

Basic Payments Scheme Greening



Agriculture, Food and Rural Communities Directorate



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This Greening booklet provides guidance on the three Greening elements of the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and should be read in conjunction with the 'Basic Payment Scheme' booklet and the 'Cross Compliance' booklet which will be on our website soon.

 This is an updated version of the Greening booklet. A green arrow has been added to the left hand side to show changes / additions since the October 2014 version and an orange arrow has been used to show changes since the January 2015 version.

1. Greening - overview

Greening was introduced to improve the environmental performance of farming. A new Greening payment 'for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and environment' will be paid on top of the Basic Payment Scheme from 2015. Thirty per cent of Scotland's Pillar 1 budget will be allocated to the Greening payment.

Under the CAP reform, it is mandatory for applicants to the Basic Payment Scheme to comply with Greening requirements, where relevant on their land. In return for this, an additional Greening payment will be made. The Greening requirements cover:

- Permanent grassland
- Crop Diversification
- Ecological Focus Areas (EFAs)

The Greening requirement applies at a business level. This is the land under one Business Reference Number (BRN) – all the land your business declared on your Single Application Form.

Greening is paid in accordance with the number of eligible hectares in the region concerned in each year of application. The rate per hectare will be established for each region in due course.

You may be subject to inspections throughout the year to ensure you are adopting relevant Greening practices. If you fail to meet your Greening requirements, this will result in a proportionate reduction being applied to your Greening payment. From 2017, in addition to this reduction, you may incur an administrative penalty which can be applied to your Basic Payment.

1.1 What does Greening mean for me?

To make sure you receive the Greening payment with your basic payment, you must comply with Greening requirements. Many businesses already comply with Greening requirements as part of their normal agricultural practices. However, it is important you read this booklet to see which Greening requirements apply to you. Greening activities will include one or more of the following:

- Protect permanent grassland designated as environmentally sensitive grassland
- Grow a minimum number of crops

- Farm 5% of your arable area in a manner that promotes biodiversity - known as an Ecological Focus Area (EFA).

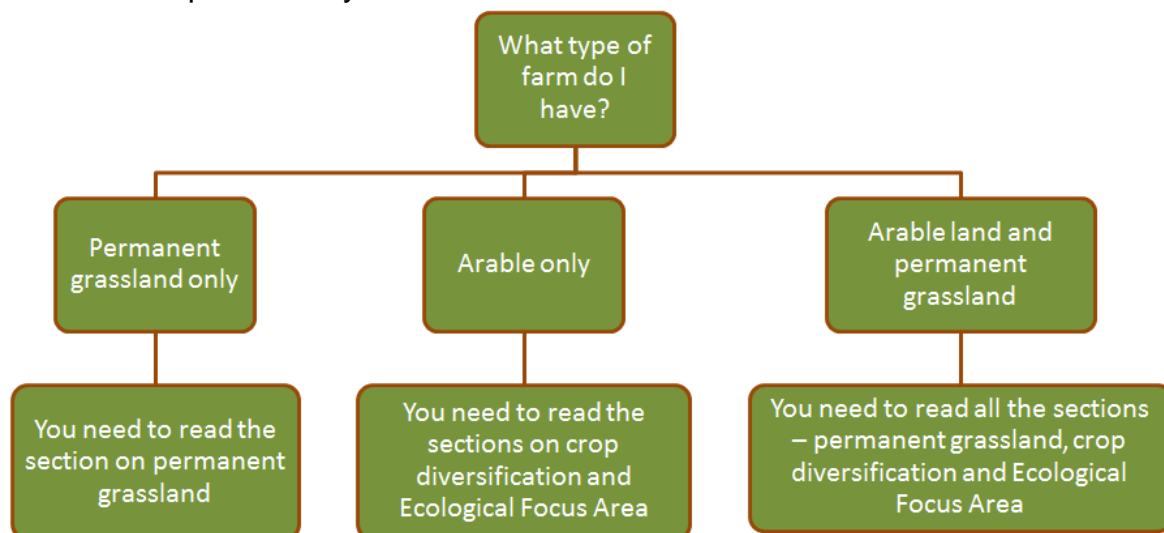
1.2 When will Greening affect me?

The three Greening requirements – permanent grassland, crop diversification, and ecological focus areas – all commence on 1 January 2015.

In addition, we are currently working with the European Commission to produce a Greening equivalence scheme that aims to provide more flexibility within the Greening framework and which we intend to introduce for 2016.

1.3 What do I need to read?

This booklet will describe the three Greening elements and what you need to do for each of the requirements. Use our diagram below to find out which part(s) of this booklet are important for you to read.



Remember – your permanent grassland includes rough grazing and your arable land includes any temporary grassland and *fallow that you include in a crop rotation. Temporary grassland is grassland that is five years old or less.

* Please see further information on fallow land at section 4.3.1 EFA fallow land and Annex C

1.4 Are Good Agricultural & Environmental Condition (GAEC) and Greening the same?

No, but a lot of the GAEC and Greening practices complement each other. Like Greening, you are also required to comply with GAEC to meet Basic Payment Scheme requirements.

You should be aware of two specific examples of GAEC that are changing that will impact on Greening. These are:



- A requirement to keep a two metre margin from the centre of a hedge and a two metre margin from the top of the bank of a water course, ditch or other water body
- An extension to the ban on cutting or trimming a hedge to a new period – starting 1 March and ending 31 August

For more details specifically covering GAEC please have a look at the Basic Payment Scheme Guidance which will be on our website soon.

2 Permanent grassland

2.1 What is permanent grassland?

Permanent grassland is land used to grow grasses or other herbaceous forage (such as clover), either naturally (self-seeded including 'rough grazing') or through cultivation (sown), which has **not** been included in the *crop rotation for five years or longer.



* Helpful tip

If you plough permanent grass and immediately sow a new grass ley, the land will retain its status as permanent grass.



Some examples of permanent grassland

All unimproved semi-natural areas are already protected by *The Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) (Scotland) Regulations 2006*

These grasslands cannot be improved without first determining whether an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required. All farmers, including those farming organic land, are required to comply with Environmental Impact Assessment and cross compliance rules regarding ploughing of permanent grassland.

If you have land in Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), you must also observe site requirements that may apply to grassland habitats on the site.

If you want more information about this you should contact your local Scottish Government area office.

Additional Greening requirements for permanent grassland

Scotland's requirement for Greening:

From 2015 onwards, the regulations require that the ratio of permanent grassland compared to the total agricultural area declared must not decrease by more than 5%. The maintenance of this ratio will be monitored at a national level and it is only if there is a reduction in the ratio the Scottish Government will take action to increase the area of permanent grassland.

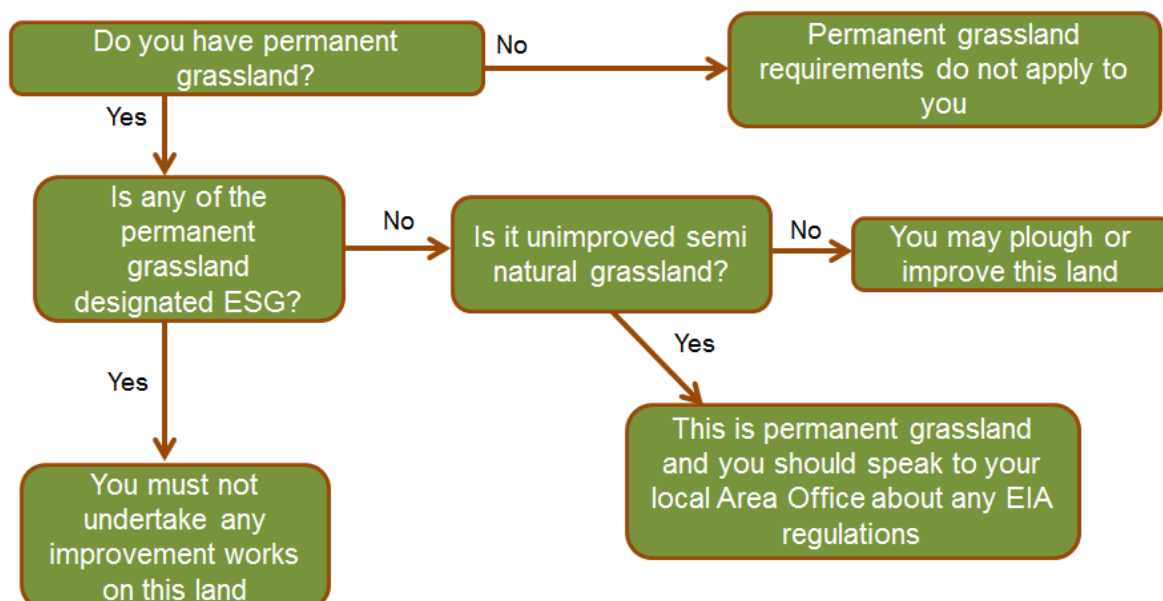
Your additional business requirement for Greening:

Individual businesses must not convert or plough permanent grassland designated as Environmentally Sensitive Grassland (ESG) on their holding. In Scotland Environmentally Sensitive Grasslands have been defined as NATURA designated sites where land managers will already be bound by the existing specific management agreements in place to ensure they are protected and managed sympathetically.



