



NetRegs

Smallholder's environmental checklist

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Soil

Prevent soil compaction

This allows air and water to move deep into the soil, allowing healthy root development and encouraging healthy plant growth.

- Reduce axle loads where possible
- Avoid vehicles accessing fields after heavy rain or if soils are waterlogged
- Be aware of the impacts that animals can have by trampling certain areas.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Correct pH for soil

- The correct pH level for your soil will allow the uptake of fertilisers by plants, improving yields.
- Think about soil sampling and liming
- Less uptake of nutrients means poorer crops and a greater risk of diffuse pollution from the farm land

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get the correct nutrient balance

- Create a nutrient budget for your farm; regular soil testing will help target nutrients where needed.
- Consider application methods, for example to avoid losing nitrogen when applying slurry

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[Daera: Soil structure and avoiding compaction](#)

[Farming and Water Scotland: soil and nutrients](#)

[Scottish Government: Farm Soil Plan](#)

[Farming for a better climate: Valuing your soils](#)

[Daera: Soil sampling](#)

[Farming and Water Scotland: Soil and pH](#)

[Daera: Soil sampling](#)

[Farming and Water Scotland: Nutrient budgets](#)

Soil continued

Landspreading organic fertilisers

- You must be aware of the rules that govern the use of certain wastes, such as paper sludge or food waste
- You should also be familiar with the rules for the use of slurries and manure
- Organic fertilisers such as slurry and manure can provide valuable nutrients and can improve soil texture.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[NetRegs: Landspreading waste](#)

[NetRegs: Landspreading slurry and manure](#)

[WRAP.org.uk: Renewable fertiliser matrix](#)

[NFUS and Zero waste Scotland: Sourcing and using digestate and compost](#)

Notes

Protecting water

Water abstraction and impoundment

- If you want to abstract or impound water from a borehole, a spring, a burn, a stream, a river or loch/lough you may need authorisation from the NIEA or SEPA.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Dredging

- In northern Ireland: contact the Rivers offices for information about dredging of waterways.
- In Scotland: read the guidance from SEPA on any works in or near water.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Bank management

- Protect riverbanks from erosion and stabilise existing riverbanks using best practice techniques.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[NetRegs: Water abstraction or impoundment](#)

[Northern Ireland: Contact the DfI Rivers Offices](#)

[SEPA: Dredging—A land managers guide](#)

[SEPA: dredging in straightened river between 1 and 5m wide](#)

[SEPA: Engineering in the water environment. A good practice guide](#)

[SEPA: Sustainable riverbank protection](#)

[SEPA: Reducing riverbank erosion Best practice guide](#)

Protecting water cont.

Works in or near water

- Working in or near water can cause damage to the bed or banks, can cause problems with silt in the watercourse and can transfer non-native species.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Poaching and bank erosion

- Know the rules that prevent significant poaching
- Position livestock feeders at least 10m from water
- Fence areas to prevent animals accessing watercourses

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Steading drainage

- Runoff from around the steading must not cause pollution. Collect and store drainage contaminated with manure or slurry
- Lightly contaminated drainage can be treated with constructed farm wetlands or other sustainable drainage systems.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[GPP 05: Works and maintenance in or near water](#)

[Northern Ireland: Cross Compliance and Verifiable Standards](#)

[Farming and Water Scotland: Poaching and erosion](#)

[Scottish Government: Cross compliance verifiable standards](#)





[Northern Ireland: Good agricultural practice—air soil and water](#)

[Farming and Water Scotland: Steading Drainage](#)

[Constructed Farm wetlands: design manual for Northern Ireland and Scotland](#)

[CIRIA: The SUDS Manual](#)

Septic tanks, biodiscs for sewage treatment


-  • Check if your building has a septic tank or other treatment system
-  • Is it in proper working order, e.g. are there odours, or does the wastewater drain very slowly?
-  • Make sure you know what can and can't go into the tank
-  • Is it emptied regularly?

 **Not Applicable**

 **Implemented**

 **Will Investigate**

The use of buffer strips




-  • Buffer strips prevent the loss of soil to ditches, burns, rivers etc. and help prevent pollution from fertiliser and pesticide runoff.

