

ISH1 Improve Soil Chemistry

Why is this good for water quality?

The aim

Effective land management can improve soil health by supporting some of the natural soil chemical processes. Boosting soil chemical processes improves nutrient cycling and availability, soil pH, organic matter content and microbial activity. Enhancing soil chemistry will also improve soil porosity that supports water retention and availability for crops. Additionally, increased organic matter and microbial activities help breakdown pesticide residues ultimately reducing the potential for pesticide runoff.

Why is this good for my farm?

Improving soil health by supporting the natural soil chemistry processes can help improve the efficiency of nutrient applications and enhance the effectiveness of plant protection products. Enhanced effectiveness of plant protection products also means a reduced risk of resistant pests or diseases. This results in a more resilient cost-effective crop production.

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Payment Rate: 50% of cost up to £5,000

Specification

- Improve the chemistry of farm soils, e.g. pH, nutrient levels, electrical conductivity
- Soil tests must be provided to demonstrate imbalance in soil chemistry or areas that are targeted for improvement
- Suggested methods must have track record of improving the targeted issues
- One application per 5-year period (2025-2030) to cover a soil improvement project on the farm, one off payment
- Five-year agreement to follow nutrient management plan taking into account the soil chemistry changes set out
- The aim in catchments outside of nitrate priority areas should be the reduced use of plant protection products
- Applicants are expected to complete the action in a way that could be reasonably expected to achieve the soil chemistry aim.

Evidence to apply

- Maps to show locations of soils being improved
- VSS process images
- Quote for costings
- Written guidance from professional to support proposals
- Detailed soil analysis to highlight areas of concern

Evidence to claim

- Invoices for product and methods employed
- Nutrient management plans
- Outside GW catchments, evidence showing reduced use of plant protection products such as an IPM plan