



Autumn / Winter 2019



Downs & Harbours  
Clean Water  
Partnership  
*Working towards  
a cleaner water  
environment*



**A clear solution  
for farmers**  
CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

# Downs & Harbours update

Working with farmers to improve water & air quality

## Local update

### Chichester Farming Cluster Group

**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October – Crown & Anchor, Dell Quay**

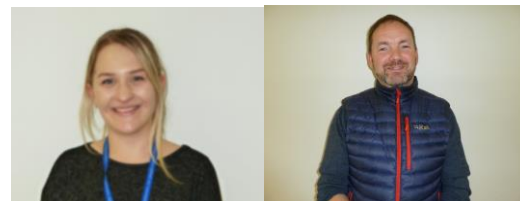
In October we held a workshop with farmers and other stakeholders from the Chichester area to develop ways to improve water quality and set up a new farmer lead cluster group. Similar cluster groups have been set up which include the South Downs Cluster Group and Arun to Adur Farmers Group. Details of these groups can be found following the link [www.southdownsfarming.com](http://www.southdownsfarming.com)).

The cluster group is an opportunity to get farmers together in the same catchment and design workshops, disseminate information and work with stakeholders like Portsmouth Water and Natural England who can support the group in delivering catchment management improvements.

As the Chichester area covers the low lying plain and the south downs, we therefore have initially thought that 2 groups would be set up to cover the differing catchments but fall under the one Cluster Partnership.

We hope to hold another event in the New Year where we can discuss setting up these groups and would welcome your support. Please contact us if you wish to attend and provide any support to the groups. A proposed date will follow shortly.

Get in touch with Portsmouth Water's  
Catchment & Environment Team



Beth Fairley & Simon Deacon

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- **New specialist advice services**
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## Metaldehyde ban overturned

The ban on the on-farm use of metaldehyde slug pellets from 2020 was overturned in the High Court in July following a challenge from a producer on the legality of the ban. According to Defra, the legal challenge was based on how the process was conducted and it is currently reviewing the decision, which a spokesman said they would do as swiftly as possible.

In the meantime, we continue to provide free support and advice to farmers and landowners about our catchment management solutions

Up-to-date advice and guidance on metaldehyde restrictions can be found at [getpelletwise.co.uk](http://getpelletwise.co.uk), or please get in touch with your CSFO.



### South Downs Farming website

The website is now live ([www.southdownsfarming.com](http://www.southdownsfarming.com)). Its aim is to promote farming on the South Downs and the work of the Farm Clusters to a wide audience (linked to both the @SDFarmClusters Twitter and @SDFarmClusterNetwork Instagram accounts).

## Future Farming: Changes to farming in England

What will happen when we leave the EU? Guidance and a downloadable leaflet is now available on the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-farming-changes-to-farming-in-england>

It sets out the latest information on farming policy in England after Brexit. It will be updated as needed and aims to remove some uncertainty. It gives information that farmers and those in the farming industry might need to get ready for the coming changes, such as:

- phasing out direct payments
- changing how we work together
- changing rules and regulations
- grant programmes
- 

Please take a moment to get familiar with these changes to get ready for Brexit.



## New Specialist Advice Services

CSF is a confidential government service providing advice to farmers on environmentally and economically sustainable practices to improve soil, water and air.



Along with our continuing suite of specialist advice, we now promoting an additional five new services outlined below:

1. Assessment and Monitoring of Soil Health
2. Natural Flood Management
3. Water Resources Audit
4. Livestock nutrient planning. Animal nutrition to reduce losses of nutrients & ammonia to the environment
5. Woodland for Water and Air

Contact your CSFO for more information.

## Conservation agriculture – mob grazing



**CONSERVATION AGRICULTURE  
2019/20 CAMPAIGN**

There's an old saying, "Never leave the sheep in the same field long enough to hear the church bell ring twice". Mob grazing or short duration, high density grazing is a modern version of a traditional practise seen to improve pasture and stocking rate.

