

PRESS RELEASE



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10 February 2010

NVZs and Cross Compliance Checks

Now that the area of the country covered by nitrate vulnerable zones has significantly increased farmers should be aware that they may receive cross compliance checks in respect of their Single Payment Scheme not only from the RPA but also from the Environment Agency. This latter body has been able to carry out checks since the scheme's inception, but the scope of these checks is going to become much more far reaching given the changes in the NVZ legislation.

The RPA and the EA have issued detailed guidance on the records that need to be kept and also the start date for such record keeping. The situation is slightly complicated insofar as the rules and start dates are different for the new NVZs compared to existing areas that were already in the NVZ.

Andrew Bays of BCM comments: "We have already started to see checks being carried out by the Environment Agency under this new legislation. The scheme guidance, although quite detailed, is clear. There is a burden on farmers to keep regular records of activities such as applying nitrogen fertiliser, applying manure and importing and exporting farmyard manure. Most of the detail required will be in the farmer's records already, it is just a question of making sure that it gets carried forward into a record specifically for SPS and NVZ purposes. Farmers should make sure that they are carrying out the correct record keeping. As part of this exercise, BCM have employed the services of an external consultant who can do a dummy compliance check for clients to make sure that their record keeping is as required. He can also give further advice as to how a record keeping process can be implemented that will satisfy the requirements.

For further details please contact Andrew Bays on 01962 763900.

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