Some examples of Environmentally Sensitive Grassland areas

2.2 What permanent grassland requirements apply to me?



 **Helpful tip**

If you plough or improve and sow permanent grassland to a one off crop such as spring barley, kale or turnips the land will convert to arable and future grass will be temporary (for at least 5 years).

 **Helpful tip**

If you plough permanent grass and immediately sow a new grass ley, the land will retain its status as permanent grass.

3 Crop Diversification

3.1 What is crop diversification?

Crop diversification is the growing of a number of different crops that enhances biodiversity.


Crop diversification has benefits for soil organic matter by:

- Reducing the effects of climate change
- Reducing soil erosion, pest and weed control
- Improving water quality.


3.2 Do the crop diversification requirements apply to me?

If all of your holding (all of the land declared on your Single Application Form) is certified as organic, the crop diversification requirements do not apply to you so there's no need to read this section.

If part of your holding is certified as organic the areas that are not certified as organic need to be considered for crop diversification.

 If your holding is only partly organic, you may choose not to benefit from the exemption for organic land. Instead you need to meet Greening requirements across all your arable land. In this case the organic crops would count towards the crop diversification requirement.

3.3 What land is included in the calculation and then subject to your crop diversification?

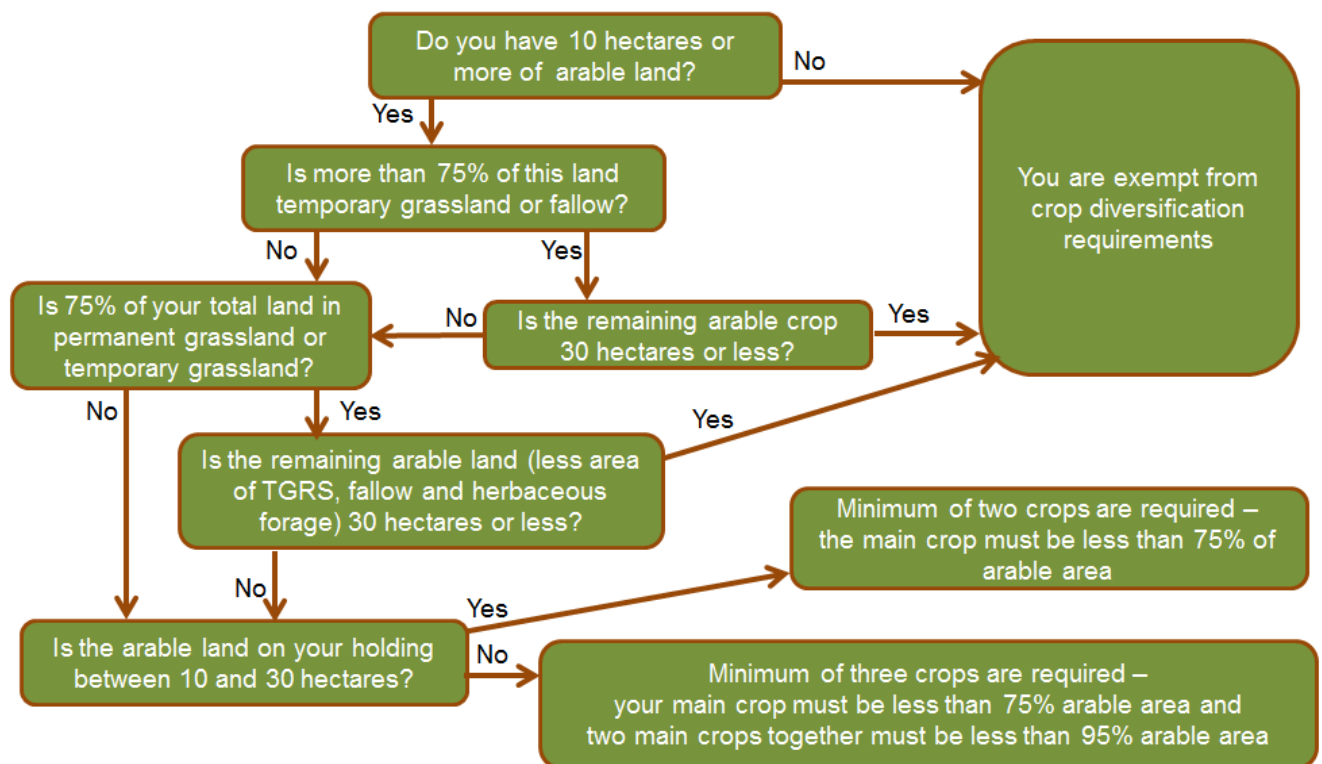
 All the arable land on your holding must be included in your calculation unless this is declared by another applicant for the Basic Payment Scheme and is included in their crop diversification calculation (see Annex C).

In calculating your arable area you should ensure that you include any land that is fallow, any land in an EFA buffer or field margin (see section 4) that is temporary grass and any land in an environmental agreement that was formerly arable that is currently in an agri environment scheme that does not allow production, for example beetle banks, grass margins and water margins where grazing is excluded. These areas may currently be declared as LIEM (LFASS ineligible environmental management) or PEM (Positive Environmental Management).

Please ensure that for any land let out that you utilise the appropriate crop code noting the example at Annex C.

For the avoidance of doubt permanent crops are not included in the calculation of your arable area (please see the glossary at section 6 for a definition of permanent crops).

Use our flowchart to see what applies to you.



➔ In addition to the exemptions in the flowchart, you should be aware that for a small number of businesses there is an additional refinement to the diversification commitment where the temporary grassland or fallow land covers more than 75% of the arable land on the holding, and you don't meet any of the exemptions in the flow chart at section 3.3 because the rest of your arable land is more than 30 hectares.

If your declared land meets this statement then you can count the temporary grassland or fallow land as your main crop, and you don't need to reduce the percentage covered by this crop. On your remaining arable land you need to grow

at least two other crops. Your main crop on this remaining arable land must not cover more than 75% of this land.

Remember – your arable land includes any temporary grassland that you include in a crop rotation. Temporary grassland is grassland that is five years old or less.

We have also compiled a table at Annex A which you will find helpful in identifying your crop diversification requirements.

Other exception

If you have taken control of new land that is more than 50% of what you declared in the previous year, and provided that this land is being cultivated differently to that of the previous year, you may be exempt. You should contact your local area office to clarify your crop diversification requirements.

Can I grow more than two or three crops?

You can grow as many crops as you like, but if you are not exempt and have between 10 and 30 ha of arable land you must have at least two crop types with no one crop occupying more than 75% of the arable land.

As mentioned above, if you have more than 30 ha of arable land then you must have at least three crops with the main crop not occupying more than 75% and no two crops occupying more than 95% of the arable land area. Any additional crops must therefore occupy at least 5% of the arable land area.

These limits are maximum percentages that you must not exceed but you can grow smaller amounts and/or more crops if you wish. For example if you had 100 ha of arable land you could grow 40 ha of spring barley, 30 ha of winter wheat, 20 ha of temporary grass and leave 10 ha as fallow. Fallow can also count towards your EFA requirement (see EFA section).



Helpful tip

If you plan to grow nitrogen fixing crops as part of your crop diversification requirement, these crops can also count towards your EFA requirement. For more information on nitrogen-fixing crops, please see page 23.

Eligible crops for the purposes of crop diversification



For the purposes of crop diversification, a crop is defined in the EU Regulations as any of the following:

- (a) A culture of any of the different genera defined in the botanical classification of crops
- (b) A culture of any of the species in the case of *Brassicaceae*, *Solanaceae* and *Cucurbitaceae*

(c) Land lying fallow

(d) Grass or other herbaceous forage (clovers, lucerne, sainfoin and Forage vetches) on arable land (temporary grass)

Winter and spring crops count as separate crops.

It is anticipated that most crops grown in Scotland will meet the definition of a crop outlined in the EU Regulations. The exceptions to this are permanent grassland and permanent crops which do not count as crops for the purposes of crop diversification.

Permanent crops are non-rotational crops other than permanent grassland that occupy the land for five years or more and yield repeated harvests.

The table at Annex D provides examples of crops which meet the definitions of (a) and (b) above. It should be noted that these are not exhaustive.

If the crop that you are intending to grow is not on the list or you have any queries as to what would be regarded as a separate crop for the purposes of crop diversification, please contact your local area office.

It's important to note that individual crops which fall within a single genus or single species (in the case of *Brassicaceae*, *Solanaceae* and *Cucurbitaceae*) count as only one crop for the purposes of crop diversification. For ease of reference we have grouped crops of like genus or single species into a 'crop family'. If you grow only onions and leeks, these would count as only one crop because they fall within the same genera (*Allium*) noting we have identified these as the 'onion family'.

The end use of the crop has no impact on how it is counted for the purposes of crop diversification. For example, if you grow some winter wheat as wholecrop and some for grain, this counts as one crop (winter wheat). Potatoes will be considered to be a single crop regardless of whether they are being grown for seed or ware markets.

