

SCHEDULE

STANDARDS FOR GOOD AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITION

PART 2

Standards for Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition

Establishment of buffer strips along water courses

- 1.—(1) Organic manure must not be applied to any land which is situated within—
 - (a) 10 metres of any surface water; or
 - (b) 50 metres of any well, borehole or similar work sunk into underground strata for the purposes of any water supply.
- (2) No field heap is to be located within—
 - (a) 10 metres of any surface water; or
 - (b) 50 metres of any well, borehole or similar work sunk into underground strata for the purposes of any water supply.
- (3) Nitrogen fertiliser must not be applied to any land if there is a significant risk of nitrogen entering surface water, taking into account—
 - (a) the slope of the land, particularly if greater than 12 degrees;
 - (b) any ground cover;
 - (c) the proximity of the land to any surface water;
 - (d) weather conditions; and
 - (e) the type of fertiliser being applied.
- (4) Chemical fertiliser must not be applied to any land in any case, location or manner that makes it likely that the fertiliser will directly enter any surface water.
- (5) Except where sub-paragraph (6) applies, the cultivation of land or the direct application of pesticides must not take place within 2 metres of the top of the bank of any surface water.
- (6) This sub-paragraph applies where pesticides are applied to land to control injurious weeds to which the Weeds Act 1959(1) applies.

Use of water for irrigation

- 2.—(1) The abstraction of water for irrigation must be carried out in compliance with the authorisation procedures set out in Part 2 of the 2011 Regulations.
- (2) In this paragraph, “abstraction” has the same meaning as in section 20(6) of the 2003 Act.

Protection of groundwater against pollution

- 3.—(1) A beneficiary must not, when carrying on any agricultural activity—
 - (a) cause or permit the direct or indirect discharge into groundwater; or
 - (b) do anything likely to cause a direct or indirect discharge into groundwater,

(1) 1959 c.54.

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally made).

of any substances or families or groups of substances specified in the lists in the Table in Part 3 of this Schedule, unless it is authorised under the 2011 Regulations and carried out in accordance with that authorisation.

(2) A beneficiary must, when carrying on any agricultural activity, comply with the requirements of a notice issued under regulation 32(2) of the 2011 Regulations (enforcement notices) in relation to the direct or indirect discharge into groundwater of any substances or families or groups of substances specified in the lists in the Table in Part 3 of this Schedule.

Minimum soil cover

4.—(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where land has been cropped with any crop which has been harvested, a beneficiary must ensure that throughout the winter following that harvest such land is covered by the stubble of the harvested crop, by another crop or by grass.

(2) Sub-paragraph (1) does not apply to the extent that the prevailing agronomic or weather conditions and the condition of the composition of the soil of that land—

- (a) after harvest are such that compliance with that sub-paragraph would be detrimental to the use of the land for agricultural production; or
- (b) are such that they would allow cultivation to be carried out on the land in preparation for the following year's crop rotation before the end of winter.

(3) Final seedbeds must only be created for as short a period as possible before the next crop is planted, to avoid significant erosion of the soil, taking account of prevailing agronomic or weather conditions.

(4) In this paragraph, "winter" means the period beginning on the day after the crop has been harvested and ending on the last day of February in the calendar year following that harvest.

Minimum land management reflecting site specific conditions to limit erosion

5.—(1) A beneficiary must prevent the erosion of the banks of watercourses, at watering points or feeding areas, from overgrazing or heavy poaching by livestock.

(2) In the case of late harvested crops where agronomic or weather conditions prevent the subsequent crop or cover from being sown, a beneficiary must put in place measures to limit soil erosion.

(3) In this paragraph, "heavy poaching" means the cutting up of turf to a significant degree as a result of trampling by livestock.

Maintenance of soil organic matter

6.—(1) A beneficiary must not burn stubble except for the purposes of disease control or elimination of plant pests.

(2) A beneficiary who makes muirburn must—

- (a) provide at the place where the muirburn is about to take place, and maintain there whilst the muirburn is undertaken, sufficient staff and equipment to control and regulate burning operations so as to prevent damage to any woodlands on or adjoining the land where the operations are taking place or to any adjoining lands, march fences or other things; and
- (b) do so with due care so as not to cause damage to any woodlands on or adjoining the land where the operations are taking place, or to any adjoining lands, woodlands, march fences or other things.

(3) A beneficiary must not plough up rough grazings and other semi-natural areas without approval under the Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) (Scotland) Regulations 2006⁽²⁾.

Retention of landscape features

7.—(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (3), a beneficiary must not remove or destroy drystone or flagstone dykes, turf and stone-faced banks, walls, hedges (or part of a hedge) and trees (whether in line, in a group or isolated), ponds or watercourses without the prior written consent of—

- (a) the Scottish Ministers; or
- (b) such other authority, by or under any enactment, as may be notified to the beneficiary by the Scottish Ministers when the beneficiary applies to the Scottish Ministers for consent.

(2) A beneficiary must not trim a hedge or cut a tree during the period beginning on 1st March and ending on 31st August in any calendar year, except—

- (a) for the purposes of hedgelaying up to and including 31st March; or
- (b) to the extent necessary for the purposes of road safety.

(3) Written consent under sub-paragraph (1) is not required to widen field entrances to enable access for livestock or farm machinery.

(4) A beneficiary must not alter, or cause (whether directly or indirectly) the damage or destruction of a monument for the time being included in the Schedule of monuments compiled and maintained under section 1 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979⁽³⁾ without prior scheduled monument consent within the meaning of that Act.

(5) Except where sub-paragraph (6) applies, the cultivation of land or the direct application of organic manure, chemical or nitrogen fertilisers or pesticides must not take place within 2 metres of the centre line of a hedge.

(6) This paragraph applies where pesticides are applied to land to control injurious weeds to which the Weeds Act 1959 applies.

(7) In this paragraph—

- (a) “hedge” means any hedge growing in, or adjacent to, any land which forms part of a holding, which has—
 - (i) a length of at least 20 metres; or
 - (ii) a length of less than 20 metres where it meets (at an intersection or junction) another hedge at each end,

and any gap of less than 20 metres is to be treated as part of the hedge; and

- (b) “remove or destroy” does not include—
 - (i) trimming a hedge; or
 - (ii) lopping branches from trees; and
- (c) “hedgelaying” means a traditional method of cultivating hedges where tall saplings are partly cut through near the base and then bent over so that they lie horizontally and make a thick barrier.

(2) S.S.I. 2006/582, as amended by S.S.I. 2006/614, S.S.I. 2008/202, S.S.I. 2010/460, S.I. 2011/1043 and S.S.I. 2013/177.

(3) 1979 c.46, as amended by Schedule 4 to the National Heritage Act 1983 (c.47).