

News story: New guide for farmers to help reduce air pollution from ammonia

Updated: We have added the animated video produced to support the launch of the COGAP to reduce emissions of ammonia from agriculture.

A new guide published today sets out the steps farmers, advisors and contractors can take to reduce ammonia emissions and help improve air quality.

Our [Clean Air Strategy](#) highlights that agriculture is responsible for 88% of UK emissions of ammonia gas, which 'over-fertilises' natural habitats with nitrogen and combines with other pollutants to produce fine Particulate Matter pollution which is harmful to human health.

The [Code of Good Agricultural Practice \(COGAP\) for Reducing Ammonia Emissions](#) sets out simple steps all farmers can take to reduce ammonia emissions, such as using a nutrient management plan to calculate fertiliser application rates.

It also includes more significant changes to slurry storage, spreading equipment and infrastructure, alongside innovative techniques such as slurry and digestate acidification and separation.

Environment Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

Air pollution is not just an urban issue and with 88% of ammonia emissions coming from farming, the government is taking concerted action.

With clear new guidance and financial support we will help farmers across the country to take action, reduce emissions and help improve air quality.

In addition to the new guidance, Defra is providing a package of financial and technical advice to help farmers reduce their emissions.

Defra is investing £3 million over the next three years to fund a specialist team of experts who will offer support, advice and guidance on the most effective ways to reduce emissions from ammonia on their land.

It will fund demonstrations of the latest low-emission spreading equipment and one-to-one advice on reducing ammonia emissions which will be available from Catchment Sensitive Farming officers by the end of this year.

A video has also been produced by Defra to support the launch of the COGAP. [Ammonia emissions from agriculture video](#)

The RDPE Countryside Productivity scheme is currently offering 40% grants towards much of the manure management equipment recommended in the COGAP to reduce ammonia emissions. This includes low-emission spreading equipment, slurry and digestate storage bags, digestate processing equipment and mild acidification equipment. Farmers in priority catchments for reducing water pollution may also be eligible for grants towards covers for slurry stores and lagoons under the Countryside Stewardship scheme.

The voluntary code has been written by Defra in collaboration with the National Farmers Union (NFU), the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board and the Agricultural Industries Confederation.

Contributions have also been made by other organisations including ADAS, the British Egg Council, the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers, the Environment Agency, Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF), the National Association of Agricultural Contractors, Natural England, Plantlife and the Tenant Farmers Association.

The guide includes information on how to reduce emissions when:

- storing organic manure
- applying organic manure
- applying manufactured nitrogen fertiliser
- feeding livestock
- housing livestock

NFU environment forum chairman Mark Pope said:

The NFU welcomes the launch of the Code of Good Agricultural Practice for Reducing Ammonia Emissions. The code contains a variety of measures to reduce ammonia emissions on farm, which in many instances provide multiple benefits to the environment and resource efficiency.

Farmers have recognised there is a need to reduce their ammonia emissions and the sector has made improvements with levels dropping by 10% in the past 30 years. However, further reductions are required from the industry in order to meet targets set under the Government's Clean Air Strategy. We urge Defra to continue to offer farmers guidance on this issue alongside targeted financial support where necessary.

Robert Sheasby, chief executive of the Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC), which represents companies delivering both inputs and advice to farmers said:

We are pleased to note that the new code recognises the importance of professional advisers in guiding farm practice. Those on the Feed Adviser Register and FACTS Qualified Advisers are already undertaking additional training that will update some 4,500

professionals on the code's requirements.

By delivering advice tailored to the needs of individual farms, their crops and livestock, we will make a significant contribution to meeting Defra's ambition for productivity and ammonia mitigation.

Jill Hewitt, Technical Consultant at the National Association of Agricultural Contractors added:

Spreading manures, slurry and digestate waste has become a predominantly contractor operation and the NAAC welcomes new guidance to help farmers and contractors make decisions about the best way to apply waste to land to maximise nutrient content, and minimise air pollution.

Nigel Penlington, Head of Environment and Buildings at the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board said:

There is increasing pressure on farmers to control ammonia so we welcome this as a first step to help raise awareness and provide simple, practical steps to make a difference on the farm, improve the image of farming and its environmental performance and, at the same time, save farmers money and provide some benefits to the health and welfare of livestock and crop health.