For the purposes of crop diversification land in fallow must not be subject to any agricultural production (see details at section 4.3) throughout May and June.

Please see the list of arable crops to meet the requirements of crop diversification at annex D



Helpful tip

If you grow two fields of spring barley and use them for different purposes such as one for malting barley and one for whole crop silage they are considered as one crop for crop diversification.

4 Ecological Focus Area (EFA)

4.1 What is an Ecological Focus Area?

An Ecological Focus Area is an area of land upon which you carry out agricultural practices that are beneficial for the climate and the environment. The main aim of EFAs is to improve biodiversity.

There are five EFA options that you may use to contribute to your EFA which can be used on their own or in combination to meet the EFA commitment:

- Fallow land
- Buffer strips
- Field margins
- Catch crop / green cover
- Nitrogen-fixing crops (subject to management conditions)

If the EFA requirements apply to you, it means 5% of your declared arable land must be put into one or more of the five types of EFA.



Helpful tip

Land can only be counted once in a claim year as EFA – it cannot be fallow and green crop cover in the same claim year.

Many elements of EFA are complementary to Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC). This means that field margins and buffer strips along water courses can meet both GAEC and EFA requirements and be eligible land for the Basic Payment Scheme.

Please be aware that with effect from 1 January 2015 there will be a GAEC requirement to maintain a two metre uncultivated strip from the middle of all hedges to protect the hedge from damage (i.e. do not plough or apply fertilizer or herbicide within two metres of the centre of a hedge).

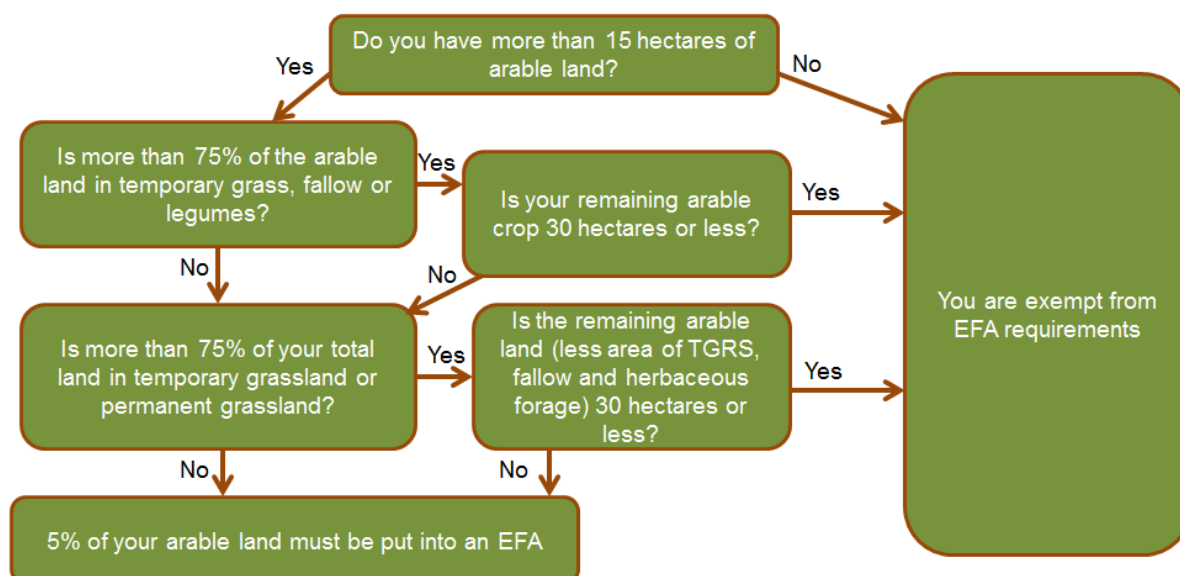
4.2 Do the EFA requirements apply to me?

If 100% of your land is organic, you don't need to read this section as EFA requirements are not applicable to you.

If part of your holding is certified as organic the areas that are not certified as organic need to be considered for EFA requirements.

Where businesses are only partly organic, you may choose not to benefit from the exemption for organic land. Instead you may choose to meet Greening requirements across all your arable land. You may choose to do this as in this situation the organic land/crops would count toward the EFA requirement.

If you're not an organic farmer, use our flowchart to see what applies.



We have also compiled a table at Annex B which you will find helpful in identifying your EFA requirements.

What counts as arable land on my holding?

For the purposes of calculating your EFA requirement the arable land must include all of the land used to grow arable crops, fallow and temporary grassland that you **declare** on your Single Application form (SAF).

All the arable land on your holding must be included in your calculation unless this is declared by another applicant for the Basic Payment Scheme and is included in their crop diversification calculation.

When calculating your arable area you should ensure that you include any land that is fallow, any land in an EFA buffer or field margin (see section 4) and any land in an environmental agreement that was formerly arable that is currently in an agri environment scheme that does not allow production, for example beetle banks, grass margins and water margins where grazing is excluded. These areas may currently be declared as LIEM (LFASS Ineligible Environmental Management) or PEM (Positive Environmental Management).

Please note permanent crops are not included in the calculation of your arable area (please see the glossary at section 6 for a definition of permanent crops).

✓ Helpful tip

If you use temporary grass in 2015 as EFA fallow, this land will retain its arable status for EFA purposes (including your commitment to have 5% of your arable land

subject to EFA) for as long as you continue to use it for EFA fallow even if the grass becomes more than five years old.



Remember – your arable land includes any temporary grassland that you include in a crop rotation. Temporary grassland is grassland that is five years old or less. **If you plough permanent grass and immediately sow a new grass ley, the land will retain its status as permanent grass and does not become temporary grass.**

How much does each of these options contribute to my EFA commitment?

Europe has set out a number of weighting factors for the different types of EFA which will contribute to each EFA option. These factors allow for the fact that certain types of EFA deliver higher levels of environmental benefit. When calculating your EFA obligation you will measure the actual area of the EFA feature and multiply by the appropriate weighting factor to give the equivalent area of EFA.

The weighting factors are:

- Fallow land has a weighting factor of x1 - this means that one hectare of fallow land counts as one hectare towards your calculated EFA commitment.
- Field margins have a weighting factor of x1.5 - this means that one hectare of field margin counts as 1.5 hectares towards your calculated EFA commitment.
- Buffer strips along water courses or a water body have a weighting factor of x1.5 - this means that one hectare of buffer strip along a water course or water body counts as 1.5 hectares towards your calculated EFA commitment.
- Nitrogen-fixing crops have a weighting factor of x0.7 - this means that one hectare of nitrogen fixing crop counts as 0.7 hectares towards your calculated EFA commitment.
- Catch crops / green cover have a weighting factor of x0.3 - this means that one hectare of catch crops counts as 0.3 hectares towards your calculated EFA commitment.

Where can I put my EFA?

You must locate your EFA fallow, catch crop / green cover crops and nitrogen-fixing crops on arable land. Your field margins and buffers can be on or adjacent to arable land noting that for those elements '*adjacent to*' means that the area of the EFA option must be contiguous (touching) to arable land. To this extent it can be entirely permanent grassland but it must be touching arable land along its longest side to qualify.

EFA	Location	Weighting factor
Fallow	On arable land	1
Buffer strips	On or adjacent to arable land	1.5
Field margins	On or adjacent to arable land	1.5
Nitrogen-fixing crops	On arable land	0.7
Catch crop / green cover	On arable land	0.3

The guidance below for buffer strips and field margins provides some practical examples but if you are not sure if your area qualifies please seek advice from your local area office.



To be eligible to support EFA the land must be:

- Used by the claimant
- On a declared agricultural parcel
- On Basic Payment Scheme eligible land.

4.3 Types of EFA

The following sections describe each type of EFA which you will find useful when considering which type you want to use for your business.

4.3.1 EFA fallow land

EFA fallow land is land that has no crop production or grazing on it.

What land is eligible to support EFA fallow?

Your land must:

- Be arable land
- Be on your holding (all the land you claim for on your Single Application Form)
- Be in a declared, eligible, agricultural parcel
- Have been in the preceding year fallow or an arable crop (including temporary grass)
- Be a minimum of 0.01 ha in size
- Be clearly identifiable

Do's and don'ts for EFA fallow

You must:



- Keep a map detailing the location and size.
- Control injurious weeds, by spot herbicide application or hand roguing.

You must not:



- Undertake agricultural production between the dates of 15 January and 15 July. For example, this includes areas of land used in the establishment and growing of a crop, for the storage of materials (irrigation pipes, fuel bowsers, seed boxes), for the turning of machinery or for access (except for occasional use).



- Undertake maintenance such as drainage between the dates of 15 January and 15 July.
- Change the land cover within the fallow period 15 January to 15 July with the exception of establishing a wild flower or wild bird seed mixture.
- Top the fallow between the dates of 15 January and 15 July.
- Apply any fertilizer or herbicide to the area of fallow in the period 15 January to 15 July*.



*You may apply basal fertilizer to aid the establishment of a wild flower mixture or wild bird seed mixture.

