Farming and the Environment now and in the Future?

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What are Natural Capital Schemes?

There are various schemes available now:

- Environmental Land Management
  - Sustainable Farming Incentive
  - Countryside Stewardship
  - Landscape Recovery
- Water companies schemes
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Specific grant funded initiatives (Farm Net Zero)
- Specific supply chain projects

What does the environment need?

Between 5% and 7% of land managed effectively for the environment using multi-functional options

- Nesting and breeding habitat
- Over wintering and hibernation habitat
- Protect watercourses
- Provide connectivity
- Summer feeding
- Winter food
- Healthy, functioning soils

Profitable Farm Businesses

Planning is key.

Know what you have on the farm.

- Important Sites
  - Sites of Special Scientific Interest
  - Scheduled Monuments and historic sites
  - County Wildlife Sites
- Important Species
  - Birds
  - Mammals
  - Flowers

Planning is key.

Look at the margins and edges.

- Difficult to farm areas.
- Unnecessary Overlaps.
- Protect watercourses.
- Use buffer strips to help with management.

Make a map – there will be between 3% and 7% of land you can use.

Options for the Edges.

Put those options in the right place.

- Protect features.
- Connect habitats.
- Provide for wildlife species.

Options for production.

Cover crops.

Legume fallow.

Undersown Maize

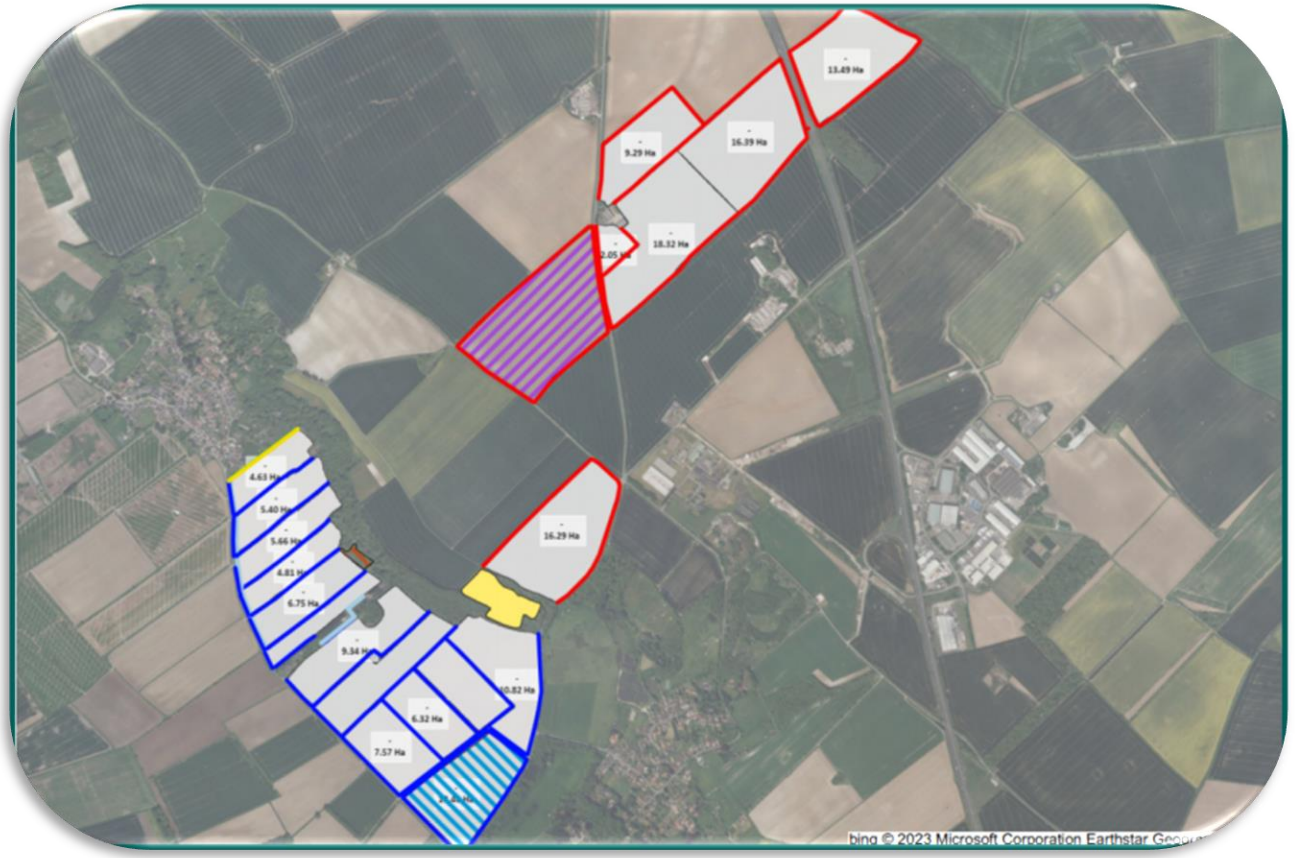
Herbal leys.

