



FAR[®]

Ground Rules

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Welcome to the first edition of Ground Rules for the Horizons region. This newsletter is to update you on regional rules and timelines that relate to you as an arable farmer in the Manawatū-Whanganui region.

A little bit of background

Horizons' One Plan sets objectives, policies and rules that aim to balance how the region's natural resources are used for economic and social wellbeing with a healthy environment. Work in the region has identified specific target catchments where there is a need to manage all contaminant losses to improve water quality. Intensive farm businesses such as dairy and irrigated sheep and beef, horticulture and arable, within these sensitive catchments will require Land Use Consents. Conversions to intensive land use, or from one intensive land use to another outside of target catchments will also require a land use consent. These consents set nutrient management targets for the farm and require the farmer to show how contaminant losses and environmental risks will be managed in the future.

How do I know if my farm needs a consent?

There are two things to consider:

1. Is my farm in a target catchment?

For the rules to apply more than 20% of the farm must be within a target catchment.

2. Do the cropping rules apply to my land use?

Cropping is defined as: "Using an area of land in excess of 20 ha to grow crops. A "crop" is defined as cereal, coarse grains, oilseed, peanuts, lupins, dry field peas or dry field beans. This definition does not include crops fed to animals or grazed on by animals on the same property."

Target Catchments

Refer to the attached catchment maps to see if your farm is in a sensitive catchment.

If you have been arable farming continuously on the land outside the sensitive catchments since before 9 May 2013, you do not need a consent and you need not read any further.

If your farm is in a sensitive catchment and fits with the cropping rules, you will need to get a Land Use Consent. The time to do these is now.

If you are uncertain and have questions to ask there will be opportunities to attend meetings to find out more.

Land Use Consents

As a sector we've been stalling on the consent front because the cropping rules are not clear-cut for many arable farms. Some crops are in and others are out and we all have questions about how an intensive cropping consent might actually work. However, we've stalled long enough and the time has come for those arable farmers that need consents to get underway with the process. Horizons staff are aware of some of the challenges for farmers to obtain arable consents and there is an opportunity for FAR and farmers to work with Horizons staff to develop practical solutions. We will begin with a meeting where you can ask questions and by addressing these we can begin developing a practical way forward.

Irrespective of the questions that might be in your mind there are a number of components and steps in the consenting process: This table is a key reference point for the consent. Horizons is in the process of updating the table to reflect changes in Overseer. More information on this will be provided at the meetings.

Table 1. Cumulative Nitrogen Leaching Maximum (CNLM) by Land Use Capability (LUC) Class.

Year	LUC 1	LUC 2	LUC 3	LUC 4	LUC 5	LUC 6	LUC 7	LUC 8
1	30	27	24	18	16	15	8	2
5	27	25	21	16	13	10	6	2
10	26	22	19	14	13	10	6	2
20	25	21	18	13	12	10	6	2

The numbers in this table are used to calculate a nitrogen loss limit for your farm. This number and an estimate of your current nitrogen losses determines what sort of consent you will require. The table also sets a time frame for reducing the nitrogen losses from your farm with the help of proven good management practices. The year the table starts depends on what catchment you are in, the date each catchment came 'online' is listed below:

Target catchments and dates for consenting:

- Mangapapa, Waikawa, Papaitonga - 1 July 2014.
- Mangatainoka, coastal lakes (northern Manawatu, Kaitoke Lakes, southern Wanganui lakes) coastal Rangitikei, Lake Horowhenua - 1 July 2015.
- Upper Manawatu above Hopelands and Manawatu above gorge - 1 July 2016.

The steps for working out your N loss allowance are:

1. Develop LUC map for the property (Horizons staff will help with this) and with reference to the above table, develop N loss limits for the farm based on the areas of different LUCs on your farm.
2. Find out what the nitrogen loss is for the existing farm system. Currently the only way to do this for arable farms is with an Overseer nutrient budget and you will need to employ someone with experience in modelling arable systems to do this. The Overseer nitrogen loss number enables you to see if your farm is currently meeting the CNLMs.
3. If the farm does meet the CNLMs the consenting process is via the controlled consenting pathway. This means a consent will be granted to an applicant and the consent will contain a number of conditions set by the Council to mitigate environmental effects.
4. If the farm does not meet the CNLMs, then the application would be a restricted discretionary consenting pathway. In this case, the best thing to do is to contact the Horizons Rural Advice team for advice. This type of consent goes through a very different process requiring a high level of supporting information.

Next Steps

FAR and Horizons staff will convene a meeting in November for farmers in target catchments. FAR will let you know when this meeting will be. At the meeting we will look at individual farm maps and discuss N loss figures, these can be pre-prepared by Horizons staff if you register for the workshop. It will also be an opportunity for an open and honest discussion around how the rules may work for arable farmers, and how they may not. It is important that Horizons staff understand from your perspective as this will be good feedback for future plan changes and catchment review work. It may be possible to work with a small group of case-study farms to test and refine the process. We will consider this at the meeting.

For further information

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Key

- Cities
- Towns
- Highway
- River
- Water Management Zone
- Targeted catchments

- Targeted Catchments**
- Hoki_1 - Lake Horowhenua
 - Mana_1 - Upper Manawatu
 - Mana_2 - Weber - Tamaki
 - Mana_3 - Upper Tamaki
 - Mana_4 - Upper Kumeti
 - Mana_5 - Tamaki - Hopelands
 - Mana_6 - Hopelands - Tiraumea
 - Mana_8 - Mangatainoka
 - Mana_9 - Upper Gorge (Excluding Mangahao)
 - Rang_4 - Coastal Rangitikei
 - West_4 - Kaitoke Lake
 - West_5 - Southern Whanganui Lakes
 - West_6 - Northern Manawatu Lakes
 - West_8 - Lake Papatonga
 - West_9 - Waikawa



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