You are allowed to:



- Change the ground cover to establish a wild flower or wild bird seed mixture within the fallow area.
- Temporarily store farm yard manure for that field.

Note - these are examples of what you **may** do, you do not have to do this.



Helpful tips for EFA fallow land



- If you choose to put temporary grass in fallow the land retains its arable status for the period it is claimed as EFA fallow even if the grass is more than 5 years old.



- If you are unsure if your use of an area for access or tracking is more than occasional use, you should not use this as an EFA fallow area.
- If you've claimed temporary grass as EFA fallow in one year and decide not to claim this as EFA fallow in the following year, it will revert to being temporary grass if it's five years or younger, or permanent grass if it's older than five years.

4.3.2 Buffer strips

Buffer strips are areas of land that help to benefit water quality and biodiversity.

What land is eligible to support EFA buffer strips?

Your land:

- Must provide a buffer to a water course or water body.

- Must start on or adjacent to arable land in such a way that their long edges are parallel to the water course or body being buffered
- Does not need to meet the water's edge (if it is more than 20 m wide) but will stop at the water's edge
- Must be on a declared, eligible, agricultural parcel
- Must be between 2 and 20 m wide
- Must be a minimum of 0.01 ha in size
- Must be clearly identifiable and distinguishable for the period 1 January to 31 December.

Do's and don'ts for buffer strips

You must:

- Keep a map detailing the location and size
- Control injurious weeds.

You must not:

- Undertake agricultural production from 1 January to 31 December however the Scottish Government has applied an exemption to this rule which allows farmers to cut and remove (including for silage/hay) any grass within the buffer area.
- Graze the buffer in the period 1 January to 31 December.
- Apply any fertilizer or herbicide to the buffer strip except for the spot treatment of injurious weeds.



You are allowed to:

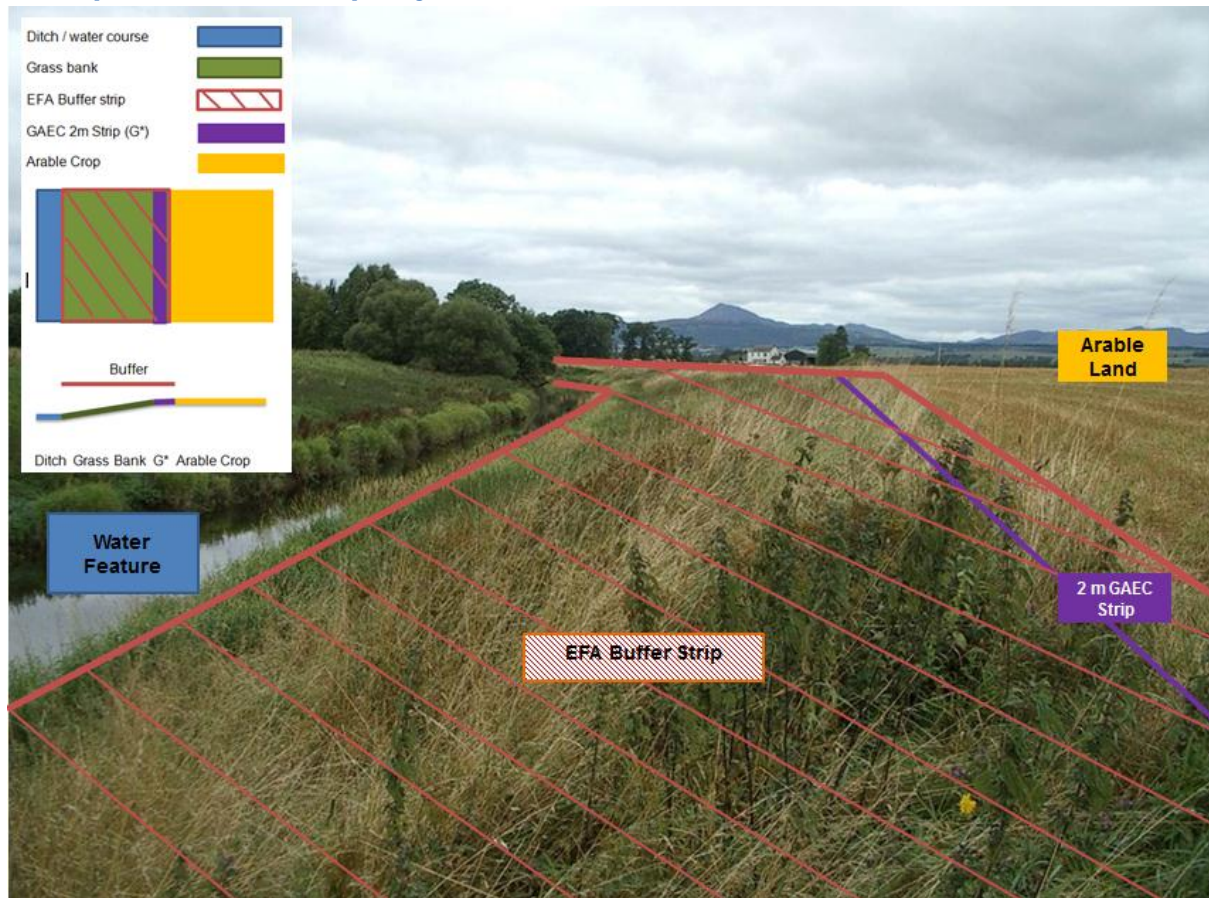
- Change the ground cover to establish a wild flower mixture, wild bird seed mixture or grass sward
- Cut and remove (including for silage/hay) any grass within the buffer area but you should be sympathetic to ground nesting birds by avoiding nesting periods.

Note - these are examples of what you **may** do, you do not have to do this.

Examples of buffer strips

The following sketches provide examples of EFA buffer strips however you should note these are indicative examples to help you when considering your EFA requirements. If you are unsure if your chosen area is eligible to count towards an EFA buffer, please contact your local area office with details and they will provide further guidance.

Example 1 – buffer strip adjacent to arable land

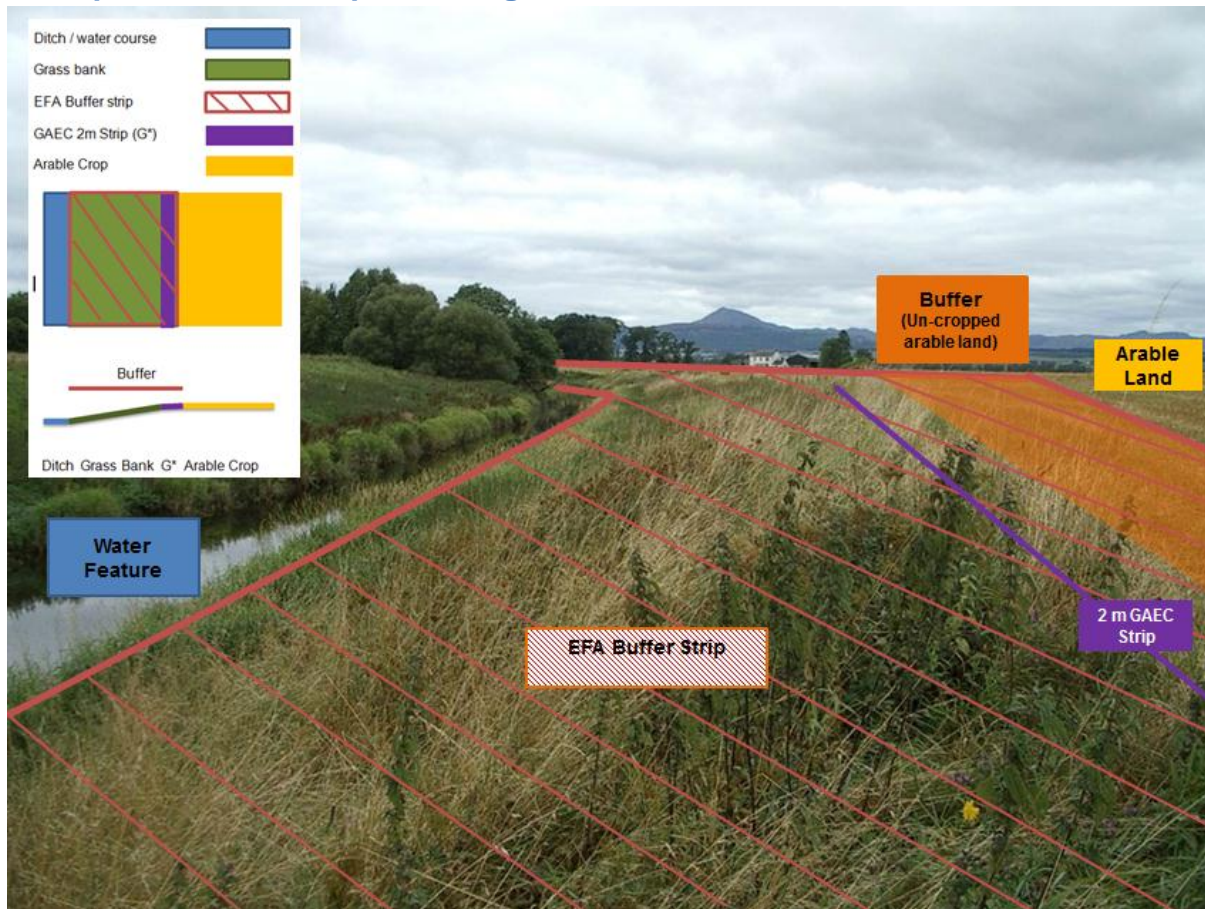


The EFA buffer strip starts at the edge of the arable land and runs parallel with the water course. The buffer strip stops at the edge of the water. The buffer must be between 2 and 20 metres. It does not need to meet the water edge but will stop at the water edge.

