



Check Sheet for Organic Manure management

Organic manures provide useful and alternative sources of nutrients to mineral fertilisers when applied in a proper manner at the correct rate and timings. But when improperly applied they can be a source of pollution from nutrients, contaminants and pathogens. See check sheets for Fertiliser Use and Soil Management.

The following questions may aid, or remind, you of management practices to help maximise the benefits and minimise the potential for contamination of the environment from the use of organic manures.

Good planning is essential to get the most out of organic manures - economically & for higher crop yields and to ensure compliance with the various pieces of legislation relating to manure usage on the farm.

PLANNING: Do you or others managing your land review your manure management? In order to do this do you...

		YES	NO	ACTION
A 1	Make sure you have an up to date risk map for the farm (NVZ requirement)? → Show where and under what conditions manures can and cannot be spread, field storage heap sites, areas with steep slopes, water bodies and boreholes. → Avoid storing/applying manures where risk of their getting into water. → Tried & Tested, PLANET and MANNER NPK used with The AHDB Nutrient Management Guide (RB209) help manure and nutrient management planning.			
A 2	Complete your Nutrient Management Plan each year for each crop for each field and update as season progresses with records of all applications, taking into account nutrients in manures? → PLANET and MANNER NPK software and Tried & Tested sheets can be used for planning and recording application.			
A 3	Test fields every 3-5 years for P, K, Mg and pH and avoided over applications which would raise soil levels above target indices (especially phosphate - check fields close to farm)?			
A 4	Analyse your manures or use standard book values for nutrient content of manures? CSF can help with manure analysis and nutrient planning. Calculate the value of manures in terms of nutrients and equivalent fertiliser costs? → RB209 will give typical nutrient contents, also used in PLANET and MANNER NPK. → For wastes, suppliers should supply an analysis before spreading.			
A 5	Target manure applications to crops which will respond the best to the actual crop nutrients supplied?			
A 6	In NVZs ensure that you comply with all requirements - including planning and recording? → The requirements of the Code of Good Agricultural Practice – these apply whether or not in an NVZ.			
A 7	Consider changes to the rotation or to manure application rate and timing to reduce fertiliser use and nutrient losses?			
A 8	Check your storage facilities and field storage sites comply with legal requirements e.g. SSAFO Silage, Slurry and Fuel Oil (2010) Regulations? See Defra web pages but check with the Environment Agency if you are unsure.			
A 9	Reduce potential volumes of slurry by diverting away any dirty or grey water from the slurry store?			
A 10	Calibrate the manure spreader for rate of application? → Have you checked how much you are actually carrying and applying?			
A 11	Ensure that you have any necessary Environmental Permits in place for producing or spreading certain wastes?			
A 12	Assess how you will manage applications and workloads to incorporate within 24 hours if spread on the surface of bare ground?			
A 13	Maintain records of all activities related to manure usage, including import and export documentation, for at least 5 years?			

Applying manures at the correct time, at the desired rate, under the right conditions summarises the aims of all manure applications. This will maximise manure use efficiency and minimize losses.

PREPARING: Before starting any manure applications will you or others managing your land.....

		YES	NO	ACTION
B 1	Assess whether field & weather conditions are suitable for manure/slurry application or if spreading may lead to losses later? DO NOT APPLY if soil frozen or waterlogged!			
B 2	Avoid spreading if there are any NVZ closed periods relevant to the soil type and the manure that is being spread?			
B 3	Aim to apply manures when the crop needs the nutrients to grow?			
B 4	Check that the spreader is calibrated for the manure to be used – manure is valuable?			
B 5	Check that the Total N from manures will not exceed 250kg/ha in any 12 month period in any field?			
B 6	Ensure that the operator is aware of any limitations on where the manures can and cannot be spread, especially near field boundaries or if conditions are not suitable?			
B 7	Ensure any limits that apply to maximum application rates or spreading intervals are adhered to?			
B 8	Identify methods of avoiding manure/ disease transfer to roads from fields during applications e.g. by washing tyres, removing exterior clumps on machinery?			
B 9	Identify methods of applying manures which minimise contamination of herbage for grazing or cutting?			

Careful monitoring of field conditions and spread patterns ensures that the manures are legally and evenly applied to ensure optimum returns and low losses. Care during washing out of the spreader will avoid any losses of N & P and other contaminants to ground and surface waters

FIELD WORK: During and after manure applications, do you or others managing your land.....

		YES	NO	ACTION
C 1	STOP Spreading if field conditions deteriorate or heavy rainfall occurs which may lead to losses to drains or watercourses.			
C 2	Ensure that you DO NOT overspread buffer zones and watercourses. Take extra care when spreading in field corners and on uneven boundaries?			
C 3	Consider if soil and environmental conditions will lead to increased nutrient losses e.g. <i>cracked soils or ammonia loss on hot days?</i>			
C 4	Enter the field at the top of any slope whenever possible?			
C 5	Spread headlands last to avoid driving over spread areas and carrying contaminated soil from fields?			
C 6	Incorporate solid manures within 24 hours, or slurries within 6hrs, when applied to the surface of bare ground or stubble to maximise their crop benefit and comply with legislation?			
C 7	Only wash the outside of the spreader in the field, or on an area of growing crop, or where washings can be collected and disposed of safely to an unfertilised crop? Ensure any cleaning activities take place at least 10m away from watercourses and no runoff can occur.			

How good is your manure management?

If you have answered substantially more **YES** answers than **NO** then you are doing a great deal to protect water and fine tune your manure performance. Every **NO** answered has a potential cost, or consequence. Consider actions to address these areas for future manure management.

Further information and advice:

Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB):

www.ahdb.org.uk

Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC) - Fertiliser Industry

Assurance Scheme: <https://www.aictradeassurance.org.uk/fias/>

Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) - To find out if you are in a

CSF catchment and if so, contact your local Catchment

Sensitive Farming Officer: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/>

[catchment-sensitive-farming-reduce-agricultural-water-pollution](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/catchment-sensitive-farming-reduce-agricultural-water-pollution)

Defra - Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) information:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nutrient-management-nitrate-vulnerable-zones>

Environment Agency - www.environment-agency.gov.uk

FACTS - consult a FACTS qualified adviser for nutrient management

advice: www.basis-reg.com

Farming Advice Service (FAS) - cross compliance and nutrient management advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/farming-advice-service>

Health and Safety Executive - storing and handling ammonium nitrate: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture/faqs.htm#c5>

National Association of Agricultural Contractors (NAAC):

www.naac.co.uk

Natural England - www.naturalengland.org.uk

NCTSO Five Point Plan to Secure your Fertiliser:

www.secureyourfertiliser.gov.uk/10points.htm

Nutrient management planning software tools: **PLANET** and

MANNER NPK www.planet4farmers.co.uk

Tried & Tested nutrient management planning tools and advice including a paper based plan: www.nutrientmanagement.org