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Welcome to the first edition of the “**Waveney Catchment Partnership**” newsletter. The partnership aims to help those who live and work in the Waveney Catchment to improve the water quality of the river for the benefit of all its users. As well as Catchment Sensitive Farming and Essex & Suffolk Water, it includes the Environment Agency and the Broads Authority, agronomists from Frontier and Hutchinsons, wildlife advisors from FWAG, the Waveney River Trust and farmers who work in the catchment. We will combine our resources to consolidate and improve the help, advisory services and information we provide to farmers and land managers to improve water quality.

The first news is that Ian Skinner has joined Essex & Suffolk Water as catchment adviser in the Waveney. His background in both farming and working with the Environment Agency will be a valued extra resource to us all.

Countryside Stewardship Scheme

The application window for the **New Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CS) and Grants has opened**. CS is a replacement for, not only the Environmental Stewardship scheme (HLS & ELS – whose existing agreements will run their course), but includes replacements for CSF grants, EWGS and much more. You can look up details at www.countrysidestewardship.gov.uk. Or just give Robert a call to discuss how it might be of benefit in your situation. The main feature of this new scheme to note is that there is much more emphasis on water quality and pollinating insects. However, if you are in a current ES agreement, or CS Mid Tier is not for you, then there is the possibility of standalone grants being available.

Launch of Pesti-wise in the Dickleburgh Stream

Funded by Essex & Suffolk Water, Pesti-wise is a 5 year programme of collaborative working with farmers, agronomists and our partners in the River Waveney Catchment Partnership. The Dickleburgh Stream has been selected for this initiative after analysing local water quality data as well as agricultural and environmental pressures. As the Dickleburgh Stream catchment is relatively small, we are hoping that all farmers within it will get involved. This initiative is running alongside similar projects in other catchments in Essex and Northumberland which are also exploring different ways to manage the pesticide risk to water.

We have some exciting offers to help farmers and growers in the catchment reduce the amount of pesticides entering the brook, including practical guidance, training and access to grants for new equipment and on-farm infrastructure.



Catchment Challenges for Water Quality

Analysis of the water taken from the River Waveney and pumped to Barsham for treatment shows that, while 2014/15 was not as bad for metaldehyde as the wet autumn of 2012/13, levels did exceed the EU Drinking Water Directive of 0.1µg/l for 7 consecutive weeks from 16th October to 4th December. 2014/15 has been the worst on record for Propyzamide, with levels exceeding 0.1µg/l for 15 weeks, including all of January and February 2015. The following tables show the number of weekly samples that fail the limit for total pesticides (which at 0.5µg/l is 5 times higher than that for single pesticides), and those for the individual pesticides Metaldehyde and Propyzamide (eg Kerb).

Total Pesticide Concentration Results in Waveney Raw Water						
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
% of Samples > 0.5µg/l	3%	15%	13%	50%	27%	13%
Maximum Concentration	0.68	1.97	0.98	2.9	10.8	3.9

Metaldehyde Concentration Results in Waveney Raw Water						
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
% of Samples > 0.1µg/l	4%	15%	0%	40%	10%	15%
Maximum Concentration	0.2	0.92	0.09	0.79	0.24	2.7

Propyzamide Concentration Results in Waveney Raw Water						
	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
% of Samples > 0.1µg/l	6%	11.5%	2%	21%	8%	29%
Maximum Concentration	0.23	0.29	0.17	0.62	0.24	0.83

Can we challenge ourselves? Can we aim for the water quality results at this time next year to be the best yet for metaldehyde and propyzamide concentrations? Working together with precision application and adhering to best practice, this can be achieved, safeguarding drinking water and important pesticide products for the future.

Remember to pay close attention to:

- ✓ Look at weather forecasts and avoid pelleting where rainfall is predicted in the next 48 hours;
- ✓ Buffer strips next to watercourses and leaving an appropriate width when using pesticides;
- ✓ Filling and cleaning of equipment away from drains and watercourses;
- ✓ Keeping machines calibrated, especially when changing between pellets or products.



Robert's Blog

With Defra planning to consult on 'policy options for problem pesticides' this autumn, it's more important than ever to demonstrate that voluntary changes to metaldehyde use and practice can make a positive difference to water quality, on the Waveney and other catchments where it regularly creates problems, to provide evidence to argue against the possible introduction of mandatory withdrawal or restrictions.