There is a requirement to maintain a two metre uncultivated buffer at the 'top' of the bank as part of the Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) but this can be included in the EFA buffer area.

In this example the defined edge of the buffer is the start of the cropped field and the width of the buffer must be between 2 and 20 metres.

Example 2 – buffer strip including arable land



The EFA buffer strip starts on the arable land.

There is a requirement to maintain a two metre uncultivated buffer at the ‘top’ of the bank as part of the Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) but this can be included in the EFA buffer area.

In this instance the farmer has chosen to extend the buffer into the arable field and will leave the area in stubble (natural regeneration) for the duration of the claimed period (at least 1 January to 31 December but the farmer may choose to claim this area for multiple years).

✓ Helpful tips for buffer strips

- The buffer may include eligible landscape features such as hedges (up to three metres wide)
- If the area of the buffer includes land ineligible for your Basic Payment this must be deducted from the area of the buffer claimed.
- Any land claimed as an EFA buffer is considered as ‘arable’ for the purposes of the EFA arable calculation.

4.3.3 Field margins

Field margins provide an important habitat for farmland biodiversity and contribute to wildlife and ecological networks.

What land is eligible to support EFA field margin?

Your land:


- Must be on or adjacent to arable land
- Can be around the margin of a field or split two crops within a field.
- Must be on a declared, eligible, agricultural parcel
- Must comprise BPS eligible land (arable and permanent grassland)
- Must be between 1 and 20 m wide
- Must be a minimum of 0.01 ha in size
- Must be clearly identifiable and distinguishable for the period 1 January to 31 December.

Do's and don'ts for field margins

You must:


- Keep a map of the location detailing the location and size
- Control injurious weeds.

You must not:

- 
- Undertake agricultural production from 1 January to 31 December
 - Graze the margin in the period 1 January to 31 December.
 - Apply any herbicide or fertilizer* to the field margin with the exception for the spot treatment of injurious weeds.

*You may apply basal fertilizer to aid establishment of ground cover

You are allowed to:

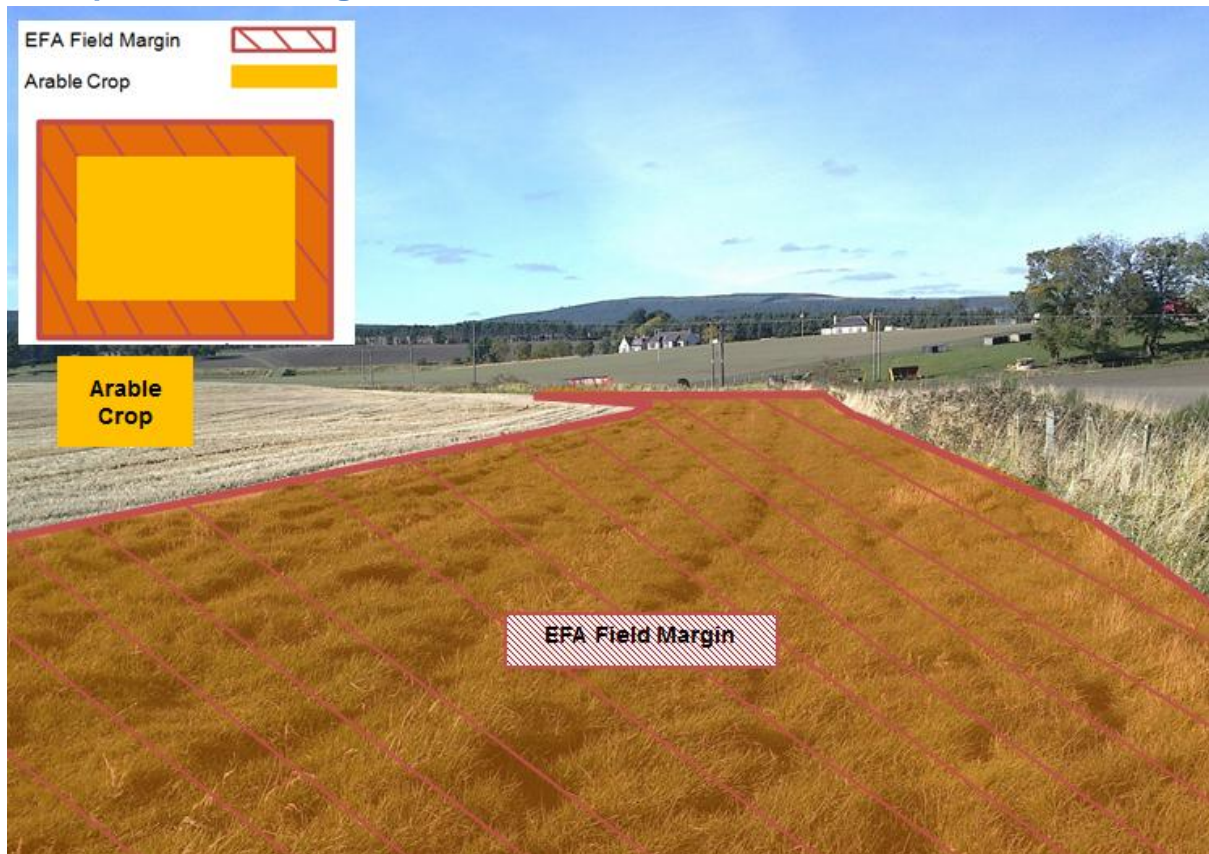
- 
- Change the ground cover to establish a wild flower mixture, wild bird seed mixture or a grass sward
 - Apply basal fertilizer to aid establishment of the ground cover.
 - Top any grass (but not remove the cuttings) after 31 August.

Note - these are examples of what you **may** do, you do not have to do this.

Examples of field margins

The following illustrations provide examples of EFA field margins. Please note - these are indicative examples to help you when considering your EFA requirements. If you are unsure if your chosen area is eligible to count towards an EFA field margin, please contact your local area office with details and they will provide further guidance.

Example 1 – field margin in arable field



Above is an existing grass field margin (possibly a former agri-environment option or a field margin established in grass) running from the fence to the edge of an arable crop. The margin is between 1 and 20 metres wide on arable land and will not be subject to agricultural production for the period 1 January to 31 December.

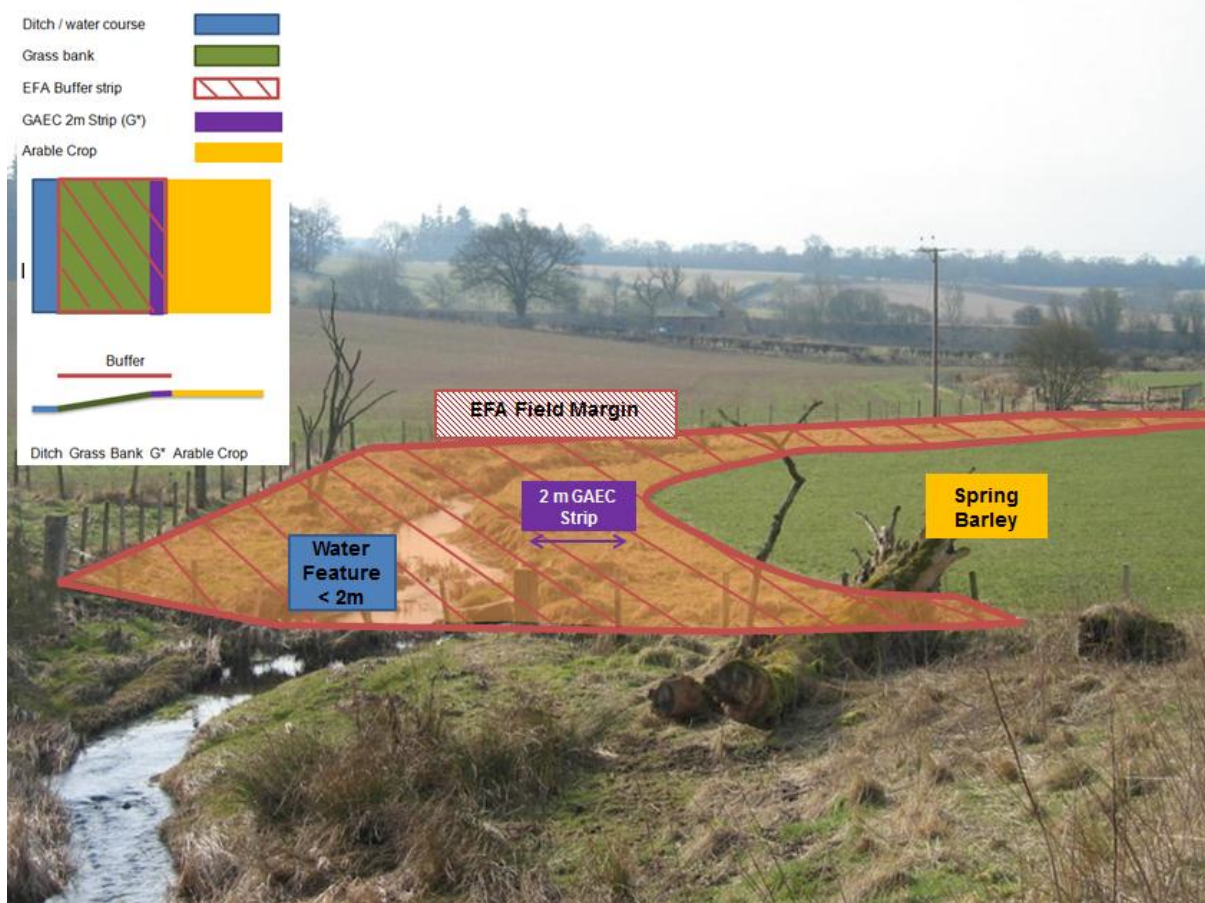
Note – if the land was sown out a number of years previously and is now permanent grassland (i.e. more than five years old) the area is still eligible as it is adjacent to the arable land.

