



**A clear solution
for farmers**

CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

Spring 2019

CSF in Northumberland

Till (Tweed), Wansbeck, Lyne & Sleekburn, Eglington Burn, Thirston Burn

Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) is a partnership between Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England. It works with farmers and a range of other partners to improve water and air quality in high priority areas. CSF offers farmers free training, advice and support for grant applications.

Free advice your CSFO can offer



- Manure management
- Nutrient management
- Soil condition
- Pesticide management
- Farm infrastructure
- Silage, slurry and agricultural fuel oils regulations
- Cross compliance
- Nitrate Vulnerable Zones
- Farming rules for water

Support for grant applications your CSFO can offer

CSF can provide advice and support for **Countryside Stewardship (CS)** applications. Some higher risk options, such as concreting and roofing require endorsement from your CSFO to be approved, therefore contacting your CSFO early in the process is recommended.

The application window for agreements with a 1st January 2020 start date has just opened; the deadline to request an application is 31st May.

The **Countryside Productivity Scheme** can help farmers purchase manure management equipment, including low-emission spreaders; the scheme is due to run again in 2019.

Get in touch with your local Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer (CSFO)



For Till (Tweed):
Stuart Moss
07881 834705
stuart.moss@naturalengland.org.uk



For all other catchments:
Susie Hardie
07795 305673
susie.hardie@naturalengland.org.uk

Countryside Stewardship Application dates

31st May

Mid-tier and Water Capital Grant application request deadline.

31st July

Mid-tier and Water Capital Grant application submission deadline

Soil Organic Matter

In January CSF held a free workshop in Alnwick looking at the importance of soil organic matter (SOM) and strategies to improve it in arable soils.

Some of the key benefits of maintaining and improving SOM are...

- Improved root penetration
- Improved water and nutrient storage and availability, which benefits crop establishment and growth.
- Improved soil workability, reducing cultivation costs and compaction and increasing the number of weeks in the year that soils can be worked.
- Improved cation exchange capacity, which controls the availability of nutrient for plant uptake.
- Improved soil pH buffering which reduces the need for liming.



Farming Rules for Water

In April 2018 the Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural Diffuse Pollution (England) Regulations 2018 came into force, which introduced new '**farming rules for water**'. The aim of the rules is to promote good practice in managing fertilisers and manures and encouraging land managers to take reasonable precautions to prevent diffuse pollution from runoff or soil erosion.

In summary the fertiliser rules require farmers to test their soils, then **plan** and apply their fertiliser or manure to improve soil nutrient levels and meet crop needs; **Soil testing** is required at least every five years.

There are **minimum storage** and **spreading distances** from water sources. They also require farmers to **assess weather and soil conditions** to reduce the risk of runoff and soil erosion.

The remaining rules require farmers to manage livestock by **protecting soil** within five metres of water and **reducing livestock poaching**.

The rules will be enforced by the Environment Agency. It will be up to farmers to demonstrate their compliance.

More information can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/rules-for-farmers-and-land-managers-to-prevent-water-pollution>

What are the water quality pressures in the catchments?

Till (Tweed)

Faecal Indicator Organisms (FIO), Nitrate, Phosphate & Sediment.

Wansbeck

Sediment

Lyne & Sleekburn

Phosphate

Eglington Burn

Sediment

Thirston Burn

Nitrate, Phosphate & Sediment

What are the visible signs of diffuse pollution to look out for?

- mud in rivers and on roads.
- rapid build-up of sediment in rivers.
- algal growth (blue-green algae and sewage fungus)
- declining fish numbers.
- impoverished stream life.

NEW..... Catchment Sensitive Farming takes on air quality

By reducing farm ammonia emissions we can help improve England's health and environment as well as save your farm business money.



