

Regulatory measures to tackle agricultural pollution to be introduced

The regulations will come into force in January 2020 with transitional periods for some elements to allow farmers time to adapt and ensure compliance.

The regulations will include the following measures:

- nutrient management planning
- sustainable fertiliser applications linked to the requirement of the crop
- protection of water from pollution related to when, where and how fertilisers are spread
- manure storage standards.

There are already reports of poor practices being carried out in unsuitable weather conditions this winter, with the number of incidents this year already exceeding last year.

Cabinet Secretary Lesley Griffiths said:

“Last year, I outlined my intention to introduce a whole Wales approach to tackling nitrate pollution. This year, we have seen an increase in the number of major polluting incidents, damaging both the environment and reputation of the agricultural industry. Equally damaging, in the context of Brexit, is the impact such incidents have on the work underway on Sustainable Brand Values for Welsh Products.

“As winter approaches, I am receiving reports of further incidents and of slurry spreading being carried out in unsuitable weather conditions. Not all slurry spreading is bad, but it must be done legally to avoid such destructive consequences.

“This poor practice is leaving many stretches of rivers devoid of fish. Our rural communities, which depend on tourism, angling and food industries, must be protected.

“I have carefully considered the need to balance regulatory measures, voluntary initiative and investment to address agricultural pollution.

“In the long-term, we will develop a regulatory baseline, informed by responses to the Brexit and our Land consultation. But in the short term, we must take action now to deal with these unacceptable levels of agricultural pollution.

“That is why I am today confirming I will introduce regulations next spring across Wales to tackle the issue. The regulations will replicate good practice which many farms are already implementing routinely – this must become the norm.

“The regulations will enable firm and consistent enforcement to be taken. The regulations will also ensure there are no barriers to trade of agricultural produce with the European Union following Brexit and help us meet national and international obligations on water quality.

“This is the right thing to do – for the environment, for the economy and for the reputation of farming in Wales.”

[Rebecca Evans meets key European Parliament Brexit group in Strasbourg](#)

During a visit to Strasbourg the Minister will meet the Parliament’s Brexit Steering Group. The group’s six members will play a crucial role in determining the Parliaments’ views on any Brexit Withdrawal Agreement between the UK and the EU. The European Parliament has a decisive role in the Brexit process because it must approve the Withdrawal Agreement negotiated by the European Commission.

Rebecca Evans said:

“We are now at a crucial time in the Brexit process. A deal, if there is one, between the UK and the EU will need the approval of both the Westminster Parliament and the European Parliament, an aspect which is often overlooked in the heated debate over Brexit. I am looking forward to meeting MEPs from the Brexit Steering Group to again communicate the Welsh Government’s aim of a Brexit that protects jobs and our economy.

“We are now 135 days from the UK leaving the EU and it is crucial we see a deal that avoids us catastrophically falling out of the EU and puts in place a platform for continuing our trade and economic relations.”

The Minister will also raise the Welsh Government’s wish for the Wales to remain a member of certain EU programmes – such as Horizon 2020 and Erasmus – once the UK has left the EU.

Rebecca Evans continued:

“I have heard from our university leaders how much they value collaboration with partner universities, how important continued research collaboration is and why it is vital that they are still able to participate in the Erasmus + and Horizon 2020 programmes. We share this view, and have continually lobbied the UK Government on continued participation.

“We want Wales to be a global and outward looking nation; Welsh universities have worked hard to build these links and our students benefit from this collaboration and we want to see this continue.”

Rebecca Evans’ visit will include meetings with at least three members of the Steering Group – Elmar Brok MEP, Gabriele Zimmer MEP, Philippe Lamberts MEP – and European Parliament Deputy Secretary-General Markus Winkler, as well as Welsh MEPs.

In April the Welsh Government welcomed Elmar Brok MEP, a senior Member of the European Parliament and a member of the Brexit Steering Group for talks on Brexit.

Kirsty Williams responds to report into Universities’ civic contribution

The WCPP’s report comes as part of their review of how Welsh Universities embrace their civic mission by contributing to their local communities.

Speaking at the launch event at the Welsh Millennium Centre, the Education Secretary said:

“The report offers constructive challenge to me and government, but also to the sector and university leadership in Wales.

“Our university sector is strong in its public good values and excellence, with high levels of student satisfaction and outstanding research impact, where Wales outperforms all other UK nations.

“Working together on maximising civic contribution is a Welsh national endeavour, where we can be an international leader.

“I hope that today’s policy paper helps provide yet more momentum for debate and policy development in Wales on civic contribution, and that Universities, individually and collectively, will now come forward with their own thoughts and ideas.”

Children's Minister announces £15m to expand services to support families and help reduce the need for children to enter care

As at March 2017, there were 5,954 children in care in Wales, and increase of 5% on the previous year. This increasing trend is being seen across the UK.