Example 2 – field margin adjacent to hedge including GAEC strip



➡ The example above is a field margin (on which the farmer has chosen to establish grass) running from the hedge to the edge of an arable crop. The margin is between 1 and 20 metres wide on arable land and will not be subject to agricultural production for the period 1 January to 31 December. In this instance there is a GAEC requirement to maintain a two metre uncultivated strip from the centre line of the hedge (as detailed above). The two metre GAEC strip can be included in the EFA field margin.

Example 3 – field margin including GAEC and Basic Payment Scheme eligible landscape feature



In the example above, the farmer has chosen to include an area from the fence to the edge of the cropped land including as part of the EFA field margin the ditch as it is less than two metres wide (a Basic Payment Scheme eligible landscape feature) and the two metre uncultivated GAEC buffer for the water course. The two metre GAEC buffer starts at the top of the bank (not from the edge of the water course).

Note - In this case the farmer must ensure that the margin is maintained for the period 1 January to 31 December in the claimed year. If the crop in the field is grass cropped as silage for example and the farmer wishes to graze the aftermath before 31 December stock must be excluded from the EFA field margin (possibly by a stockproof temporary fence).

✓ Helpful tips for field margins

Hedges and ditches defined as landscape features (hedges up to three metres wide and ditches up to two metres wide) under (GAEC) on field boundaries may be included as part of this field margin.

- If you have existing beetle banks created under a previous Agri-Environment Scheme this can be included in a field margin



- If the area of the EFA field margin includes land ineligible for your Basic Payment this must be deducted from the area of the field margin claimed.
- Any land claimed as an EFA field margin is considered as 'arable' for the purposes of the EFA arable calculation
- If the margin splits two crops these can be the same crop (such as a field of winter barley split in two by a field margin).

4.3.4 Catch crops / green cover

The provision of a catch crop or green cover will provide an enhancement of biodiversity and improvement of soil structure.

What land is eligible to support EFA catch crops / green cover?

Your land must be:

- Arable land
- On your holding – all the land you claim on your Single Application Form
- On a declared, eligible, agricultural parcel
- A minimum of 0.01 ha in size
- Clearly identifiable.

Dos and don'ts for catch crops / green cover

For both catch crop and green cover you must:

- Keep a map detailing the location and size
- Establish the crop between 1 March and 1 October

For catch crop only:



- The main crop will be under sown with a recognised grass seed mixture containing Perennial rye grass and / or an Italian rye grass as part of the mix.
- It must be established between 1 March and 1 August.

For green crop cover only:

- The green crop cover must be a mixture of two or more of the following crops:
 - Rye
 - Vetch
 - Phacelia
 - Barley
 - Mustard
 - Oats
 - Alfalfa
 - Triticale

You must not:

- plough and sow any catch crop / green cover to a winter crop in the autumn **(prior to 31 December)** of the year that it is claimed as an EFA.

You are allowed to:

- Graze the catch crop after harvest of the main crop.
- Retain the green crop cover until later in the spring to provide winter cover.

Note - this is an example of what you **may** do, you do not have to do this.



Helpful tips for catch crop / green cover

In practical terms the only catch crop you can grow will be a cereal nurse crop with under sown grass as the catch crop. The remaining crops can be grown as mixture for a green crop cover which will be ploughed in as a soil conditioner.

4.3.5 Nitrogen-fixing crops

These are plants that contain symbiotic bacteria called *Rhizobia* within the nodules of their root systems, producing nitrogen compounds that help the plant to grow and compete with other plants. When the plant dies, the fixed nitrogen is released; making it available to other plants and this helps to fertilize the soil.

What land is eligible to support EFA nitrogen-fixing crops?

Your land must be:

- Arable land
- On your holding - all of the land you claim on your Single Application Form
- On a declared, eligible, agricultural parcel
- A minimum of 0.01 ha in size
- Clearly identifiable.

Do's and don'ts for nitrogen-fixing crops

You must:

- Keep a map detailing the location and size
- Ensure that nitrogen-fixing crops on your EFA area are associated with an EFA field margin where they are adjacent to the edge of a field. The field margin must meet the EFA field margin rules (and be claimed as EFA). For example it must be 1 - 20 m wide, with no agricultural production and may also count towards your EFA requirement
- You must grow one of the following nitrogen-fixing crops:
 - Alfalfa
 - Beans (including Faba beans)
 - Birdsfoot trefoil

- Chickpea
- Clover
- Lentil
- Lupin
- Pea
- Vetch



You may also grow a mixture of nitrogen fixing crops from the above list.

You must not:

- Harvest the crop before 1 August in order to protect ground nesting birds.



Helpful tips for nitrogen-fixing crops

- The associated EFA margin must meet the EFA margin rules and be claimed as EFA. If you wish to graze the aftermath of the nitrogen-fixing crop livestock must be excluded from the field margin for the period 1 January to 31 December by stock proof fencing.
- From 2016 there will be an additional requirement to ensure that there are at least two different nitrogen-fixing crops on your EFA area to extend the flowering period for pollinators. The main nitrogen-fixing crop should not exceed 75% of the total area of nitrogen fixing crops declared as EFA.



General helpful tips for all EFA

- If you choose to claim an EFA buffer or EFA field margin on permanent grassland, open grazed woodland or rough grazing – they must be adjacent to arable land. You must declare this land as Permanent Cover (PC) on your Single Application Form (SAF). This Permanent Cover will be considered as arable land when calculating your total area of arable land for your Greening requirements including the area of EFA.
- If you wish to undertake multiple EFA options in one field you can do this as long as you meet all the eligibility requirements of each and you are able to distinguish the location and extent of each option. In a practical example, this means you could have an area of fallow surrounded by a field margin.
- The land can only count once as an EFA so as detailed above you may have different EFA options in the same field the land can however only contribute to your EFA commitment once.
- There is no upper limit to the area you can manage and declare as EFA. So if you have a commitment of five ha you can manage and declare above this figure, if you wish.





- For any area of EFA buffer strip or field margin that is sited on permanent grassland then your EFA requirement is increased by 5% of the area of permanent grassland included as EFA.
- **Land managed for EFA as field margins, fallow and buffer strips are not eligible for LFASS payments.**
- If you wish to include areas in your EFA that are currently part of an Agri-environment Scheme you can do this however:
 - You must ensure that the management of the two schemes are compatible (noting some Agri-environment Schemes require land to be grazed which would not be compatible with EFA field margins).
 - The payment you receive for your Agri-environment Scheme may be reduced to reflect the greening payment you receive for your EFA field margin.
 - There may be delays in the payment of your Basic Payment as both schemes will require to be validated.

5. Case studies

Here are some examples of different types of farm businesses in Scotland and how the Greening requirements affect them. This might help you when considering your Greening requirements.

Example 1 - arable farm

Jack Smith is an arable farmer with 100 ha of cropped land (arable) and 50 ha of permanent grassland.

He needs to consider each of the three greening elements:

Permanent grassland – There are 50 ha of permanent grassland on the unit but none are designated as Environmentally Sensitive Grassland ([see page 5](#)) Jack's farm is already “green” as far as the permanent grassland requirements are concerned.

Crop diversification – Jack used the table we provided for crop diversification (Annex A) and confirmed that to meet the Greening crop diversification requirement, three separate crops must be grown.

He chooses to meet this requirement with the following crops:

- 32 ha winter wheat – 32%
- 28 ha winter barley – 28%
- 21 ha winter oilseed rape – 21%
- 8 ha field beans – 8%
- 6 ha seed potatoes – 6%
- 5 ha fallow – 5%

Total = 100%

There are six crops for the purposes of crop diversification, the main crop is not more than 75% of the arable area and the two main crops together are not more than 95% of the arable land.

