

WHAT MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO REDUCE DIFFUSE POLLUTION?

FACT SHEET
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Background:

Defra's England Catchment Sensitive Farming Delivery Initiative programme operates in the Wensum catchment and is encouraging land managers to undertake measures funded under Defra's agri-environmental stewardship schemes that will help to reduce diffuse pollution. Farming is not the sole cause of diffuse pollution but it does contribute approximately 60 per cent of nitrates, 25 per cent of phosphorus and 70 per cent of sediments entering our waters, amongst other pollutants (Defra website www.defra.gov.uk).

The extensive monitoring work that will be undertaken by this project, will help provide the 'evidence base' to assess how well these measures are working and members of the **Wensum Alliance** will evaluate the effectiveness of the various measures undertaken and develop recommendations that will help refine future agri-environmental policy to reduce pollution further.

What are the types of measures?

There are a number of different land management measures that can be used as appropriate, to help reduce diffuse pollution. These can be grouped into a number of different categories.

- **Land use measures** – e.g. converting vulnerable areas of land to uses with lower fertiliser/pesticide requirements
- **Soil management measures** – e.g. to reduce compaction, maintain ditches and drainage; adopt minimal cultivation systems; retain stubble; plant cover crops
- **Farm infrastructure measures** – e.g. fence off waterways from livestock; establish sediment traps; improve/ cover slurry and manure storage; control waste water
- **Livestock management measures** – e.g. avoid poaching; reduce stocking rates on wet fields; improve livestock housing ; modify grazing regime; modify livestock feed
- **Fertiliser/nutrient management measures** – e.g. use precision technology to minimise excess applications; analyse soils regularly; use clover in place of grass
- **Manure management** – e.g. modify manure application; site heaps away from watercourses; improve effluent/manure storage
- **Crop protection measures** – e.g. adopt recognised crop protection management plan

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Monitoring the effects

State-of-the-art monitoring equipment will be used for long-term measurements to both identify and record pollutants and to evaluate the effectiveness of measures to reduce it. The study will consider the impacts and effects on ecosystems and sustainable production and aims to improve understanding of how to predict and control diffuse pollution from agriculture.

Where can I find out more about funding?

Measures can be undertaken voluntarily (see Campaign for the Farmed Environment 'A Farmer's Guide to Voluntary Measures' www.cfeonline.org.uk) or can potentially attract funding under a number of agri-environment schemes and other routes. The three main sources of funding are the England Catchment Sensitive Farming Delivery Initiative (ECSFDI) which applies in the Wensum catchment and the environmental stewardship Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) or Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) (see www.defra.gov.uk for more information).

WENSUM ALLIANCE Research Team at UEA

The Wensum Alliance is being led by Dr Kevin Hiscock and Prof. Andrew Lovett from the School of Environmental Sciences at the University of East Anglia in Norwich. The first phase of the project runs until 31 March 2014. For further details please contact:

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If you would like to join the **Wensum Alliance** and be part of this project, please get in touch. Your local knowledge, experience, expertise and advice will be invaluable in helping to develop the right catchment and farm management solutions for reducing pollution in the Wensum catchment.

General Enquiries:-

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