



Manage your land to reduce flood risk

Why?

- › Understanding the risks to your business from flooding allows you to plan and protect your business.
- › To cope better with periods of excessive rainfall.
- › Watercourse maintenance improves land drainage and reduces the impact of flooding.

How?

- Find out if your land is at risk of flooding or coastal erosion.
- Plan and prepare for intense and excessive rainfall.
- Consider Natural Flood Management options.
- Minimise soil erosion. Remove any compaction after harvesting and before planting.
- Be aware of your responsibilities as a landowner near a watercourse.
- Monitor and maintain field drains and ditches.



Manage your livestock to protect the environment

Why?

- › Livestock can erode your river banks and increase the risk from flooding as well as loss of productive land.
- › Faecal bacteria in rivers, bathing waters and shellfish waters increase the risk of water-borne diseases and injuries to animals and people.
- › Excess nitrogen, emitted to the air as ammonia, is deposited onto soils and into water. This has negative impacts on water quality and habitats.

How?

- Prevent livestock access to rivers. Provide alternative drinking sources.
- Place livestock feeders away from watercourses.
- Reduce stocking levels near watercourses and when soils are wet.
- Apply for a consent/permit to fence along field margins adjacent to watercourses or to build bridges to allow livestock to cross watercourses.
- Establish hedges and woodland alongside watercourses to prevent livestock access, reduce diffuse pollution and enhance biodiversity.



Use pesticides efficiently and dispose of them carefully

Why?

- › Losing pesticides, including sheep dip, to the environment means valuable resources are wasted and not doing the job required.
- › To reduce the risk of pollution, clean up costs, damage to your reputation and possible restrictions.
- › To protect beneficial insects, including bees and other pollinators.

How?

- Follow product labels and minimise environmental risk.
- Ensure your staff and contractors are trained and aware of the risks to water on and from your farm.
- Ensure stores, handling, filling and wash-down areas do not allow pesticides to be lost to drains or to the ground.
- Consider installing a lined biobed or biofilter.
- Routinely maintain and calibrate your sprayers.
- Follow best practice for sheep dip use and disposal.
- If you hold an environmental permit for disposal of pesticides, comply with the conditions of the permit.
- Establish grass and/or woodland buffer strips alongside watercourses to intercept any overland flow and trap sediment and pesticides.



National Customer Contact Centre: 03708 506 506
Report pollution incidents to the 24 hour incident hotline: 0800 807060

Key actions for farmers



nutrients

Manage your nutrients well



soils

Manage your soil sustainably



water

Manage your water use effectively and plan your longer term water management



flood risk

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livestock

Manage your livestock to protect the environment



pesticides

Use pesticides, including sheep dip, efficiently. Store and dispose of pesticides correctly.

This leaflet summarises our messages to farmers.

These messages and key actions aim to provide clear and consistent information to engage farmers and those who influence them including:

- industry intermediaries
- industry initiatives
- delivery partners, such as those in Catchment Partnerships
- third party farm assurance schemes
- industry training and knowledge exchange

Tailoring these messages to suit individual businesses and the local circumstances should help to achieve better environmental outcomes, and improve partnerships with the agricultural sector.

Why would a farmer take action?

- to make their business more efficient
- to reduce risks to their business
- to build resilience and be better prepared for the future
- to leave a legacy
- to enhance credibility



Credit: Jake Freestone

The key messages and actions are:



Manage your nutrients well

Why?

- › Slurry and manure are valuable resources when applied at the right time and in the right conditions.
- › Nutrients which end up in the wrong place, such as watercourses and groundwater are a waste and highly polluting.
- › Good slurry and nutrient management will reduce waste and help save money.

How?

- Test your soils and use the results in your fertiliser planning.
- Maintain and calibrate your application equipment.
- Apply only what fertiliser the crop (including grass) needs and in the right conditions.
- Find out if you are in a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) and follow the action programme measures.
- Reduce volumes of slurry by diverting clean roof or yard water, roofing stores or using a slurry separator.
- Make sure you have sufficient capacity for storing slurry, particularly for the winter months.
- Create grass and/or woodland buffer strips alongside watercourses to intercept any overland water flow to trap sediment and nutrients.



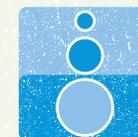
Manage your soil sustainably

Why?

- › Healthy soil is essential for nutrient availability and efficiency.
- › Poorly managed, compacted soil reduces yield, increases run-off, strips productive topsoil and causes silt build up in watercourses.
- › Eroded soil can carry nutrients, pesticides and faecal bacteria into watercourses.

How?

- Know your soils so you can get the best out of them.
- Look for soil compaction before drilling or planting and remove compaction where necessary.
- Choose a crop rotation and manage livestock to protect soil structure.
- Manage risks during and after harvesting, especially in relation to watercourses and roads.
- Maintain farm tracks to reduce soil loss and install cross drains to manage run off.
- Relocate gateways, tracks and feeders where runoff and soil erosion is a risk to watercourses, habitats, roads and property.
- Consider measures to trap sediment, such as a constructed wetland.
- Prevent contamination. Only certain wastes can be spread to land for agricultural benefit.



Manage your water use effectively and plan for your longer term needs

Why?

- › Reduce the costs of using water on your farm by managing your demand.
- › Plan and invest to cope better with future shortages of water or take advantage of excessive rainfall.

How?

- Carry out a water audit.
- Plan cropping to maximise water use efficiency.
- Plant drought or flood tolerant crops.
- Harvest rainwater for reuse or build a water storage reservoir, potentially in conjunction with other abstractors.
- Set up or join a water abstractor group with your neighbours.
- Apply to take high flows when available, for storage and subsequent use when flows are lower or restricted.
- Use efficient irrigation techniques such as scheduling and applying at night.
- Make a plan to prepare for possible restrictions and drought.
- Check your abstraction licence(s) meets your needs.