EFA – Using the table provided for EFA (Annex B), he also confirmed that to meet the EFA requirement at least five ha (100 ha of arable land x 5% = 5 ha) must be managed as EFA.

Jack's farm meets its EFA requirement by having five ha of fallow land. However if he decided not to meet the EFA fallow prescription he could meet his EFA obligation as follows:

- 3.4 ha of field margin or buffer strip along water courses (3.4 ha x 1.5 = 5.1 ha EFA) **or**
- 7.2 ha of nitrogen fixing crops (7.2 ha x 0.7 = 5.04 ha EFA) **or**
- 17 ha of catch crops (17 ha x 0.3 = 5.1 ha EFA) **or**
- A combination of these to meet the required EFA commitment.

Note if Jack includes any area of EFA buffer strip or field margin that are sited on permanent grassland then his EFA requirement is increased by 5% of the area of permanent grassland included as EFA.

Example 2 – dairy farm

Neil Groves is a dairy farmer with 100 ha of which 20 ha is arable crop, 80 ha is temporary grass.

Neil needs to consider each of the three greening elements:

Permanent grassland – There is no permanent grassland on the unit, Neil's farm is exempt from the permanent grassland requirement.

Crop diversification – Neil looked at our table on crop diversification (Annex A) and confirmed that as 75% of the holding is temporary or permanent grassland there is no requirement to grow multiple crops.

EFA – Neil used the table provided on EFA (Annex B) and confirmed that as 75% of the holding is temporary grass and as he has less than 30 ha of arable crop, he is exempt from any EFA requirements.

Example 3 – mixed upland farm

Hilary Chiles is a mixed upland farmer with 120 ha of which 85 ha is arable land (including 40 ha of temporary grass) and 35 ha of permanent grassland including two designated sites of Environmentally Sensitive Grassland.

Hilary needs to consider each of the three greening elements:

Permanent grassland – There are 35 ha of permanent grassland on the unit with two areas designated as Environmentally Sensitive Grassland ([see page 5](#)). Hilary must ensure that the designated grassland is not converted (ploughed or cultivated) or improved. She is familiar with the land as it is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which has been notified and regularly reviewed by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

Crop diversification – Hilary used our table on crop diversification (Annex A) and confirmed that at least three crops must be grown.

She chooses to meet this requirement with the following crops:

- 15 ha spring barley, under sown with grass – 17.6%
- 20 ha winter barley – 23.5%
- 40 ha of temporary grass – 47.1%
- 10 Ha of turnips – 11.8%

Total = 100%

Two main crops total (23.5% + 47.1%) = 70.6%

There are four crops for the purposes of crop diversification. The main crop is not more than 75% of the arable area and the two main crops together are not more than 95% of the arable land.

EFA – Hilary checked our table on EFA (Annex B) and confirmed that to meet the EFA requirement at least 4.25 hectares (85 hectares of arable land x 5% = 4.25 hectares) must be managed as EFA.

Hilary's farm could meet its EFA requirement by having at least:

- 4.25 ha of fallow land (4.25 ha x 1 = 4.25 ha EFA) **or**
- 2.84 ha of field margin or buffer strip along water courses (2.84 ha x 1.5 = 4.26 ha EFA) **or**
- 7.2 ha of nitrogen fixing crops (7.2 ha x 0.7 = 5.04 ha EFA) **or**
- 14.17 ha of catch crops (14.17 ha x 0.3 = 4.25 ha EFA) **or**
- A combination of these to meet the required EFA commitment.

Example 4 – hill farm

David Logan is a hill farmer with 200 hectares of which 5 ha is forage rape, 25 ha temporary grass and 170 ha permanent pasture.

David needs to consider each of the three greening elements:

Permanent Grassland – There are 170 ha of permanent grassland on the unit but none are designated as Environmentally Sensitive Grassland. David’s farm is already “green” as far as permanent grassland requirements are concerned

Crop diversification – David looked at our table on crop diversification (Annex A) and confirmed that as more than 75% of the holding is grassland (temporary grass) or herbaceous forage (permanent grassland) there is no requirement to grow multiple crops.

EFA – David used our table on EFA (Annex B) and confirmed that as more than 75% of the holding is grassland (temporary grass) or herbaceous forage (permanent grassland) there is no requirement to grow multiple crops.

6. Glossary of terms

Arable land

Arable land means the area declared by the business which is land cultivated for crop production, including areas that are temporary grassland (grass up to five years old following an arable or break crop). It also includes areas of land which are available for crop production but which are lying fallow. It does not include areas under permanent crops (see below). The initial 100% arable area figure, used for the crop diversification calculation, will be the area of determined arable land which is the arable land declared across the business following validation/inspection.



If you choose to claim an EFA buffer or field margin on permanent grassland, open grazed woodland or rough grazing; they must be adjacent to arable land. You must declare this land as Permanent Cover (PC) on your Single Application Form (SAF). This Permanent Cover will be considered as arable land when calculating your total area of arable land for your Greening requirements including the area of EFA.

If you have arable land registered for organic production you may choose not to include this as arable land.

Arable crops

Land with arable crops including temporary grass and land lying fallow which is claimed by the business. It does not include arable land used for organic production.

Grass in a long rotation

Areas of grass which are more than five years old, including those that have been reseeded as grass without a break crop (arable or catch crop), are considered to be permanent grass and therefore do not count as arable area.

Agricultural area

Agricultural area means any area taken up by arable land, permanent grassland or permanent crops.

Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC)

Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) refers to a set of European Union standards which are aimed at sustainable agriculture. Keeping land in good agricultural and environmental conditions is related to issues such as soil erosion, maintaining the total area of grassland and soil organic matter.

Many elements of EFA are complementary to GAEC. This means that field margins and buffer strips along water courses can count for both GAEC and EFA and as eligible land for the Basic Payment Scheme.

Hedge

A hedge means any hedge which has a length of at least 20 metres or a length of less than 20 metres where it meets another hedge at each end. Any gap of less than 20 metres is treated as being part of the hedge.

Temporary grassland

Temporary grassland is land that has been in grass or other herbaceous forage for five years or less.

How to claim your new grassland

There are three traditional ways of establishing a temporary grassland sward:

1. Spring sown (prior to 15 May). This is the main crop for that year and will be temporary grass on the Single Application Form
2. Undersown grass where the main cereal nurse crop will be claimed on the Single Application Form
3. Autumn sown grass where the previous arable crop will be entered on the Single Application Form.

If the land remains in grass for a number of years following establishment, it should be entered on the Single Application Form as follows.

	SAF	SAF	SAF	SAF	SAF	SAF	SAF
Example 1	TGRS	TGRS	TGRS	TGRS	TGRS	PGRS	PGRS
Example 2	Cereal	TGRS	TGRS	TGRS	TGRS	TGRS	PGRS
Example 3	Cereal	TGRS	TGRS	TGRS	TGRS	TGRS	PGRS

Your arable land includes any temporary grassland in your crop rotation. Temporary grassland is grass that is five years or less.

Permanent grassland

Permanent grassland (or permanent pasture) means land used to grow grasses or other herbaceous forage (such as clover) naturally (self-seeded, including rough grazing) or through cultivation (sown) and that has not been included in the crop rotation of the holding for five years or more.



Helpful tip – You should be aware that this definition includes areas of rough grazing.

It may include other species such as shrubs and/or trees which can be grazed provided that the grasses and other herbaceous forage remain predominant. Alternatively, where Member States so decide, land which can be grazed and which forms part of established local practices where grasses and other herbaceous forage are traditionally not predominant in grazing areas and can be classed as permanent grassland.

Permanent crops

Means non rotational crops other than permanent grassland and permanent pasture (including rough grazing) that occupy the land for five years or more and yield repeated harvests, including nurseries and short rotation coppice.

Organic land

Land that is in conversion or maintenance and has been certified by a recognised certifying body.

Cross-border farming

Every farm business needs to be sure that it is meeting relevant Greening requirements and this includes businesses that have farms in different parts of the UK.

A cross-border business would need to meet the crop diversification requirement across the business as a whole. A cross-border business could grow a mixture of crops on each of its farms no matter where they are located or, the business could grow different crops in different parts of the UK. For example, as long as the business overall meets the crop diversification requirement, it could choose to grow spring barley in Scotland, potatoes in England and temporary grass in Wales.

A cross-border farming business would also need to meet its EFA requirement across the business as a whole. This means that the requirement could be met in just one part of the UK. Where the EFA requirement is delivered in different parts of the UK, the measures will need to meet the conditions set in the country in which the EFA is located i.e. meet English conditions for EFA in England and meet Scottish conditions for EFA in Scotland.

7. Annexes

Annex A

You will find these tables useful to determine what Greening requirements apply specifically to you.