Livestock do not selectively graze as they are put in a situation where there is competition for food. This type of management allows the diversity of an herbal ley to remain diverse and creates a mixed diet benefiting the health of the animal.

The trampling effect of mob grazing means that around about 40% of the crop is pushed into the soil, providing food for soil biology to thrive and create organic matter. This also provides soil cover reducing risk of erosion during the non-grazing resting period.

Harder grazing over shorter periods of time forces plants to grow deeper and stronger roots, making them more resilient by tapping into lower soil, accessing water and nutrient supplies. The deeper roots also support better soil structuring and creates a stronger plant that can recover quicker after being grazed.

The more rhythmic grazing carried out by the livestock means that manure and urea is more evenly distributed across the paddock. This means that nutrient supply to the soil, and benefits of soil organic matter building from manure, is across the paddock and not in patches.

Ironically, the higher stocking rates grazing for a much shorter period of time has shown to mean that compaction is less likely. There is less movement across the paddock in comparison to set stocking meaning less impact from hoof movement.

Mob grazing systems have proven to support higher stocking densities in comparison to set stocking while completely cutting out artificial fertiliser use, reducing animal medicine requirements, cutting out mineral supplement needs, and reducing winter feed costs by extending the grazing period.

In most cases of mob grazing, only 5-10% of ground is being grazed at one time which allows the other 90-95% to recover over a number of weeks and sometimes months. This allows the diversity of plants to flower and set providing food and habitat for a range of wildlife like birds, voles, insects, pollinators and owls.

More time is spent in and around the livestock to help move them from paddock to paddock. Although this sometimes means a higher work load on the grazing part of the business, it also means spending more time to observe the animals and pick up any signs of lameness, disease or other injuries within the herd or flock. This ultimately means a happier and healthier group of animals.

*[smilingtreefarm.com/blog/mob-grazing](https://smilingtreefarm.com/blog/mob-grazing)*



## Reducing ammonia, saving money & helping the environment



Covering all lagoons by 2027

CSF is now offering air quality advice alongside our existing water work, we are working with farmers to help them reduce their emissions of Ammonia.

Ammonia is one of the key pollutants highlighted in DEFRA'S clean air strategy, it has been targeted because of its links to respiratory disorders in human health and its long term damage to certain vulnerable protected sites and sensitive habitats.

From a farming perspective lost Ammonia is essentially lost nutrients, so why waste these nutrients which have been targeted for crop growth.

Ammonia can be lost at many stages during the process of feeding livestock to spreading manures, so it's really important that the whole process is considered, starting at the very beginning with livestock diets to ensure that animals get just the right amount of crude protein to maximise milk yield or animal growth.

It's not just the organic manures either, Ammonia is readily lost from Urea based fertilisers that do not contain any slow release coating or inhibitor.

CSF can now offer a site visit to look at your farm and help you look at the Ammonia risks and potential losses from your system, we can help you plan for changes proposed in the clean air strategy such as covering slurry lagoons and use of low emission spreading techniques. We can provide specialist visits too that will help you look at livestock diet, housing and infrastructure, manure and livestock handling, spreading manures, this can be from your own or imported manures.

If you want to know more or to find out who your local catchment officer is please call the South East Ammonia lead advisor Andrew Russell on 07901 512398 or email [andrew.russell@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:andrew.russell@naturalengland.org.uk)



Diet links to Ammonia output

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## Farming rules for water – are you compliant?

Do you know that the farming rules for water have now been in place since April 2018 and cover the whole of the country to include areas that are not in Nitrate Vulnerable Zones?

Did you know that the rules are checked during a routine cross compliance inspection and any breaches identified can affect your BPS payment?

Did you know that CSF can help you meet the requirements through our advice service?

### How can we help?

If you haven't had a visit from your local catchment officer then we can carry out an initial visit to see where we can help improve local water and air quality by looking at your farm, its infrastructure and interaction with the local environment, we can help you apply for land management and water capital grants and signpost you to other grant applications such as the Countryside Productivity Scheme.

