

Cropped Machair

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Aim

The aim of this option is to maintain a traditional agricultural practice that benefits a wide range of flowers, farmland birds and important insects such as bumblebees.

A mixture of arable cropping followed by fallow on machair allows a variety of wild flowers to develop and set seed. These provide food and habitat for insects and birds.

Eligibility

Ploughable machair is eligible.

Under-sown crops are not eligible.

You should not include areas of land covering rocks, scree, water, dense bracken etc. We will check this using the same approach we use to check land for the Basic Payment Scheme.

[Assessing your land eligibility](#)

Spatial targeting



[Map of target area – Cropped Machair \(PDF, Size: 701.9 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/7_Cropped_Machair.pdf This option is available within the target area shown on this map.

You can check if this option is available on your holding [here](#).

Application requirements

You must prepare and submit for approval a cropped machair management plan. The plan must include a map showing the location(s) of the machair to be managed. The plan must also detail your proposed rotation over the course of your contract.



[Cropped Machair Management Plan \(MS Word, Size: 134.0 kB\)](#)

doc_external_url: <https://www.ruralpayments.org/media/resources/Cropped-Machair-Management-Plan-AECS-April-2015.docx> [Plan template]

Management requirements

- each year, you must establish a spring arable crop on part of the eligible land
- the same area must not be cropped for more than two consecutive years
- you must undertake all cultivation and establishment work, including rolling, before 15 May
- do not harvest the crop before 1 September
- you must harvest in a wildlife-friendly manner
- following harvest (this will be the second harvest if you are cropping for two consecutive years) you must leave this area fallow for two or three years (the definition of fallow is that the area must be allowed to regenerate naturally and not be cultivated or reseeded)

- do not spray, except for the spot-treatment of injurious weeds (requires prior written notification) or treatment of invasive species (requires prior written approval)

Payment

You can claim £239.76 per hectare per year.

You will only be paid for the area sown to an arable crop or left fallow. Areas remaining in fallow following completion of a previous contract are eligible for up to two three years payment as fallow.

There is a separate payment to support the use of seaweed as a fertiliser:

- [Use of Seaweed as a Fertiliser on Cropped Machair](#)

Inspections

The inspectors will check:

- each year, you have established a spring arable crop on part of the eligible land
- the same area has not been cropped for more than two consecutive years
- you have undertaken all cultivation and establishment work, including rolling, before 15 May
- you have not harvested the crop before 1 September
- you have harvested in a wildlife-friendly manner
- following harvest (this will be the second harvest if you are cropping for two consecutive years) you have left this area fallow for two or three years
- you have not sprayed, unless with prior written notification or approval as appropriate

Additional guidance

[Supporting guidance is available for this option.](#)