 **Not Applicable**

 **Implemented**

 **Will Investigate**

Spreading fertilisers

-  • Make sure when you apply fertilisers that the nutrients will remain on your farm where needed.
-  • Be aware of weather conditions, soil conditions and know the rules for spreading near water.
-  • Maintain your spreading equipment and make sure it is properly calibrated.

 **Not Applicable**

 **Implemented**

 **Will Investigate**

Get Help

[NetRegs: Septic tanks](#)

[NetRegs: Septic tanks e-learning tool](#)

[Northern Ireland: Cross compliance verifiable standards \(GAEC 1\)](#)

[Farming and water Scotland : Diffuse pollution](#)

[DAERA: Nitrogen fertiliser options 2019](#)

[DAERA: Use of organic fertilisers and soil improvers](#)

[Farming and water Scotland: Slurry and manure](#)

[Farming and water Scotland: Inorganic fertilisers](#)

Protecting water cont.

Pesticides and water

- Pesticide users must have a certificate of competence, or work under the supervision of someone who has.
- The storage and handling of pesticides must be done in a way that prevents the risk of pollution.
- Know the rules for spraying pesticides near water, and take care washing down equipment.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Soil and cultivation

- Soils are an essential resource: check that you are not damaging soil eg by compaction and that soils are not being washed off your land.
- In wet weather, avoid heavy trampling from livestock or tramlines from machinery, particularly on slopes/close to field gates/near water.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[DAERA: Guidance on the use of pesticides](#)

[Farming and Water Scotland: Using pesticides](#)

[Farming and Water Scotland: Purchase and storage of pesticides](#)

[DAERA: Soil structure and avoiding compaction](#)

[DAERA: Valuable soils need protection](#)

[Farming and water Scotland: Soil and cultivation](#)

[Scottish Government: Farm Soil Plan](#)

Notes

Animals

Keeping livestock

- If you want to keep animals on your land you will need to get a unique identification number for your business.
- Make sure you understand the rules surrounding the keeping and movement of livestock.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Sheep dip

- Sheep dippers and drip pens must be located away from water and must be maintained in good condition.
- Anyone dipping sheep must be the holder of the correct certificate or supervised by the holder.
- Disposal of waste sheep dip to land will require a permit from your environmental regulator.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Veterinary medicines

- Store veterinary medicines safely.
- Use as indicated on the labels and dispose of unused medicines by returning to your vet's surgery.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[DAERA: Livestock farming](#)

[DAERA: Identification numbers for herd and flock keepers](#)

[NIDirect: Keeping chickens](#)

[FAS Scotland: Livestock](#)

[Scotland's Rural College: CPH and herd or flock numbers](#)

[DAERA: Sheep dipping courses](#)

[Farming and Water Scotland: Sheep dip](#)

[NetRegs: Sheep dip rules](#)

[NetRegs: Veterinary medicines](#)

[NetRegs: Storage and disposal of medicine](#)

[DAERA Proper use of veterinary medicines-responsibilities of farmers.](#)

Animals cont.

Organic livestock production

- To produce and market organic meat you must be registered with an organic control body and you must adopt certain organic standards.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[Soil Association: Why choose organic?](#)

[DAERA: Organic beef production](#)

[Europa EU: Organic farming](#)

[SRUC organic livestock](#)

Notes

Crops

Pests and diseases

- Pest, weeds and diseases can adversely affect your productivity. Be aware of the best methods and techniques to combat them.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Fertilisers

- If you farm in Northern Ireland you must be aware of the Nitrate and Phosphate rules that apply when applying fertiliser to your land.
- In Scotland, rules apply to the application of fertilisers with additional rules for farms within Nitrate Vulnerable Zones

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Biobeds

- Biobeds can be used to prevent equipment washings from causing pollution.
- Check and see if constructing a biobed would be of benefit to you
- Check that no authorisation from your environmental regulator is required for washings.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[DAERA: Crops and horticulture](#)

[Farming Advisory Service
\(Scotland\) Crops and soils:](#)

[NetRegs: Fertiliser application](#)

[NetRegs: Fertiliser regulations](#)

[DAERA Code of Good
Agricultural Practice for the
Reduction of Ammonia
Emissions.](#)

[The Voluntary initiative:
Biobeds](#)

[NIBusiness Info: Disposal of
pesticides](#)

[Scottish Government: Code of
practice for using plant
protection products](#)

