

Continuous Spring Cereal Cropping

This measure incentivises continuous spring cereal cropping on a block of arable land for a period of between 3 to 5 years. Spring crops grown in this scheme must be preceded by an over winter cover crop. Spring crops are lower input. This measure should be used on land that is suitable for spring cropping.

Payment rate:

An annual payment for the duration of the scheme of:

- £250/ha/year for fields in the High Priority Area
- £200/ha/year for fields located in the Wider Safeguard Zone

Length of scheme

- Fields in this scheme are fixed for the term of the agreement.
- This scheme is for a minimum of 3 years, the maximum length of the scheme is subject to agreement with your Wessex Water catchment adviser.

Benefits

- Reduced fertiliser costs
- Reduced farm N leaching
- Used in conjunction with cover crops – utilising residual N from previous crop
- Potentially improved grass weed control

Eligible areas

- This measure is available to all arable fields in the Shapwick and Sturminster Marshall Safeguard Zone.
- Up to 30ha per farm business can be entered into this scheme

Non-eligible areas

- Fields outside of the Safeguard Zone catchment area are not eligible
- Low input cereal options covered by countryside stewardship or other schemes

Requirements

Eligible crops:

- Spring cereals included in this measure are Spring Barley, Spring Wheat, and Spring Oats.
- Other spring crops may be considered, please speak with your catchment adviser

Other field management:

- We do not stipulate cultivation and drilling methods.
- The crop may be managed as normal with standard herbicides, fungicides, and PGRs.

Fertiliser rates:

- Nitrogen release from the preceding cover crop must be considered when nutrient planning to ensure there is no over application or excess availability of N in the soil
- A well-established cover crop could potentially supply enough nitrogen to reduce fertiliser by 25-30kgN/ha.

Overwinter cover:

- Under this scheme we stipulate that a cover crop must be grown ahead of the spring crop.
- The over winter cover crop may be funded through Wessex Water – please see separate scheme information, or another scheme such as SFI.

Destruction of cover crop:

- From the 15th January and as close to agronomically possible to the drilling of the spring cereal.

Application process

- Please fill out the expression of interest form, stating an approximate area of land you wish to enter into the scheme.
- Upon submitting the expression of interest form, your Catchment Adviser will be in contact with you to discuss the scheme further.
- Once the scheme and area is agreed a formal contract will be drawn up between the farmer and Wessex Water.

Record keeping, validation and data collection

- In entering the scheme, you are agreeing to allow a Wessex Water catchment adviser to visit land in a scheme for visual inspection before, during and after the implementation of the scheme.
- In entering the scheme a Wessex Water catchment adviser may request farm records from you demonstrating fertiliser rates, the change in cropping, stocking rates etc.
- In entering the scheme Wessex Water may carry out soil sampling, porous pots, grain samples and crop tissue samples for nutrient analysis. Any data collected will be shared with the farmer. Wessex Water will store data on an internal Wessex Water database and may be used to contribute to a larger aggregated and anonymised data set.

Payment terms

- Payment will be made annually.
- To claim payment for the scheme your Wessex Water adviser will request you to send an invoice to be sent directly to them.
- Wessex Water payment terms are end of the month plus 30 days
- The invoice should be submitted between the 1st – 31st January to guarantee payment by 31st March.
- You may be required by the Wessex Water payments team to be registered as “suppliers” to Wessex Water Services Limited, please ensure paperwork is filled out and returned.