[Open consultation: Energy Performance Certificates in buildings: call for evidence](#)

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) are a widely used measure of the energy performance of buildings, both in the residential and commercial sectors, and are a key tool in promoting energy efficiency improvements to buildings.

We're seeking evidence on how EPCs currently perform against 3 attributes:

- quality
- availability
- encouraging action to improve energy efficiency

We also outline suggestions for improvement, many of which have been advocated by businesses and industry representatives. The list of suggestions is not exhaustive, and inclusion or exclusion should not be taken as an indication of government policy. Additional ideas are welcome, as are views about the relative impact of the ideas listed, and how they might be implemented to best effect.

We would like to hear from:

- building owners and occupiers in both the domestic and non-domestic sectors
- estate agents and others involved in the sale or lease of buildings
- all parts of the energy efficiency products supply chain – EPC assessors, accreditation bodies, software providers and enforcement bodies
- anyone else who regularly uses EPCs

Press release: £45 million investment in rural broadband

Rural businesses and communities are set to benefit from improved broadband access as part of a £45 million boost by the government.

The new funding for the government's [Rural Broadband Infrastructure Scheme](#) adds to the £30 million investment announced last year, increasing the total pot of funding available to £75 million.

The money will be made available through grants to local authorities that have already applied for funding, in areas where broadband services at speeds of 30Mbps or faster are not available or planned. The funding will be used to support full fibre wherever possible.

It follows the launch of the Government's [Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review](#) this week which outlined plans to prioritise hard-to-reach rural areas for roll out of full fibre connectivity.

Visiting North York Moors National Park today, Lord Gardiner will announce that North Yorkshire is one of the local authorities to receive funding through the scheme with a grant offer of over £11 million.

Rural Affairs Minister Lord Gardiner said:

I am delighted to announce today that North Yorkshire has been awarded a grant of £11 million towards improving its broadband infrastructure.

Rural areas should not be left behind in the connectivity slow lane, missing out on the opportunities high speed broadband can bring. The funding made available through the Rural Broadband Infrastructure Scheme champions our countryside communities and businesses by opening up access to broadband of at least 30 Megabits per second, in some of the most hard to reach areas.

The increased funding for the Rural Broadband Infrastructure Scheme follows a positive response and a high number of applications from local authorities. It is part of planned investment of at least £3.5 billion into our rural economies by 2020, supporting the quarter of businesses in the UK which are based in the countryside.

The scheme is delivered by the Rural Payments Agency and supports those rural areas which are not currently scheduled to receive broadband as part of commercial delivery plans or under the Government's [Superfast Broadband Programme](#), which expects to give access to superfast broadband to around 97% of UK premises over the next few years.

With nearly a fifth of people living in the countryside, it is important that the needs of rural communities are heard loud and clear across government. In addition to driving forward high speed internet, the government is championing housing availability and supporting job creation.

Lord Gardiner is today visiting the North York Moors National Park as part of National Parks Week where he will also meet a number of young workers and apprentices. North York Moors supported 120 apprentices through its Apprenticeship Programme, amounting to over 50,000 working days.

Press release: Dover dredging application decision

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) has approved an application from Dover Harbour Board (DHB) to carry out aggregate dredging at Area 521, known as the South Goodwin Sands.

The marine licence granted by the MMO gives DHB permission to extract up to 3 million tonnes of aggregate by trailer suction hopper dredging, which is proposed to be undertaken between September 2019 and September 2020. This follows an application [DHB originally made to the MMO in May 2016](#). The aggregate is required to provide fill material for the wider Dover Western Docks Revival project.

The decision follows extensive public consultation, during which over 1,300 specific representations from the public were received. Issues raised during

this consultation were taken into account by the applicant, the MMO and its primary advisers in determining the application.

The MMO believes it was appropriate to grant the licence because it is satisfied, on the basis of the evidence provided, the assessments that have been undertaken and on advice from its primary advisers, that sufficient measures were proposed to protect the marine environment, prevent interference with legitimate users of the seas and mitigate impacts to any other relevant matters. These measures have been captured in the marine licence conditions.