Crops continued

Organic crop production

- There are certification bodies that provide guidance covering converting to organic production and the standards that are required for organic certification.
- Organic methods reduce the risk of water pollution by removing many of the chemicals that can cause harm to the environment.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[The Soil Association: What is organic farming](#)

[Organic Farmers and Growers](#)

[DAERA: Organic production - general information](#)

[Scottish organic producers association](#)

[SRUC: Organic crop production](#)

Notes

Waste

Duty of care

- Make sure you understand your duty of care for waste

Hazardous/Special waste

- Waste with hazardous properties must be segregated and dealt with as Hazardous/Special waste

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Farm Plastics

- Find a collection service that will collect your used plastics, including silage wrap and empty plastic containers for recycling or disposal.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Composting and AD

- Composting is a way of treating organic waste to yield a valuable fertiliser and soil conditioner. You may be able to carry out this activity under a waste exemption.
- Anaerobic digestion uses materials such as slurry, manure and energy crops such as rye grass or pea to produce methane gas for energy as well as fertiliser.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[NetRegs: Duty of Care](#)

[NetRegs: Hazardous/Special waste](#)

[NetRegs: Agricultural waste](#)

[DAERA Duty of Care](#)

[DAERA Hazardous Waste](#)

[SEPA: Special Waste](#)

[Zero Waste Scotland: Farm plastic recycling](#)

[SEPA: Farm plastics information leaflet](#)

[NetRegs: Composting](#)

[NetRegs Anaerobic Digestion](#)

[WRAP NI: PAS100 compost specification](#)

[Information portal on AD](#)

[Zero Waste Scotland: AD](#)

Waste continued

Waste exemptions for agriculture

- A number of waste activities can be carried out on your farm under exemptions from your environmental regulator.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[NetRegs: Waste exemptions for agriculture](#)

[DAERA: Waste exemptions for agriculture](#)

[SEPA: Activities exempt from waste management licensing](#)

Notes

Buildings

Generate renewable energy

- You might be able to use roofs of buildings to install solar PV and/or solar water heating.
- Installing wind turbines could help generate the energy you use and provide an income.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Rainwater harvesting

- Make use of the free resource in the form of rainwater collected from your roofs.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Asbestos and asbestos cement

- Check your buildings and roofs for signs that asbestos and asbestos containing cement have been used in the past.
- Learn how to reduce risks from these materials and what you must do if you decide to remove them

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[NetRegs: Generate renewable energy](#)

[DAERA: Solar PV on the farm.](#)

[Scottish Government: Renewable energy on farms](#)

[NetRegs: Video case study—How to harvest rainwater](#)

[LEAF: A guide to rainwater harvesting on a farm](#)

[GOV.UK: White asbestos on farms: how to spot, manage and dispose of it](#)

Buildings continued

Oil and fuel storage

- Make sure all oils and fuels are stored in compliance with the regulations that cover Oil Storage.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[GPP 2 Above ground oil storage](#)

Notes

Machinery, equipment and fuel

Buying environmentally friendly goods

- When you make purchases, check the sustainability of different products.
- Look at the businesses selling them and choose those with green credentials

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Servicing and maintenance

- Looking after machinery and equipment will lengthen its life and help you avoid costly replacements.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Dealing with waste oil

- Check and find out if there is an oil bank nearby that you can use, or find a licensed carrier who can collect your waste oil.
- Waste oil must be stored, and transported safely and in a way that avoids spills.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[NetRegs: Buying environmentally friendly goods and services](#)

[Resource Efficient Scotland: Quick guide to sustainable procurement](#)

[NetRegs: Maintaining farm machinery](#)

[GPP 8 Safe storage and disposal of used oils](#)

[Oil Care Campaign: Find your nearest Oil Bank](#)

Notes

Protect biodiversity

Action to help pollinators

- There are simple ways in which you can help to encourage native pollinators on your land, such as planting wildflower borders, hedge cutting practices and identifying and protecting pollinators' nest sites.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Field biodiversity

- It is possible to encourage biodiversity on your land and maintain a profitable business

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Dealing with invasive non-native species

- It is important to recognise and know how to remove invasive non-native species.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[NetRegs: Actions to help pollinators](#)

[The Nature Friendly Farming Network \(NFFN\)](#)

