

Introduction and updates for 2016

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This guidance provides details on the three Greening elements of the Common Agricultural Policy and should be read in conjunction with the guidance for the Basic Payment Scheme and Cross Compliance.

- [Basic Payment Scheme](#)
- [Cross Compliance](#)

Please ensure that you read all the relevant elements of this updated 2016 guidance (including the annexes) if you are intending to apply under the Basic Payment Scheme. There have been a number of changes to the Greening requirements compared to 2015 that fall into two categories:

- the introduction of an Equivalence scheme
- scheme changes to the existing Greening requirements

The Greening Equivalence Scheme

The Scottish Government has applied to the European Commission for approval to implement a Greening Equivalence Scheme in Scotland from 2016. If approved (and subject to any amendments made by the Commission) it is proposed that the scheme will contain all the existing requirements, with the exception of two specific additional elements:

- a voluntary alternative Crop Diversification requirement
- an additional compulsory requirement for the inclusion of a Nutrient plan for permanent grassland

Details of the Scottish Government Equivalence scheme proposals can be found in Annex K. This guidance will be updated if the Equivalence scheme is approved and the Scottish Government confirms its intention to implement the scheme in 2016.

Scheme and other changes for 2016

- changes to the rules on Ecological Focus Areas (EFA) nitrogen fixing crops, including changes to the associated EFA field margin requirements. See Ecological Focus Areas
- EFA field margins and EFA buffer strips no longer have to be adjacent to arable land but within five metres of arable land
- if you have EFA features, you are required to submit a map detailing the location and size of each EFA feature with your 2016 Single Application Form. See Annex J

Wording on other elements has been enhanced to provide further clarity to the existing rules.

In this guidance:

- Greening overview
- Permanent grassland
- Crop diversification
- Ecological Focus Areas
- Case studies
- Glossary and abbreviations
- Annexes