

# Intensive Farming Newsletter

March 2017

Issue 19

## Welcome to the Environmental Permitting Regulations (EPR) update newsletter for operators of intensive pig and poultry farms.

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## New requirements will trigger a permit review

The new Best Available Techniques (BAT) Reference Document (BREF) for the Intensive rearing of pigs and poultry (IRPP) was published on the 21st February 2017. There is now a separate BAT Conclusions document which sets out the standards that permitted farms will have to meet.

The BAT Conclusions document can be downloaded from the European IPPC Bureau website:

<http://eippcb.jrc.ec.europa.eu/reference/irpp.html>

During the next few months, the Bureau will implement some final editing and formatting to the full BREF document which is expected to be published on their website before the summer of 2017. A final draft version of the full BREF is available to download from the link above (please note that the document is 18MB).

We've been working closely with the NFU, AHDB Pork, BPC, NPA and BEIC to provide information to the Bureau during the drafting stages and we've co-ordinated the UK position with our regulatory colleagues in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Now the BAT Conclusions are published, we must review permits within 4 years to ensure that operators can meet the new standards.

There are some new requirements for permit holders. The conclusions include BAT Associated Emission Levels for ammonia emissions which will apply to the majority of permits, as well as BAT associated levels for nitrogen and phosphorous excretion.

For some types of rearing practices, such as non-cage layer housing and some pig housing, stricter standards will apply to farms and housing permitted after the new BAT Conclusions are published.

**All new applications currently being determined and have not yet been issued will now be checked to ensure they meet the new standards.** New permits will be issued to include new conditions to ensure the new standards are met.

If you have submitted a new application or substantial variation that is being determined, we will be getting in touch with you shortly to explain the new requirements.

We will also check all substantial variations which involve building new housing as they will have to meet the new emission level requirements.

**If you're planning to expand your farm and build new housing it's strongly recommended that you talk to your trade representatives and Environment Officer (EO) about the new requirements.**

We're developing a plan for reviewing all 1230 permits, with the aim of minimising the administrative burden for both industry and ourselves. The first stage will be to check that your farm meets the new standards. We'll be getting in touch with you to run through the new requirements and are planning to run workshops in the summer to support this process

## Avian Influenza (AI)

The latest information about AI including cases, can be found at [www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu). Should the worst happen, we will always seek to work with you and our partners during an animal disease outbreak. We will be on hand to offer advice and guidance at such a distressing time.

It's very important to have good contingency plans in place that include protecting the environment. Should your premises become infected, advance preparation can be greatly beneficial. It can save you time, help you to follow legislation and possibly save you money. Plans should outline how you would tackle key pollution prevention and waste disposal issues. Guidance has recently been published on two key issues:

- Stacking, storing or treatment of litter - [www.gov.uk/government/publications/stack-store-or-treat-litter-straw-manure-and-slurry-arising-from-an-exotic-animal-disease-outbreak-rps-36](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/stack-store-or-treat-litter-straw-manure-and-slurry-arising-from-an-exotic-animal-disease-outbreak-rps-36)
- Wash water disposal - [www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-disease-outbreak-prevent-pollution-from-cleaning-and-disinfection](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-disease-outbreak-prevent-pollution-from-cleaning-and-disinfection)

There is also industry guidance<sup>1</sup> available on AI and contingency plans that you may find useful:

- National Farmers Union - [www.nfuonline.com/sectors/poultry/poultry-key-content/avian-influenza-guidance/](http://www.nfuonline.com/sectors/poultry/poultry-key-content/avian-influenza-guidance/)
- British Free Range Egg Producers Association - [www.bfrepa.co.uk](http://www.bfrepa.co.uk)
- Direct link to the contingency planning workbook - [www.bfrepa.co.uk/images/CMS/AI%20Workbook%20FINAL%20lo-res\\_1912126548.pdf](http://www.bfrepa.co.uk/images/CMS/AI%20Workbook%20FINAL%20lo-res_1912126548.pdf)

## Pig and Poultry Assurance Scheme

We've completed the search to see which farms can be invited to join the Pig and Poultry Assurance Scheme when the next scheme year begins on 1st April 2017.

In February each year we look at the farms that are not currently members of the scheme and carry out a risk assessment to see if they are eligible to be invited to join. We use a series of eligibility criteria - this includes checking whether the Compliance Classification Scheme (CCS) score is not more than 10 points for the previous calendar year, that there are no unresolved odour issues and that the farm is not in arrears for their subsistence fee. The full list of criteria is in the [Pig and Poultry Assurance Scheme guidance](#).