The funding to expand preventative and early intervention services announced today will be used to build on the support the Welsh Government and its partners are providing to families and children early on, so they are supported to stay together and ultimately reduce the need for children to enter care.

The funding is part of an additional £30m which has been allocated to Regional Partnership Boards to help strengthen integrated working, announced in the Draft Budget 2019-20 by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Mark Drakeford.

Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“As part of our programme for government, Taking Wales Forward, we set out a clear commitment to examine ways of ensuring looked after children enjoy the same life chances as other children and if necessary reform the way they are looked after. Our national strategy, Prosperity for All also describes our priorities around supporting children and families at the edge of care and young people in care, particularly as they transition towards adulthood.

“So I'm delighted to confirm we will invest £15m next year to progress our shared ambition that by intervening with support early we reduce the need for children to enter care and supporting children in care. I expect local authorities, third sector organisations and health boards to work in partnership to use this fund flexibly and creatively across their regions. It is essential for successful delivery and want to thank them for their co-operation and contribution so far.”

As part of the Welsh Government's Improving Outcomes for Children programme, Ministers are taking an ambitious cross-Government and cross-sector approach to help achieve their priorities and fulfil their commitment to improve the lives of children in care. The programme is increasing its focus on addressing the factors which can lead to children requiring local authority

care.

Last year, the Welsh Government invested £9m to support care experienced children.

This has resulted in:

- A £5m investment in local authority edge of care services meant that local authorities helped over 3,600 children to remain within the family unit by working with more than 2,000 families
- Over 1,900 care-experienced children across Wales have received funds via the Welsh Government's £1m St David's Day Fund, to support their transition to adulthood and independence
- The establishment of Regional Reflect services. During the past year, these services supported 150 young parents whose children have been placed in the care system. They have helped with issues such as contraception, housing, substance misuse, mental health and practical parenting skills
- £1m has been provided to extend the provision Personal Advisers so that all care leavers up to the age of 25 are offered a PA, regardless of circumstances. As a result an additional 20 Personal Advisers have been recruited and the extended offer taken up by more than 500 care leavers
- Care leavers have been helped to access opportunities in education, employment or training – 70 young people are now participating in a local authority work placement or traineeship scheme.

In May this year, research was published on placement outcomes for children after a final care order. This important research showed that over three quarters of the children in the study experienced a high level of placement stability as well as identifying other positive experiences of care.

The Minister added:

“We have made significant progress in improving outcomes for children in Wales. The work being done across Wales is leading to real, tangible outcomes which are having a direct and positive impact on the lives of children and young people.”

[Lights, camera, action for the next big thing in Wales](#)

The Welsh Government in partnership with Diverse Cymru are holding an event on November 20 to show underrepresented groups how to get into the fast growing Film and TV industry in Wales.

The event, run in conjunction with a number of partners including the BBC, S4C and BAFTA Cymru, will showcase the variety of roles available in the industry and help people to get that first foot on the ladder.

Speaking ahead of the event, Lord Elis-Thomas said:

“This event is an exciting opportunity to show individuals who hadn’t previously considered a career in Film, television or both that anything is indeed possible. Increasing diversity within the industry is something I am passionate about and last month I was pleased to support Hijinx’s call for an actor with a learning disability to win a BAFTA Cymru award by 2025.

I wholeheartedly support their aims of truly representing society on our screens. I’m heartened by the backing they have received from the screen industry and confident that with the support of learning disabled-led organisations, Wales can be pioneers in changing the face of who is represented on the small and big screen.

I encourage those interested in learning more about this exciting career path to come along to the event”.

The event is free to attend and is targeting groups underrepresented within the Film and TV industry: Women, BME, disabled, LGBT+ or from a low socio economic group. No previous experience within the industry is needed and those with transferable skills are also encouraged to attend – hairdressers, makeup artists, dressmakers or tailors, carpenters or joiners, electricians and accountants to name a few.

Zoë King, Funding and Projects Manager at Diverse Cymru said:

“The number of creative jobs in the film and tv industries in Wales is rising, however Diverse Cymru’s research on behalf of the Welsh Government has shown evidence of the underrepresentation of the groups of people we are targeting to attend this event.

Bringing together representatives from broadcasters, independent production companies, colleges and trade organisations, this event is a great opportunity for anyone who has wondered if this is an industry for them, if their skills are relevant or what careers or training may be available.

We want to encourage everyone to come along and find out for themselves.”

This event is part of a wider piece of work to increase diversity within the film and TV industry in Wales. It follows on from a report commissioned in 2016 that looked at barriers to working in the industry and possible

solutions.

Find out more about this free event here: <https://gov.wales/diversityinfilm>