John Tuckett, Chief Executive of the Marine Management Organisation, said:

“We understand the strength of feeling surrounding this development, both for and against. As a regulator that has to balance and manage competing uses of the marine environment we accept that not everyone will be happy with the decisions we make.

“However we are entirely impartial in our marine licencing process and consider and are satisfied that this decision is based on the best available evidence and is proportionate and complies with relevant policy.”

The MMO is committed to transparency and helping people to access the evidence on which it bases its decisions. Details about this case, including the MMO’s decision report and Marine Conservation Zone assessment are available online via the public register of marine licence applications (case reference MLA/2016/00227) and via a [page on the MMO’s website](#).

Companies wanting to carry out commercial aggregate extraction may also need other permissions, such as from the Crown Estate as the owners of the seabed. More information is also available on the [Crown Estate’s website](#).

It is now up to DHB to decide whether they proceed with the dredging project.

[News story: Suspension of Veterinary Medicines containing the excipient Diethanolamine \(DEA\)](#)

Updated: Update on supply, further batches released

Update 13 August

Further flunixin product is now available to order.

Wholesalers can accept further batches from the manufacturer provided it is accompanied by a "Caution in Use" letter.

Update 9 August

The VMD is actively working with Marketing Authorisation Holders to allow them to release further currently labelled flunixin product onto the market for non-food horses only, provided it is accompanied by a "Caution in Use" letter (to be approved by the VMD) which outlines the conditions of use and restricts supply to non-food horses. We will inform vets when flunixin product is available to order.

Update 1 August 2018 2:30pm

The suspension means that no product containing DEA and indicated for a food-producing animal may be released or placed on the market by the Marketing Authorisation Holder. No products are being recalled. The VMD judges the consumer safety risk to be very low and we are not aware of any problems in animals associated with the use of products containing DEA.

Distribution of products containing DEA

At this stage, no further product may be released by the qualified person or placed on the market (i.e. stock controlled by Marketing Authorisation Holders may not be sent to wholesalers). However, as the products are not being recalled, products already at the wholesalers may continue to be distributed.

Using products containing DEA

Vets may continue to prescribe and use products containing DEA whilst stock is available.

Vets may also continue to obtain stock from wholesalers. Therefore there should not be any immediate availability concerns.

Availability of alternative medicines

Eight of the nine suspended products are solutions for injection for cattle and horses or cattle, horses and pigs containing flunixin meglumine, a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug. The other suspended product is a suspension for injection for cattle, horses and pigs containing the antimicrobials trimethoprim and sulfadiazine.

There are other veterinary medicines currently authorised for use in cattle, pigs and horses that either contain the same active substance(s) in a different form or can be used to treat the same conditions.

Treatment decisions are the responsibility of the individual prescribing vet.

Future availability of flunixin for intravenous use in non-food producing horses

The VMD is aware of vets' concerns over the potential future lack of availability of flunixin for intravenous use in non-food producing horses. The VMD is investigating potential ways to maintain the availability of injectable flunixin for use in such horses.

A list of these products is below:

Product	Vm Number	MAH
Allevinix 50 mg/ml Solution for Injection for Cattle, Pigs and Horses	15052/4144	Ceva Animal Health Ltd
Cronyxin Injection, 5% w/v Solution for Injection	12597/4014	Cross Vetpharm Group Ltd
Dugnixon 50 mg/ml Solution for Injection for Cattle, Pigs and Horses	36167/4005	Global Vet Health S.L.
Finadyne 50 mg/ml Solution for Injection	01708/4582	Intervet UK Ltd
Flunixin 50 mg/ml Solution for Injection for Cattle, Horses and Pigs	02000/4170	Norbrook Laboratories Limited
Meflosyl 5% Solution for Injection	42058/4085	Zoetis UK Limited
Norixin 5% Solution for Injection	02000/4137	Norbrook Laboratories Limited
Pyroflam 50 mg/ml Solution for Injection for Cattle, Horses and Pigs	02000/4253	Norbrook Laboratories Limited
Tribrissen 48% Suspension for Injection	01708/4593	Intervet UK Ltd

The VMD has done this in the light of the [scientific opinion of the Committee for Medicinal Products for Veterinary Use](#)

(the scientific advisory committee to the European Medicines Agency) that there may be a risk to humans from consuming food from animals treated with products containing DEA.