

COV2 Diverse Cropping

Why is this good for water quality?

The aim-

Intercropping, the process of growing two or more crops together, has multiple benefits to the environment. The diverse root systems of different crops can improve soil structure, enhance soil aggregation and microbial activity. This leads to better drainage and water infiltration, increases organic matter and reduces erosion.

Why is this good for my farm?

Intercropping helps improve soil health, reduces pest and disease pressure (by disrupting pest cycles), leading to increased yields and income. It can also lead to more efficient resource use, such as water and nutrients, and lower reliance on external inputs like fertilisers and pesticides. This option provides extra ground cover and helps to move away from mono-cropping.

COV2 Diverse Cropping

Payment Rate: £50/ha/yr

This can take the form of intercropping two or more species at the same time, intercropping with different species following directly on from each other, companion cropping, undersown main crops or a more diverse rotation.

Specification

- Companion cropping, growing another species alongside the cash crop.
- Beans would be a good choice, deep rooting , N fixing, good at holding soil together. This option is not limited to beans, but they provide a good example that should be replicated where possible.
- The companion crop should easily be desiccated with normal spray regime no further products should be used.
- Can be used in nearly all crops winter or spring sown.
- Establishment should be non-invasive for example broadcasting before drilling so the companion plants get mixed into the seedbed.
- Pesticide records should be supplied to provide examples of previous regime and future plans.
- Any companion crop should be retained until the spring to provide cover.
- Seed rates should follow guidance and evidence needs to be provided of advice sought.
- All other pesticide-related items should be in place, buffers, dedicated filling areas, precision equipment and low drift technology in surface water areas.
- Applicants are expected to complete the action in a way that could be reasonably expected to achieve the actions aim.
- 2025-2030 agreement period, rotational option, can be moved each year

Evidence to apply

- Maps of parcels covered
- Previous spray records
- Seed rate guidance and invoices if seed brought in
- Evidence of other pesticide related items for SW areas

Evidence to claim

- Planned spray records
- Images of seed used
- Images of established companion crops