except for plant health reasons. Where burning is needed for plant health reasons, it must comply with 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). Do not plough, cultivate or intensify species-rich and semi-natural habitats so as to conserve organic matter and carbon levels in soils.

The full 2015 cross compliance and soils guidance will be published in December 2014. Please note that the current cross compliance rules will apply until 31 December 2014. All claimants are expected to continue to follow the current rules and to keep an up to date [Soil Protection Review](#) (SPR), which are still subject to inspection.

If you require further advice regarding soil management on your farm, please contact FAS on 0345 345 1302 or email advice@farmingadvice.org.uk



Changes to identification and reporting rules for sheep (and goats) from 2015

If you are a keeper of sheep and goats, you should be aware that there are some important changes to identification and reporting rules that will be in place from 1 January 2015.

Identification

From 1 January 2015, lambs being identified with the single slaughter tag must be identified with an electronic identification (EID) slaughter tag only. This change is not retrospective, so lambs identified with a non-EID slaughter tag up to the end of 2014 do not need to be re-tagged.

Reporting 'historic flock' moves

From 1 January 2015, you must include individual tag numbers for sheep (or goats) identified before 2010 on the movement document, i.e. including your older sheep that are not EID tagged. This does not apply for moves to slaughter (direct or through a red market), which will continue to be batch reported. You still batch record historic flock animals in your holding register. If these animals will move elsewhere (other than to slaughter) next year, Defra and farming bodies have recommended that you re-tag them with an EID pair of tags.

Movements

All movements must comply with the [general licence for movement of sheep and goats](#) and be recorded in the [holding register](#) (Section 5 for 'off-movements', section 6 for 'on-movements'). They must be reported using the [Animal Reporting and Movement Service](#) (ARAMS). This can be done electronically by setting up an account on the website or on paper by completing the [ARAMS-1 Movement Document](#). The ARAMS helpline can be contacted on 0844 573 0137 (open 8.00am to 8.00pm, Monday to Saturday) to assist you in using the system. Why not give it a try?

Make sure the required information is entered accurately on the movement document. This includes the tag numbers for individually identified animals (unless moving to (i) an approved Central Point Recording Centre (CPRC)) or (ii) to a different holding within your farm business where you are still the keeper). Do not assume the receiving premises are a CPRC. For a batch of slaughter animals, enter the total number of animals and it is desirable to enter the mix of flock marks too. For all moves enter the correct location addresses, CPH numbers etc.

Please note, for moves on to your holding you must always report the completion of that move yourself (on paper or electronically) within 72 hours, even if the sender has set up that move electronically on ARAMS. The sending keeper cannot do that for you. Not to do so is an offence and Defra cannot, and will not, assume that the move has been completed as planned until you report it.

Annual inventory

Your sheep and goat annual inventory forms will be sent to you later this month. Please ensure you complete the form and return it by 31 December. You must also include your annual inventory total as at 1 December in your holding register (section 7 if you use the Defra paper register). Also, look out for a leaflet that will be included with your forms to remind of the above-mentioned tagging and recording changes.

Holding register

Failure to enter information accurately in your register (tagging, movements and the annual inventory) may result in a reduction in your SPS claim. Your register should be retained for three years after the last animal in it has left the holding and should be available on request to an inspector.

Guidance on registering your holdings, tagging, record keeping, and reporting movements of sheep and goats can be found on the [GOV.UK website](#) and on the [ARAMS website](#).





Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) grassland derogation

How to apply for 2015

Grassland farmers can apply for a derogation from the 170kg of nitrogen per hectare (N/ha) per year livestock manure limit provided they meet certain criteria. If your application is approved and you meet certain conditions, you will be able to spread up to 250kg of manure N/ha per year from grazing livestock on your farm. Applications can be submitted via Defra's [Farming Online system](#). If you are unable to apply online, telephone applications are being handled by the Environment Agency's helpline on 03708 506 506. All applications must be submitted by **31 December 2014**.

Whether you are applying online or by telephone, you will need to have information about your holding to hand. If you have not previously applied for or been granted a derogation, you may find a question and answer document that has been prepared on the subject useful. Please email nitratesdirectiveteam@defra.gov.uk to obtain a copy.

Further information on the derogation can be found in Chapter 6, Part B and at Annex 2, Part B of the [NVZ guidance](#).

Abstraction licence expiry



*Abstractors who hold a time limited licence that expires on **31 March 2015** must submit an application to replace it (if they still wish to abstract) before **31 December 2014**. The Environment Agency is accepting applications now and encourages abstractors to apply early.*

For further information about applying or renewing a water abstraction licence, please visit the [Environment Agency website](#) or call the Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506.

2014 grassland derogations - Fertiliser Accounts submission by 30 April 2015

NVZ grassland farmers granted derogations are required to submit 'Fertiliser Accounts' to the Environment Agency by 30th April of the following calendar year. Farmers granted a derogation for 2014 will need to submit their Fertiliser Accounts by 30th April 2015.

