



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Environment  
Agency

# Farming rules for water: are you on the right track?



**From April 2018 all farmers need to meet new rules to protect water quality.**

You need to make sure your practices avoid pollution and benefit the water environment. By doing this, you could save money too.

The rules require you to:

- keep soil on the land
- match nutrients to the needs of your crops
- keep fertilisers and manures out of the water

### **What you need to do**

Check if you meet the rules. If you're following good practice, it's likely you meet them already:

[gov.uk/defra/farmingrulesforwater](http://gov.uk/defra/farmingrulesforwater)

**#FarmingGoodPractice**

### **1 Planning use of manures and fertilisers**

- Plan in advance each application of organic manures and manufactured fertilisers to meet but not exceed soil and crop nutrient needs
- Your planning must take into account soil testing for pH, nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), potassium (K) and magnesium (Mg). Nitrogen levels can be determined by assessing soil nitrogen supply instead of soil testing

### **2 Organic manures must not be stored on land:**

- within **10 metres** of inland freshwaters or coastal waters
- where there is significant risk of pollution entering inland freshwaters or coastal waters
- within **50 metres** of a spring, well or borehole

### **3 Organic manures or manufactured fertilisers must not be applied:**

- if the soil is waterlogged, flooded, or snow-covered
- if the soil has been frozen
- if there is significant risk of causing pollution

### **4 Organic manures must not be applied:**

- within **10 metres** of any inland freshwaters or coastal waters
- within **50 metres** of a spring, well or borehole

### **5 Manufactured fertiliser must not be applied:**

- within **2 metres** of inland freshwaters or coastal waters

### **6 You must take all reasonable precautions to prevent significant soil erosion and runoff from:**

- the application of organic manure and manufactured fertiliser
- cultivation practices & harvesting
- poaching by livestock

### **7 Protecting against soil erosion by livestock**

- Any land within **5 metres** of inland freshwaters and coastal waters must be protected from significant soil erosion by preventing poaching by livestock

### **8 Livestock feeders must not be positioned:**

- within **10 metres** of any inland freshwaters or coastal waters
- within **50 metres** of a spring, well or borehole
- where there is significant risk of pollution