

ENVIRONMENT

June 2024

Regulations update



Tillage farms must take soil samples or no P allowance will be granted.

The following apply to all farmers now: Soil samples and chemical fertiliser

- There is a proposed 5% cut to chemical nitrogen (N) allowance across most stocking rates for 2024.
- All tillage lands with no soil sample are assumed to be phosphorus (P) index 4; no chemical P is allowed and no organic imports can take place.
- Soil sampling is mandatory for all arable lands.
- Importing organic manures or spreading chemical P? Soil samples are required to ensure compliance with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) national fertiliser database.
- No roadway runoff to watercourses or waters – applies to all farm roadways, including machinery roads.

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A PROPOSED
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NITROGEN
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TEAGASC ADVISORY NEWSLETTER

ENVIRONMENT

Slurry spreading and LESS

- Slurry produced from pigs must be spread using low-emission slurry spreading (LESS).
- Slurry on all arable lands must be spread using LESS.

Slurry and soiled water

- All slurry must be applied by October 1 annually.
- Soiled water storage requirements are increasing to four weeks in 2024 for spring milk producers. For winter milk producers the requirement will also be four weeks in 2025 (three weeks until then).
- All slurry movements are to be notified online. From June 15, 2024 exporters must notify the DAFM within four days of the slurry movement taking place.

Round silage bale storage

- Round bales of silage must not be stored over 2m high or within 20m of surface waters (drains/dykes) unless on concrete with effluent storage facilities in place.

Dairy banding – all dairy farmers

- An annual declaration of milk yield must be made to the DAFM (through www.icbf.com) to determine the nitrates figure to be applied to dairy cows in your herd.

Buffer zones/ploughing and green cover

- Chemical fertiliser should not be spread within 3m of surface drains.



Round bales of silage should not be stored over 2m high.

- Ploughing or cultivation for non-grass crops should not be carried out within 3m of watercourses.
- For ploughing and green cover requirements, please refer to pages 36-37 and 78-82 of the conditionality booklet (scan QR code below).

Forage crops

- A 3m grass/vegetated buffer strip must be maintained around the external perimeter of grazed in-situ forage crops. This margin increases to 4m along any water features.

Water extraction points

Registration is required where daily extraction exceeds 25m³ (5,500 gallons) from wells, rivers, etc. This excludes public water supplies.



Scan this QR code to see the Department's Handbook for Conditionality Requirements.

Additional requirements for various GSRs

Grassland stocking rate (GSR) over 100kg N/ha

Slurry spreading and LESS

- LESS will be mandatory for farms with a grassland stocking rate (GSR) of >100kg N/ha from January 1, 2025.

Minimum slurry storage

- From January 1, 2025 farms with a GSR over 100kg N/ha will need 16/18/20/22 weeks' storage for bovines and six weeks' storage for ovines/equines, etc.

GSR over 130kg N/ha

Slurry spreading and LESS

- LESS has been mandatory since January 1, 2024.

Soil sampling

- You must prove a requirement to use chemical P, i.e., have valid soil samples showing index 1, 2 or 3 for P.
- If there are no soil samples P index 4 is assumed. Soil sampling is mandatory for all arable lands and for farms where the previous year's GSR was >130kg N/ha.

Minimum slurry storage

- You must currently have 16/18/20/22 weeks' storage for bovines and six weeks' storage for ovines/equines, etc.

Max 15% CP

- You must feed a maximum of 15% crude protein (CP) ration to dairy cows and other bovines over two years old between April 15 and September 30 annually.



No drinking points allowed from watercourses.

GSR over 170kg N/ha (non-derogation farms)

Lime

- A liming plan based on valid soil samples is mandatory.

Protection of watercourses

(as per OSI 1:5,000 maps)

- Water troughs must be more than 20m from watercourses.
- Fence watercourses 1.5m from top of bank and fence crossing points.
- No drinking points from watercourses.



Scan this QR code to learn more about water protection measures.

Additional requirements for derogation farms

Soil sampling

- Soil samples are mandatory every four years (max 5ha per sample but recommended to be less than 4ha).
- If parts of your farm are in the Teagasc/EPA high soil organic matter map (peat soils) then an organic matter sample is also required.



Ploughing of grassland is allowed between March 1 and May 31.

blackthorn in every hedgerow (every 300m) or cut hedgerows in rotation on a three-year cycle).

Slurry

- LESS for all slurry spread on farm.
- 50% of slurry must be applied by June 15 annually.
- Sufficient slurry storage in place (16/18/20/22 weeks).
- Soiled water storage requirements increasing from 2023 to three weeks and four weeks in 2024.

Clover

- Clover in grass seed mix (1.5kg/ha naked clover seed or 2.5kg/ha pelleted) when reseeded.

Ploughing

- If ploughing grassland, this must be done between March 1 and May 31. No one can plough outside of these dates.

Hedgerow management

- You must have a hedgerow management plan (white/



Department nitrates and derogation information can be found on the Teagasc website by scanning this QR code.



Scan this QR code to read more about the mandatory derogation requirements for 2024.

Grass measuring and recording

- You must complete a minimum of 20 grass measurements on recognised software.
- If new to derogation:
 - 1) do 20 grass walks recorded on software; or,
 - 2) attend two half-days training on software for grass measuring and grass measuring techniques.

Training

- New applicants to derogation must complete the following training by the end of the first year:
 - 1) nutrient use efficiency and P build up; and,
 - 2) farming sustainability and water quality regulations.