Crop diversification

Permanent grassland	Arable Land	>75% TGRS, fallow and herbaceous forage	>75% of Business is grassland and herbaceous forage	Area of arable land less area of TGRS, fallow and herbaceous forage	Crop diversification
None	<10	Y or N	NA		Exempt
None	$\geq 10 \leq 30$	Y	NA		Exempt
None	$\geq 10 \leq 30$	N	NA		2 crop
None	>30	Y	NA	≤ 30	Exempt
None	>30	N	NA	≤ 30	3 crop
None	>30	Y	NA	>30	3 crop
None	>30	N	NA	>30	3 crop
Yes	<10	Y or N	Y or N		Exempt
Yes	$\geq 10 \leq 30$	Y	Y or N		Exempt
Yes	$\geq 10 \leq 30$	N	Y		Exempt
Yes	$\geq 10 \leq 30$	N	N		2 crop
Yes	>30	Y	Y or N	≤ 30	Exempt
Yes	>30	N	Y	≤ 30	Exempt
Yes	>30	N	N	≤ 30	3 crop
Yes	>30	Y or N	Y or N	>30	3 crop

Symbol	Meaning
TGRS	Temporary grassland
>	Greater than
\geq	Greater than or equal to
<	Less than
\leq	Less than or equal to

Annex B

Ecological Focus Area (EFA)

Permanent grassland	Arable Land	>75% TGRS, fallow, herbaceous forage or leguminous crops	>75% of Business is grassland and herbaceous forage	arable land less area of TGRS, fallow and herbaceous forage	EFA
None	≤ 15	Y or N	NA		Exempt
None	> 15 ≤ 30	Y	NA		Exempt
None	> 15 ≤ 30	N	NA		EFA
None	> 30	Y	NA	≤ 30	Exempt
None	> 30	N	NA	≤ 30	EFA
None	> 30	Y or N	NA	> 30	EFA
Yes	≤ 15	Y or N	Y or N		Exempt
Yes	> 15 ≤ 30	Y	Y or N		Exempt
Yes	> 15 ≤ 30	N	Y		Exempt
Yes	> 15 ≤ 30	N	N		EFA
Yes	> 30	Y	Y or N	≤ 30	Exempt
Yes	> 30	N	Y	≤ 30	Exempt
Yes	> 30	N	N	≤ 30	EFA
Yes	> 30	Y or N	Y or N	> 30	EFA

Symbol	Meaning
TGRS	Temporary grassland
>	Greater than
<	Less than
≤	Less than or equal to

Annex C

Examples of land let out to identify the arable area on the holding for the purposes of calculating the EFA and Crop diversification requirements

Example 1 – land let out for agricultural use

Farmer Iain Blair lets a field of temporary grass (TGRS) to farmer John Smith who claims the land for his Basic Payment Scheme. In this instance the land is declared by farmer Iain Blair as land let out (Greening exempt) and the land is not included in his Greening requirements. Farmer John Smith declares and claims the field for TGRS (arable land) and this counts towards his Greening requirement. The Scottish Government's Rural Payments and Inspections Division (RPID) validate each claim by cross referencing the parcel to each claim to ensure that the field has been claimed by farmer John Smith and the Greening commitment/exemption for this field is allocated correctly.

Example 2 – Land let out for non-agricultural use

Farmer Iain Blair lets out a field of temporary grass (TGRS) to a neighbour for the grazing of a horse. The field is not claimed by the neighbour who has no farming interests. This field is declared by farmer Iain Blair as TGRS and the arable area of the field contributes to the greening commitments including both crop diversification and EFA for Iain Blair's business.

Annex D

List of arable crops to meet the requirements of crop diversification

Crop description	Crop code	Genus	Crop family
LEEK	LEEK	allium	Onion
ONIONS	ONI	allium	Onion
GARLIC	GAR	allium	Onion
CELERY	CEL	apium	n/a
ASPARAGUS	ASPG	asparagus	n/a
SPRING OATS	SO	avena	n/a
WINTER OATS	WO	avena	n/a
PHACELIA	PHA	baraginaceae phacelia	n/a
ENERGY BEET	ENG-B	beta vulgaris	Beets
FODDER BEET	OCS-B	beta vulgaris	Beets
SHOPPING SWEDES	SWS	brassica napus	Spring oilseed and swedes
SPRING OILSEED RAPE	SOSR	brassica napus	Spring oilseed and swedes
WINTER OILSEED RAPE	WOSR	brassica napus	n/a
SWEDES FOR STOCK FEED	SSF	brassica napus	Spring oilseed and swedes
BRUSSELS SPROUTS	BSP	brassica oleracea	Cabbage family
CABBAGES AND SAVOYS	CABB	brassica oleracea	Cabbage family
CALABRESE	CALA	brassica oleracea	Cabbage family
CAULIFLOWERS	CAUL	brassica oleracea	Cabbage family
KALE AND CABBAGES FOR STOCK FEED	OCS-K	brassica oleracea	Cabbage family
SHOPPING TURNIPS	STS	brassica rapa	Turnip family
MIXED BRASSICA FOR STOCK FEED	MBSF	brassica rapa	Turnip family
RAPE FOR STOCK FEED	RAST	brassica rapa	Turnip family
TURNIPS FOR STOCK FEED	TSF	brassica rapa	Turnip family
MUSTARD	MU	brassica sinapis/juncea	n/a
HEMP	HS	cannabis	n/a
CHICKPEA	CHP	cicer	n/a
PUMPKIN	PUM	cucurbita	n/a
ARTICHOKES	ARTC	cynara	n/a
CARROTS	CARR	daucus	n/a
BUCKWHEAT	BW	fagopyrum	n/a
STRAWBERRIES (Grown in open soil under temporary walk-in structures)	STRB-POLY	fragaria	Strawberries
STRAWBERRIES (Grown in the open)	STRB-OPEN	fragaria	Strawberries
SUNFLOWERS	SUN	helianthus	n/a
SPRING BARLEY	SB	hordeum	n/a
WINTER BARLEY	WB	hordeum	n/a
LETTUCE	LETT	lactuca	n/a
LENTIL	LEN	lens	n/a
FIBRE FLAX	FFS	linum	Flax & Linseed
LINSEED	LIN	linum	Flax & Linseed
BIRDSFOOT TREFOIL	BFT	lotus	n/a

Crop description	Crop code	Genus	Crop family
SWEET LUPINS	SL	lupinus	n/a
ALFALFA	ALF	medicago	n/a
MILLET	MIL	panicum	n/a
PARSNIPS	PAR	pastinaca	n/a
CANARY SEED	CANS	phalaris	n/a
WINTER PEAS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	WPEAS	pisum	Winter peas
SPRING PEAS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	SPEAS	pisum	Spring peas
WINTER PROTEIN PEAS	WPP	pisum	Winter peas
SPRING PROTEIN PEAS	SPP	pisum	Spring peas
RYE	RYE	secale	n/a
SEED POTATOES	SPOT	solanum	Potato family
WARE POTATOES	WPOT	solanum	Potato family
SORGHUM	SOR	sorghum	n/a
CLOVER	CLO	trifolium	n/a
TRITICALE	TRIT	triticosecale	n/a
SPRING WHEAT	SW	triticum	n/a
WINTER WHEAT	WW	triticum	n/a
WINTER BEANS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	WBEAN	vicia	Winter beans
SPRING BEANS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION	SBEAN	vicia	Spring beans & vetch
WINTER FIELD BEANS	WFB	vicia	Winter beans
SPRING FIELD BEANS	SFB	vicia	Spring beans & vetch
VETCH	VET	vicia	Spring beans & vetch
FORAGE MAIZE	MAIZ	zea	n/a
AROMATIC, MEDICINAL AND CULINARY PLANTS	AMCP	n/a	n/a
BEDDING AND POT PLANTS	BPP	n/a	n/a
BULBS/FLOWERS	BFLO	n/a	n/a
EX – STRUCTURAL SET-ASIDE	EX-SS	n/a	n/a
UNCROPPED ARABLE LAND	UCAA	n/a	Fallow
FALLOW	FALW	n/a	Fallow
FALLOW Land (that has been fallow for over 5 years)	FALW-5	n/a	Fallow
FALLOW CROP DIVERSIFICATION	FALWCD	n/a	Fallow
GREEN COVER MIXTURES	GCM	n/a	n/a
OTHER SOFT FRUIT	OSFRT	n/a	n/a
OTHER VEGETABLES	OVEG	n/a	n/a

Crop description	Crop code	Genus	Crop family
TURF PRODUCTION	TURF	n/a	n/a
WHOLE CROP CEREALS	WCC	n/a	n/a
WILD BIRD SEED	WBS	n/a	n/a
ARABLE SILAGE FOR STOCK FEED	ASSF	n/a	n/a
ROTATIONAL GRASS YEAR 1	TGRS1	n/a	Temporary Grass
ROTATIONAL GRASS YEAR 2	TGRS2	n/a	Temporary Grass
ROTATIONAL GRASS YEAR 3	TGRS3	n/a	Temporary Grass
ROTATIONAL GRASS YEAR 4	TGRS4	n/a	Temporary Grass
ROTATIONAL GRASS YEAR 5	TGRS5	n/a	Temporary Grass
LFASS INELIGIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT - Arable	LIEM - A	n/a	n/a
WILD FLOWER MIX	WFM	n/a	n/a



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