Whilst electric broadcasters are good at covering the ground, they are not accurate enough to go anywhere near a ditch or hard surface from where metaldehyde might get washed into watercourses. They all ding the odd pellet beyond their effective spreading width – more if the quad bumps over a clod or a tramline at the wrong moment. And that is all it takes – the odd pellet escaping the field, or vibrating off an uncleaned quad as it nips down the road or track, blue dust being washed off when out in the rain - the same happening across many fields and many farms results in a peak in the river above the drinking water limit, and the necessity to shut down the abstraction intake at the treatment works. The consequence is more expense for the water company and more evidence for Defra that metaldehyde use in drinking water catchments is unsustainable. Leachate down soil cracks, and probably very open profiles created by subcasting will add to problems. Having a firm, "conventional" seed bed both restricts metaldehyde from leaching, slowing the pathway, and the propensity for slugs to do damage. Using either ferric phosphate pellets round the headlands, or application with a boom applicator or leaving the prescribed 6m margin are essential to reduce the problem, as is thorough cleaning down of the quad /equipment before leaving the field. Fitting a rubber mat between the spinner and carrier frame can make cleaning down so much easier than having to get clods and pellets out of all those nooks and crannies.....

Robert's Blog cont.....

BEWARE THE CRACKS Big, deep & numerous this year, the risk is much increased that dirty water/slurry, slug pellets etc., will arrive deep down the soil profile. More so with any heavy shower. Much of their actives, and even those of solid manures, will go "DOWN". Not only will they be of little or no benefit at depth they will also just sit there waiting to drain into water courses when drain flow begins.



The only way to help avoid losses and problems is thorough cultivation, enough, probably with some consolidation, to try and fill the cracks .prior to any applications.

Last Call for "Grandfathers"

During October- till the November 25th deadline, CSF will be running a few pesticide application training (PA) courses – namely PA1, PA2, PA4s (pellet applicators), and PA6 (pedestrian applicators). Essentially this will be the last opportunity for free training from CSF re PA. Contact Robert to book places as soon as possible please, otherwise you may find either no places left or attendees may have to travel some distance to venues.



One-to-one on-farm advice visits available:

- **Nutrient Management Plan** - Advice in the choice, production and use of NMPs (& NVZ recording requirements).
- **Specific Sector Based Advice (Maize and Outdoor Pigs)** To provide farmers/land managers with specific advice when growing maize or running outdoor pigs to reduce run off and pollution risks.
- **Farm Infrastructure Audits**- To review the capacity and condition of livestock slurry/ manure/ effluent handling infrastructure in terms of reducing the risk of point source pollution and improving the efficiency of manure use, resulting in a reduction in diffuse pollution .
- **Water Management** - To provide bespoke advice on the main pathways for pollutants related to run-off (including tracks, ditches and tramlines) and link this to the sources of run-off and their management. The result being a range of practical actions to slow or divert damaging water movement across the farm using sustainable engineering principles and thus breaking the connectivity of potential sources of pollution to sensitive water bodies.
- **Pesticide Handling and Application / Bio-beds and Biofilters** – on improving the handling, application and disposal of pesticides so as to reduce the risk of water contamination. More specific advice on use and design of bio beds and bio filters where applicable.

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- **Water Holding Design and Management Advice** -Water holding features under the banner of Sustainable rural Drainage (SuDS), including constructed wetland systems can be designed to create wetland habitats, reduce pollution on farms. (Only to treat lightly fouled yard effluent or field run-off and are not for the treatment of heavily fouled effluent, silage liquor, slurry, concentrated pesticide)
- **Soil Husbandry** . Improve your soil structure and condition, reduce inputs, improve yields and reduce the risk of sediment (and the pollution it carries) impacting on water quality.
- **Machinery Testing and Calibration** (Fertiliser, Manure Spreaders and Slug Pellet Applicators) - an MOT, tray test and advice on calibration and maintenance (one off per farm)

Contact Robert to book – visits will be arranged when convenient to you (late autumn to early spring in the main). These are just some examples – often such visits can be tailored to your needs or advice and help is also available on a less formal basis –do please discuss your requirements with either Ian or Robert.

Future Events: Look out for invites and the next newsletter for the winter programme of events – we hope to include such topics as Catch & Cover Crops/ soil management, Countryside Stewardship, Pesticide Handling/biobeds/biofilters, and much more hopefully. If you have any requests for anything related to water quality then do let us know – we will do our best to put something on given sufficient interest and demand. If you have heard or seen a particular speaker who you thought impressive and/or informative then do let us know.....