Soil sampling & nutrient management planning – an introduction to nutrient planning, we will sample 5 of your fields and show you how to interpret soil sampling results and plan your nutrient applications accordingly, this will help you plan and manage valuable resources and save you money by only applying nutrients where they are actually needed.

Soil health check, we can have a look at your soils structure and help you identify where problems currently exist, this can include compaction, poor soil health and machinery choice.

These are just a few of the services that CSF can provide, a summary of the new rules are below, so if you have any queries or want our help and advice just give your local catchment officer a call.

### The rules are summarised as follows

#### 1. Planning use of manures and fertilisers

- Plan in advance each application of organic manures and manufactured fertilisers to meet but not exceed soil and crop nutrient needs
- Your planning must take into account soil testing for pH, nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P), potassium (K), and magnesium (Mg). Nitrogen levels can be determined by assessing soil nitrogen supply instead of soil testing.

#### 2. Organic manures must not be stored on land

- Within 10 metres of inland freshwaters or coastal waters
- Where there is significant risk of pollution entering inland freshwaters or coastal waters
- Within 50 metres of a spring, well or borehole

#### 3. Organic manures or manufactured fertilisers must not be applied

- If the soil is waterlogged, flooded or snow-covered
- If the soil has been frozen
- If there is significant risk of causing pollution

#### 4. Organic manures must not be applied

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

#### 5. Manufactured fertiliser must not be applied

- Within 2 metres of inland freshwaters or coastal waters

#### 6. You must take all reasonable precautions to prevent significant soil erosion and runoff from

- The application of organic manure and manufactured fertiliser
- Cultivation practices and harvesting
- Poaching by livestock

#### 7. 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

#### 8. 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

## Portsmouth Water Capital Grant Scheme

Portsmouth Water's capital grant scheme is open for applications until 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019. This scheme assists farmers and land owners in sensitive areas to invest in items that reduce the risk of nutrient losses to groundwater.

Whilst many of the items available are similar to those available Countryside Stewardship the benefit of the scheme is the application process is quick and easy.

Portsmouth Water have also included an option for farmers to apply for funding for their own projects that will protect drinking water quality and improve efficiency.

For more information refer to:

<https://www.cleanwaterpartnership.co.uk/grant-scheme>

or contact

[catchment.management@portsmouthwater.co.uk](mailto:catchment.management@portsmouthwater.co.uk)

### Upcoming events

Chichester Cluster Group Breakfast meeting for farmers

Dell Quay, Chichester

TBC



Managing Grassland For Horses

Venue TBC

27<sup>th</sup> November 2019, 18:00 – 20:30



For more information about any of these events, contact Portsmouth Water's Catchment Team

#### Connect with CSF

CSF pages on gov.uk:  
<http://bit.ly/CSFonline>

#### Twitter:

@naturalengland  
@NEDorstHantsLOW

#CatchmentSensitiveFarming

#### YouTube:

<http://bit.ly/CSF-YouTube>

Catchment Sensitive Farming is a successful partnership between Defra, the Environment Agency and Natural England. We work together with farmers and organisations in priority areas across England to improve water and air quality.

We provide free advice, training and grants, helping farmers take voluntary action to improve the environment and their farm business.

Since 2006, we have worked with over 20,000 farms, achieving a 92% satisfaction rate for our one to one advice. Working together, we have contributed to a 50% reduction in pesticides in our rivers.

In 2018, the Government committed an extra £3m to help us improve air quality by reducing ammonia emissions from farms.

For more information search GOV.UK for Catchment Sensitive Farming

### How do we use your data?

Your data is only used by us so we can email, call, write or text you about our Catchment Sensitive Farming work. This will include advice, access to grants, events and campaigns.

You can change your communication preferences by emailing us on [catchmentsensitivefarming@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:catchmentsensitivefarming@naturalengland.org.uk)

Our Information Charter is at [bit.ly/naturalenglandinfo](http://bit.ly/naturalenglandinfo)  
Our Privacy Notice is at [bit.ly/csprivacy](http://bit.ly/csprivacy)

Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) is delivered in partnership by Natural England, the Environment Agency and Defra.



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



Environment  
Agency