A practical and easy to use Fertiliser Accounts template is expected to be available in the New Year.

Please call **0345 345 1302** or email bookings@farmingadvice.org.uk to book your place at the FAS events listed below. Please remember to include the event name, date, session that you wish to attend, your name, company name and contact details.

FAS will be running an events programme during 2014, which will cover most regions. The events will be advertised on our website, so please keep an eye on the [events calendar](#).

Forthcoming FAS events

Managing your business in a changing climate

The Farming Advice Service in partnership with the Climate Ready Support Service invite you to attend a workshop or walk to help you identify the potential financial impacts of future extreme weather on your farm business and provide guidance on managing the risks to ensure you can remain competitive and resilient.

The focus for this activity will be arable (predominately combinable crops), dairy and lowland mixed livestock enterprises. The content of these events will be relevant to both farmers and advisors.

Agenda

The events, delivered by independent farm advisers will cover:

- Introduction to climate change risks and risk resilience;
 - Scenarios and impacts on businesses;
- Introduction to action planning;
 - Breakout sessions – discussion of risks, barriers and actions; and
 - Identifying priority actions for your own farm business.
- The very latest on CAP reform & greening
 - greening rules – crop diversification & Ecological Focus Areas (EFA);
 - managing the impacts for businesses, utilising example scenarios.

Event times

The events will be delivered in the morning at 10.00am to 12.30pm and repeated at 1.30pm to 4.00pm. Please state when booking which session you would prefer.

BASIS continuous professional development (CPD) and **NROSO** points are available for attendees. **Places are limited, so please book now to avoid disappointment.**



Date	Event	Location	Sector
28 November	Walk	Frogmary Green Farm, West Street South Petherton, Somerset, TA13 5DJ	Mixed Livestock



CAP 2015 implementation farm walk – East of England

The Farming Advice Service in partnership with the Campaign for the Farmed Environment, invite you to attend a FREE farm walk on CAP implementation 2015.

- CAP reform and cross compliance changes for 2015 - including maintaining soil cover, avoiding soil erosion and life after the Soil Protection Review.
- Managing EFAs - advice on enhancement and compliance, including the latest on hedges, buffer strips and fallow land, and using ELS options as EFAs.

- Countryside Stewardship —targeting, option choices and capital items explained.

A FREE lunch will be provided and attendees have the chance to win free bags of nectar flower mix.

BASIS CPD points are available for attendees.

Places are limited, so please book now to avoid disappointment.

Date	Venue	Time
3 December	Roxhill Manor Farm, Marston Moretaine, Beds, MK43 0QG	10.00am to 1.00pm

CAP Reform and Cross Compliance update for Livestock Farmers – North East

The Farming Advice Service in partnership with the Campaign for the Farmed Environment, invite you to attend a FREE workshop.

The workshops will take place at the following venues:

Agenda

- Changes in sheep ID/reporting & recording rules from 1 January 2015
- Using the ARAMS central reporting system for sheep & goat movements
- Avoiding Cross Compliance penalties in cattle herds
- CAP Reform and the livestock farmer (What do the Greening proposals mean for your business? How will cross compliance change?)
- Your questions answered.

The workshops will take place at **10.30am to 12.30pm** and will be repeated at **1.30 to 3.30pm**, please state when booking which session you would like to attend.

BASIS CPD points are available for attendees.

Places are limited, so please book now to avoid disappointment.

Date	Venue
Wednesday 26 November	Coquetvale Hotel, Station Rd, Rothbury, Northumberland NE65 7QH

**Register for free text message updates**

We use text messages to get relevant information to farmers quickly. We send reminders of approaching key dates or updates in response to current events (e.g. flooding). To register for FREE text message updates, please call 0345 345 1302 or email bookings@farmingadvice.service.org.uk with 'Register for text updates' in the subject line. Don't forget to include your name and mobile phone number in the message. Your details will not be shared with third parties.

**Get the latest updates by following FAS on Twitter**

FAS has joined Twitter. Follow us on [@DefraFAS](https://twitter.com/DefraFAS) for up-to-the-minute updates on publications, events and industry information.

**Subscribe to the free FAS Newsletter**

To receive further copies of the FREE bimonthly FAS newsletter, please call 0345 345 1302 or email bookings@farmingadvice.service.org.uk with 'Register for newsletter' in the subject line

Key dates

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- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 15 October | 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 4) |
| 31 October | 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 18) |
| 1 November | You can burn heather, rough grass, bracken, gorse or vaccinium on land, other than in upland areas, from this date. (GAEC 10) |
| 30 November | If you have a two part tariff agreement for your water abstraction licence, expect to receive your second part charge after 30 November. (GAEC 18) |