

ISS3 Improve Tillage Equipment and Tech

Why is this good for water quality?

The aim

Utilising advanced tillage machinery and technology allows for more precise soil management, reducing unnecessary disturbance. This helps prevent soil compaction which improves aeration and allows water to infiltrate and be retained more effectively.

Why is this good for my farm?

Optimising soil preparation with improved equipment reduces the time and labour required for planting, leading to on farm cost savings. Better soil structure also supports healthier crop growth and resilience.

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

Specification

- STEPS will support the purchase of new equipment or adaptation of current machinery to improve soil structure.
- Applicants must set out and discuss with their advisor the equipment available on the farm, how this could be improved or replaced to improve soil compaction.
- The method must be used to replace current higher disturbance tillage and cultivation practices.
- Contractors can utilise this option but permission must be sought to approach key farms they work on within a catchment.
- Joint applications between farmers allowed, the owner of the equipment will be the agreement holder but the farm sharing the equipment must consent to evidence collection
- Cannot be stacked with ISS2, the improvement is too similar.
- In surface water catchments farmers must prove they have an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM)
- In groundwater catchments farmers must prove they have a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP)
- Visual Evaluation of Soil Structure (VESS) scoring must be completed to evidence chosen areas
- Second hand or improvements to machinery are permitted but must have a serviceable life in excess of 5 years.
- *applications above £5000, will be judged on a per ha in catchment basis.
- 5-year agreement to use the equipment on designated land, full payment at claim.
- Applicants are expected to complete the action in a way that could be reasonably expected to achieve the actions aim.

Evidence to apply

- Maps showing areas of use
- Quotes to justify application cost
- VESS images
- Evidence of current cropping and equipment available on the farm
- Evidence of how the selected piece of equipment removes or prevents compaction
- Evidence that other users or farms contracted on consent to sharing information or evidence collection to support the claim.

Evidence to claim

- Images of machinery purchase or improvement
- IPM or NMP as required by catchment priority
- Images to show operation being carried out