

Slurry Investment Scheme

We plan to offer a slurry investment scheme from 2022, to help reduce pollution from farming and contribute to the 25 Year Environment Plan and net-zero commitments. This scheme will help farmers to invest in new slurry stores that exceed current regulatory requirements and are proofed against higher standards that we expect to introduce in the future.

Alongside this scheme, we plan to implement new regulations as part of the Clean Air Strategy to cover all slurry stores. We intend that by raising standards, ensuring all farmers meet the basic legal requirements and providing targeted investment support where needed, we will break the cycle of private under-investment in slurry storage and emissions reduction. All slurry stores constructed will have to meet legal construction standards and be suitably maintained to ensure they do not pose a risk of serious pollution incidents in future.

Scheme description

The scheme will enable farmers to adopt other pollution-reducing measures such as low emissions spreaders (to be a legal requirement by 2025) and the cost of storage capacity to go beyond the current legal requirements.

We will expand the Catchment Sensitive Farming project and explore how Catchment Sensitive Farming officers – an existing, trusted and reliable source of free advice – can support this scheme

Eligibility

The scheme will initially focus on those locations where environmental impact will be greatest and at viable businesses seeking to invest in improved slurry storage.

To future-proof public investment and support the sector in reducing its environmental impact, we would only want to invest in stores which are sufficiently large enough to contain at least 6 months' slurry production and are covered with an impermeable cover.

Successful applicants would be subject to conditions such as ensuring they had received relevant environmental advice and that they were providing data on the effectiveness of the new stores.

Payments

We propose that funding will be given to:

- meet a significant proportion of one-off capital cost of new stores and impermeable covers
- pay for a significant proportion of other associated equipment (pumps, pipework, access, reception tanks etc)

It will not include funding future maintenance or planning costs.

Timings

We have not yet decided on the design of the scheme but by Spring 2021 we intend to start testing with farmers, experts and industry our emerging ideas about how a slurry investment scheme could work. We plan to publish details of the scheme, as they are formed, in the second quarter of 2021 and expect to be

making funding available from Autumn 2022/23. In addition, the Farming Investment Fund will include some slurry equipment from 2021.