[DAERA: Biodiversity](#)

[Farm Advisory Service: Biodiversity](#)

[RSPB: Farming in Scotland](#)

[SNH: Biodiversity on hill and upland farms](#)

[NetRegs: Japanese knotweed, giant Hogweed and other invasive weeds](#)

[GB Non Native Species Secretariat](#)

[Invasive Species Ireland](#)

Protect biodiversity continued

Nature Friendly Farming Network

- The Nature Friendly Farming Network is a group of farmers who have come together to champion a way of farming that is sustainable and good for nature.
- Share knowledge and spread good practice.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[Nature Friendly Farming Network](#)

Notes

Forestry

Creating small woodlands

- There are many benefits to having small woodlands on your land, from increasing biodiversity to sheltering crops and livestock.
- Agro-forestry is about gaining the benefits of trees and agriculture through integrated land management

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Willow coppice for fuel

- Willow is a fast growing crop that can be used for fuel or for a range of natural products.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Burning biomass for fuel

- A number of crops including willow and miscanthus grass can be grown and processed specially for burning in biomass burners. This can be for heat or power, or combined heat and power.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[DAERA: Legacy Forestry Grants scheme](#)

[DAERA: Forestry grants](#)

[Scottish Forestry: Creating small woodlands on farms in Scotland](#)

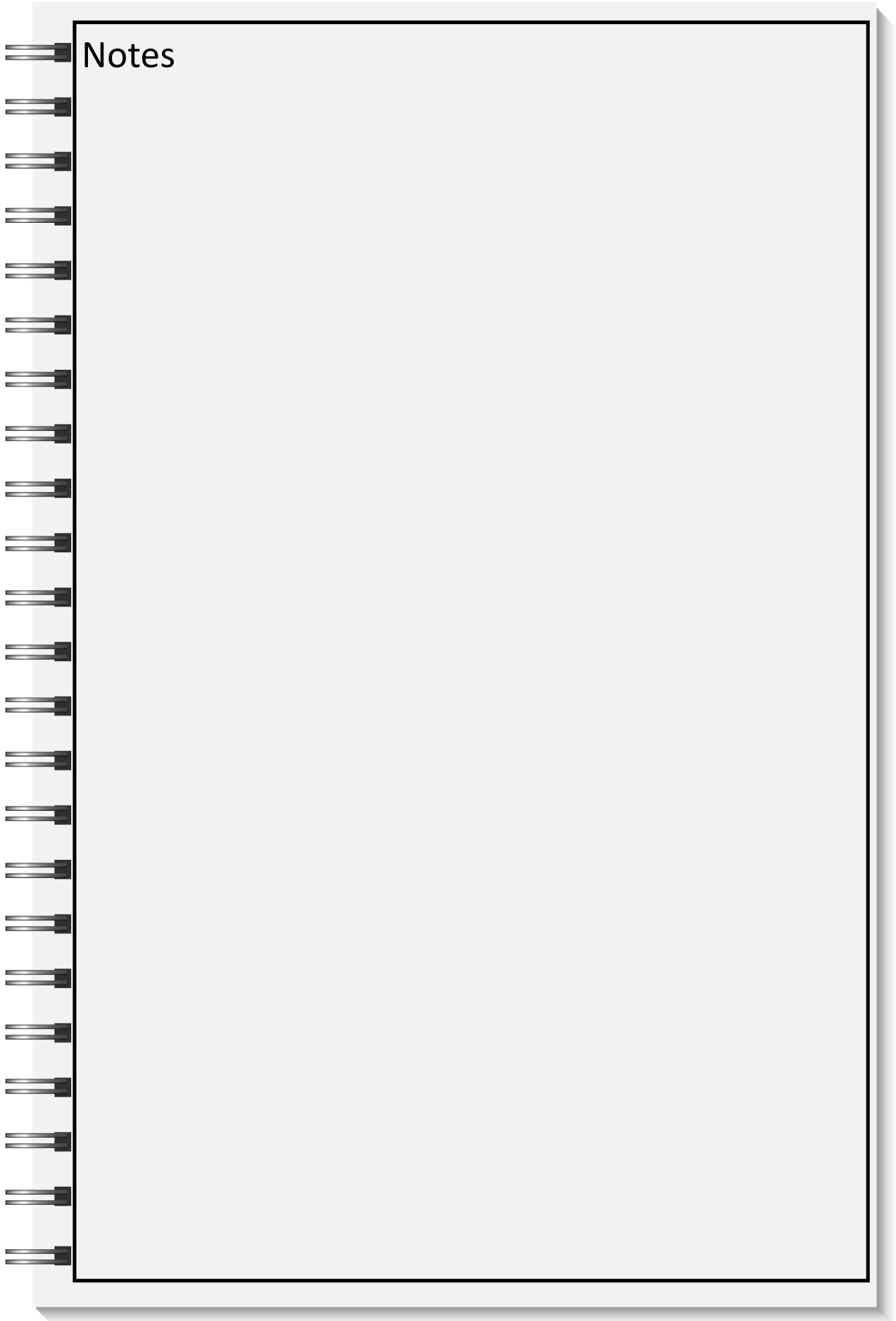
[RPS: Forestry Grants Scheme Scotland](#)

