



# 'New' rules for farmers and land managers to prevent water pollution

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The new farming rules for water were introduced on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2018 informing farmers and land owners what must be done to manage manure, fertiliser and soil to prevent runoff, erosion and leaching. In many ways these rules are an extension of cross compliance and Nitrate Vulnerable Zones guidance, acting as a 'risk assessment' for farmers to follow in relation to the following areas:

- planning the use of manures and fertilisers
- storing organic manures
- applying manures or fertilisers
- where not to apply manures or fertilisers
- taking reasonable precautions to prevent soil erosion
- protecting against soil erosion by livestock
- positioning of livestock feeders to reduce pollution

Further details can be found at:

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

## Planning the use of manures and fertilisers

Applications of organic manures and manufactured fertilisers to cultivated land must be planned in advance to meet soil and crop nutrient needs

Soil must be tested at least every 5 years to identify nutrient levels

Spreading practice should consider:

- slope (especially where over 12 degrees);
- any ground cover;
- proximity to inland fresh waters and coastal waters; and,
- the presence and condition of agricultural land drains



Soil testing is relatively cheap to undertake ask the RRT or your feed merchant for advice and guidance

## Storing organic manures

Manures should not be stored within:

- 10 metres of inland freshwater/coastal water;
- 50 metres of a spring, well or bore-hole; or,
- if there is significant risk of causing pollution

Here, poor management has allowed run off from a manure pile to leach down a track straight into a watercourse





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## Applying manures or fertilisers

Spreading should not occur if soil is: waterlogged, flooded, snow covered, has been frozen for more than 12 hours (in previous 24 hours) or if there is significant risk of causing pollution

You should also: checking spreading equipment for leaks & calibration, incorporate organic manure & manufactured fertiliser into the soil within 12 hours and check the organic matter & moisture levels of soil.



NOT GOOD PRACTICE!



KNOW YOUR DISTANCES!

## Where not to apply organic manures:

- Within 10 meters of inland freshwaters or coastal waters
- Within 50 metres of a spring, well or borehole

## Taking reasonable precautions to prevent soil erosion

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

- The application of organic manure and manufactured fertiliser
- Land management and cultivation practices
- Poaching by livestock



TIMING OF OPERATIONS HAS CAUSED ISSUES WITH RUN-OFF & EROSION



## 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.

The Ribble Rivers Trust work with farmers to create buffer strips and riparian areas to protect soils and water courses from erosion and run-off. Over the past 20 years, we have planted more than 120,000 trees across the catchment.

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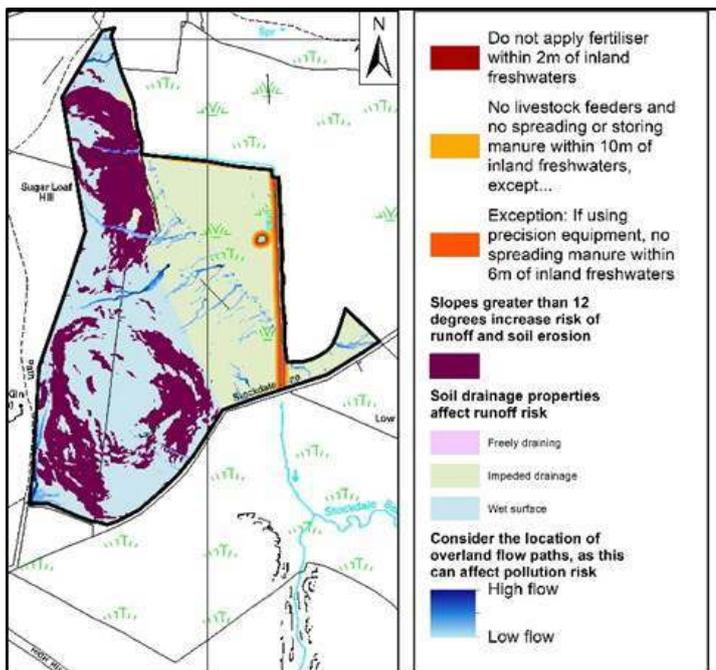
## Positioning of livestock feeders to reduce pollution

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 from poaching around the feeder entering any inland freshwaters or coastal waters



**POOR PRACTICE THAT CONTREVENES THE NEW RULES AND ENABLES RUN-OFF AND EROSION**



## Mapping Risk

The farming rules for water encourage farmers to understand and manage risk to reduce water pollution. The Ribble Rivers Trust can help farmers do this by producing risk maps incorporating all the key elements of these rules. This includes soil type, gradient, water bodies and overland flow paths to help identify where manures and fertilisers can be spread and where livestock feeders cannot be situated. Having such maps highlights that farmers are aware of, and trying to manage the risk.

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On the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2018, the British Government published the new 'Agriculture Bill'. This Bill is heralded by Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs as "legislation to deliver a cleaner and healthier environment for future generations" (full statement available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/landmark-agriculture-bill-to-deliver-a-green-brexite>). Under this Bill, the Basic Payment Scheme will be phased out over seven years and a new 'Environment Land Management Scheme' (ELM) will be developed to pay farmers to produce public goods.

During the interim period, the existing Countryside Stewardship programme remains in place. The Woodland Creation Grant Scheme is now open for applications all year round and the application window for Higher and Mid Tier is expected to open again in 2019. A new support scheme is set to be available to reduce air pollution in farming overseen by the Catchment Sensitive Farming programme. Alongside this, both the Woodland Creation Grant Scheme and the Countryside Productivity Small Grant Scheme may well return for applications in the near future.