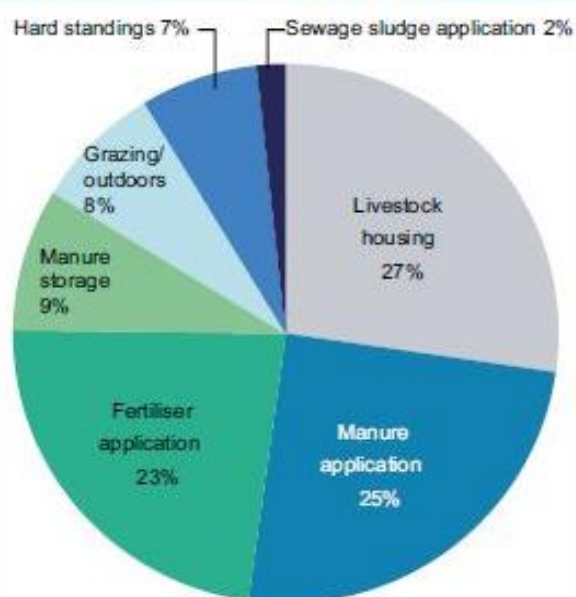
In addition to working with farmers and stakeholders to improve water quality Catchment Sensitive Farming now incorporates a programme to reduce ammonia emissions from agriculture. This follows the formal launch of the Government's Clean Air Strategy in January 2019, which sets out actions required across all sectors to protect the nation's health, protect the environment and promote clean growth and innovation.

Farming is responsible for 87 percent of all UK emissions of ammonia gas, which can travel long distances, be damaging to the environment, and combine with other pollutants to form particulates, which are harmful to human health.

The UK loses £138m of nitrogen per year from ammonia emissions, so by taking action to reduce them, farmers can get more value from their manure and fertiliser and save money.

Nitrogen (N) deposition affects plant communities which have evolved on nutrient poor habitats by increasing the amount of plant available nitrogen in the soil. The extra nitrogen can increase the growth of some species (e.g. grasses and heathers) which replace other species which have lower N requirements. Ammonia deposition is currently above the critical load for a number of semi-natural habitats across County Durham and Northumberland.

UK agricultural ammonia emissions (2016) by management category



Ammonia mitigation actions can include:

1. Covering slurry stores
2. Amending livestock diets for improved feed efficiency
3. Reduced emission slurry spreading
4. Incorporate solid manures rapidly
5. Use of ammonium nitrate fertiliser instead of urea, or use urease inhibitors with urea

Funding has been available through the **Countryside Productivity Scheme** to help farmers purchase manure management equipment including low-emission spreaders and the scheme is due to run again in 2019. Funding is also available through the Countryside Stewardship Scheme for slurry tank and lagoon covers for farmers in priority water catchments.

Reducing emissions from farming is a key element of the government's ambitious new Clean Air Strategy, which has been welcomed by the World Health Organisation.

Jonathan Skidmore is now in post within the North East CSF team to work with farmers and landowners to encourage the simple steps to reduce ammonia as set out in the new **Code of Good Agricultural Practice (COGAP) for Reducing Ammonia Emissions**.

The CSF team will continue to provide training events, tailored advice, individual farm visits and support with grant applications.

For more information please contact your local CSFO or
Jonathan Skidmore – CSF Air Quality Lead
Email: Jonathan.Skidmore@naturalengland.org.uk
Telephone: 01642 763692



Applying slurry via a trailing shoe can reduce ammonia emission by up to 60%.

Connect with CSF

On the internet

Keep in touch with our services at
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/catchment-sensitive-farming-reduce-agricultural-water-pollution>

Our twitter accounts

[@naturalengland](https://twitter.com/naturalengland)
[@NE_Northumbria](https://twitter.com/NE_Northumbria)

Catchment Sensitive Farming is a successful partnership between Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England. We work together with farmers and organisations in priority areas across England to improve water and air quality.

We provide free advice, training and grants, helping farmers take voluntary action to improve the environment and their farm business.

Since 2006, we have worked with over 20,000 farms, achieving a 92% satisfaction rate for our one to one advice. Working together, we have contributed to a 50% reduction in pesticides in our rivers.

In 2018, the Government committed an extra £3m to help us improve air quality by reducing ammonia emissions from farms.

For more information search GOV.UK for Catchment Sensitive Farming

How do we use your data?

Your data is only used by us so we can email, call, write or text you about our Catchment Sensitive Farming work. This will include advice, access to grants, events and campaigns.

You can change your communication preferences by emailing us on catchmentsensitivefarming@naturalengland.org.uk

Our Information Charter is at bit.ly/naturalenglandinfo
Our Privacy Notice is at bit.ly/csfprivacy

Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) is delivered in partnership by Natural England, the Environment Agency and Defra.



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs



The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development:
Europe investing in rural areas



Environment
Agency