[DAERA: Short rotation coppice scheme](#)

[Forestry Scotland: Wood energy WillowsScotland](#)

[NIDirect: Biomass](#)

[Energy Saving Trust: Biomass for heating](#)



Notes

Management tools

Manage environmental aspects with toolkits

- Help to manage your environmental impacts using the SME toolkits from NetRegs

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Nutrient management planning

- It is important to use the correct nutrients at the correct levels for the crops and grass you grow. A nutrient management plan is the way to make best use of resources

Applies to all

Implemented

Will Investigate

Adapt to climate change

- Climate change will have impacts on agriculture, as it is an activity that is very dependent on weather. Find out what steps you can take to climate proof your activities.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[NetRegs: Northern Ireland SME toolkit](#)

[NetRegs: Scotland SME toolkit](#)

[NetRegs: Manage and improve your environmental performance](#)

[FAS: Farm Management handbook](#) (2018-19)

[DAERA: Nutrient Action Programme Regulations 2019-2022](#)

[Planet: Nutrient management tool](#)

[Climate Northern Ireland](#)

[DAERA: Northern Ireland climate adaptation programme](#)

[Adaptation Scotland: Climate Ready places](#)

[Scottish Natural Heritage: Farming and climate change](#)

Management tools continued

Organic conversion

- Find the support and funding that is available for you to convert to organic production.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[Soil Association: Funding for Organic Farmers in Northern Ireland](#)

CAFRE Organic team: 028 9442 6765

[Soil Association: Organic in Scotland](#)

[Scottish Government Rural Payments and Services: Agri-environment Climate scheme](#)

Notes

Emergencies

Manage flood risk

- Are you prepared for flooding? Flooding can be caused by rivers, the sea, surface water or overflowing drains or sewers.
- Find out if you are at risk using the floodmaps.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Extreme weather events

- Be prepared for extreme weather events, and build resilience into your activities.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Dealing with spills

- If you have a spill on your farm, of any material or liquid that could cause harm to land or water it is important that you have a plan in place to deal with it.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[NI Department of Infrastructure: Flood maps](#)

[SEPA: Flood maps](#)

[SEPA: Sign up for flooding messages](#)

[Climate Northern Ireland: resources](#)

[Adaptation Scotland: Tools and resources](#)

[NetRegs: GPP 22—Dealing with spills](#)

Emergencies continued

Pollution incident response planning

- Remember: Source, Pathway, Receptor.
- Put in place a plan that will help you to prevent harm if spills or accidents happen.
- Keep spill equipment appropriate to the materials you have on site and be prepared to use them.

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Get Help

[NetRegs: GPP 21 Pollution Incident Response Planning](#)

Notes

General information and support:

Northern Ireland

- [NI Smallholder and Grow your own group on Facebook](#)

Scotland

- [Scottish Government: Smallholdings](#)
- [Scottish Government: Small Landholdings](#)

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Grants and funding

- [Northern Ireland DAERA: Grants and funding for rural businesses](#)
- [Scotland: Rural Payments and Services](#)

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

Useful websites

- [The Smallholder](#)
- [Scotland: Farm Advisory Service—Crofts and small farms](#)
- [The Accidental Smallholder](#)
- [Northern Ireland: Rural Support](#)

Not Applicable

Implemented

Will Investigate

NOTES