We've written to eligible farms to invite them to join. The letter includes details of the Certification Bodies (CB) that can carry out visits on our behalf. If you receive an invitation letter please note the deadline for registering with a CB of your choice is Wednesday 15 March 2017.

We'll also write to existing members to remind them what membership means and to give details of how to change CB, should they wish to.

Farms in the scheme benefit from a reduced annual subsistence charge (a current saving of £910) and time saved on visits where the CB carries it out at the same time as other assurance scheme visits, such as Red Tractor Assurance or Lion Code of Practice. If you'd like to see what the CB will look at during their visit have a look at the [Module Standards](#). This form is the same as EOs use for their inspections.

We've changed the inspection frequency for farms in the assurance scheme. Farms now receive an annual inspection - in a three year period we'll visit you once and your nominated CB will visit you in the other two years. Previously scheme farms would have received an annual inspection by their CB and an Environment Agency inspection every three years so one of the CB inspections has been removed.

## Project looking into waste derived materials spread to land

The Environment Agency has been funded by government to carry out a project looking into waste-derived materials that are being spread to land. These materials can usefully substitute for manufactured fertilisers, but they also have the potential to harm the environment and human health. The purpose of the project is to better understand the use of these waste derived materials.

Over the last couple of months we've been auditing a number of facilities that produce certain wastes. This includes the sites where the waste is produced or is treated prior to it being spread onto land.

Two of the waste streams that are being investigated are pig and poultry carcass incinerator ash and sewage sludge. Samples of ash and sludge are being collected from sites across England and analysed. The data we get from the analysis will enable us, in the future, to make informed decisions about the regulatory mechanisms used for spreading waste to land.

## Permitting update

### Pre-application discussions – free advice to get your application right first time

If you're considering making any changes to your farm, for example, increasing the number of animal places, changing the livestock type, building new housing, a permit variation is likely to be required. To reduce the administration burden for farmers, we're trialling a new framework for low risk changes to be agreed in writing between you and your EO.

Please discuss your plans with your EO before any changes are made on site. Your EO will be able to advise you whether a variation application is required and if so, how to prepare your application and whether an assessment is required to check the impact of your proposed changes on neighbours and nearby wildlife sites.

If you're unsure who your EO is, our customer services will be able to put you in touch with your local office: telephone 03708 506 506.

At the pre-application discussion the EO will gather the necessary information to enable us to run the simple screening assessment for you using the Environment Agency's Ammonia Screening Tool. We'll produce a report which tells you whether you need to employ an experienced consultant to produce a detailed modelling assessment.

AHDB Pork have produced model templates and can provide guidance on producing a site plan and information required to help with the pre-application screening. They can also provide on-farm training to help staff understand their responsibilities with regard to their environmental permit.

For more information please see the following link:

<http://pork.ahdb.org.uk/environment-buildings/permitted-agriculture-eprppc/epr-model-application-templates/>

## Open Data

Open data is defined as 'data and content that can be freely used, modified and shared by anyone for any purpose'.

The Secretary of State announced a target to publish 8,000 datasets as open data across Defra between June 2015 and June 2016, as part of open Defra. This was part of the aim to accelerate and simplify data publishing to deliver more open and transparent access to the wealth of data that organisations across government hold to help us achieve some of our outcomes through the work of others.

Although the target has been met, going forward Open Data is now the default for making our data available (unless there is a good reason, usually legal) not to.

This means that we are publishing data that we haven't made available in this way before. Under the law if we hold data then we must make it available to anyone who asks and that may be as open data or available with some restrictions on how it is used.

Data with restrictions is provided under a conditional licence, the conditions of which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-agency-conditional-licence/environment-agency-conditional-licence>

Our customers are interested in all sorts of data but for regulated sites, this is usually about permitting and compliance. To make it simple we are providing some of these datasets under a conditional licence on data.gov.uk. The data is usually that which is available under public registers.

Each of the datasets will be supplied with a briefing that explains what the dataset is, how it is collected and any qualifying information.

The link to Environment Agency datasets on Open Data is:  
[https://data.gov.uk/data/search?publisher=environment-agency&license\\_id-is-ogl=true](https://data.gov.uk/data/search?publisher=environment-agency&license_id-is-ogl=true)

## Feedback

We hope you found this newsletter useful and interesting. If you have any feedback on this newsletter please email [alison.frogley@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:alison.frogley@environment-agency.gov.uk) or [thomas.judd@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:thomas.judd@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Please contact your EO if you have questions about the content of this newsletter and the implications for your farm.

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