Companion cropping.

Actions that can work with your rotation and help production.

Make the Actions work for the farm business.

Put your plan into action.



- Use the right option for your farm.
- Put those options in the right place.
- Make the most of that difficult 3% to 7% of land.
- Integrate the scheme into your farming system.

Pick the right funding stream.

Make the environment work for you!

What should you think about when looking at schemes?

1. What is the farms strategic direction?
   - Choose the scheme that best fits
   - Don’t just follow the money
2. What are you going to be committing to?
   - Data requirements
   - Length of contract
   - Environmental outcomes
3. Each farm is different and some farms may have more opportunities than others
   - Previous practices
   - Location

Public or Private Funding?

- Environmental Land Management Scheme
  - Sustainable Farming Incentive
  - Countryside Stewardship
  - Landscape Recovery
- Private Funding
  - Water companies schemes
  - Biodiversity Net Gain
  - Specific grant funded initiatives (Farm Net Zero)
  - Specific supply chain projects

Sustainable Farming Incentive

- It is straight forward to apply for.
- There is flexibility around implementation and Action rules.
- Payments are quarterly.
- Schemes can integrate good productive farming and great environmental management.

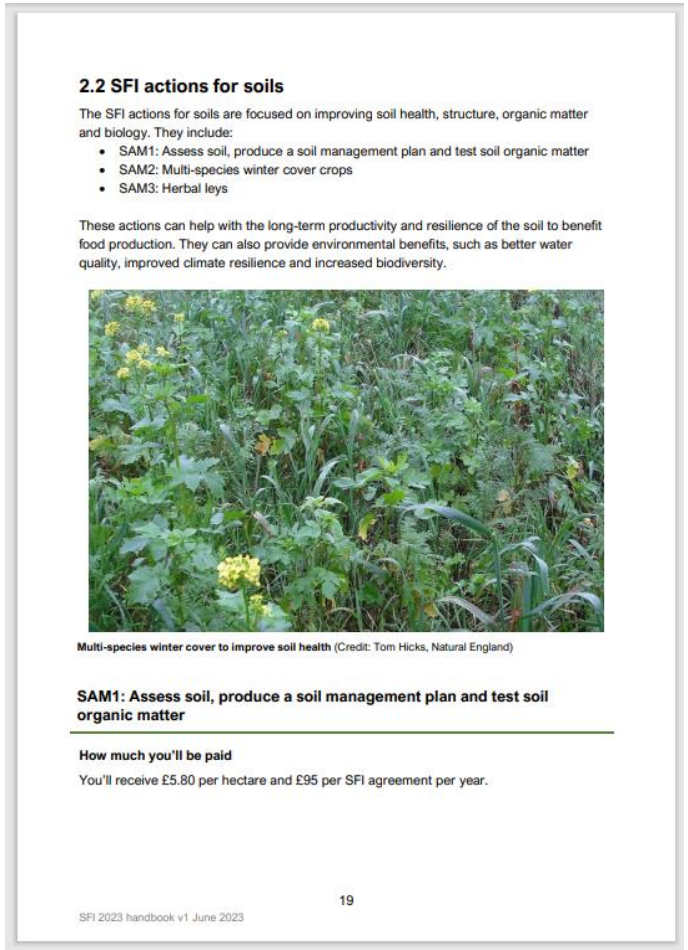
It can work on most farms

Understand the Rules

The details of each SFI action explain:

- the action's aim
- where you can do the action
- when to do the action
- how to do the action
- what evidence to keep

Work with the rules - please don't bend or break them.



2.2 SFI actions for soils

The SFI actions for soils are focused on improving soil health, structure, organic matter and biology. They include:

- SAM1: Assess soil, produce a soil management plan and test soil organic matter
- SAM2: Multi-species winter cover crops
- SAM3: Herbal leys

These actions can help with the long-term productivity and resilience of the soil to benefit food production. They can also provide environmental benefits, such as better water quality, improved climate resilience and increased biodiversity.

Multi-species winter cover to improve soil health (Credit: Tom Hicks, Natural England)

SAM1: Assess soil, produce a soil management plan and test soil organic matter

How much you'll be paid

You'll receive £5.80 per hectare and £95 per SFI agreement per year.

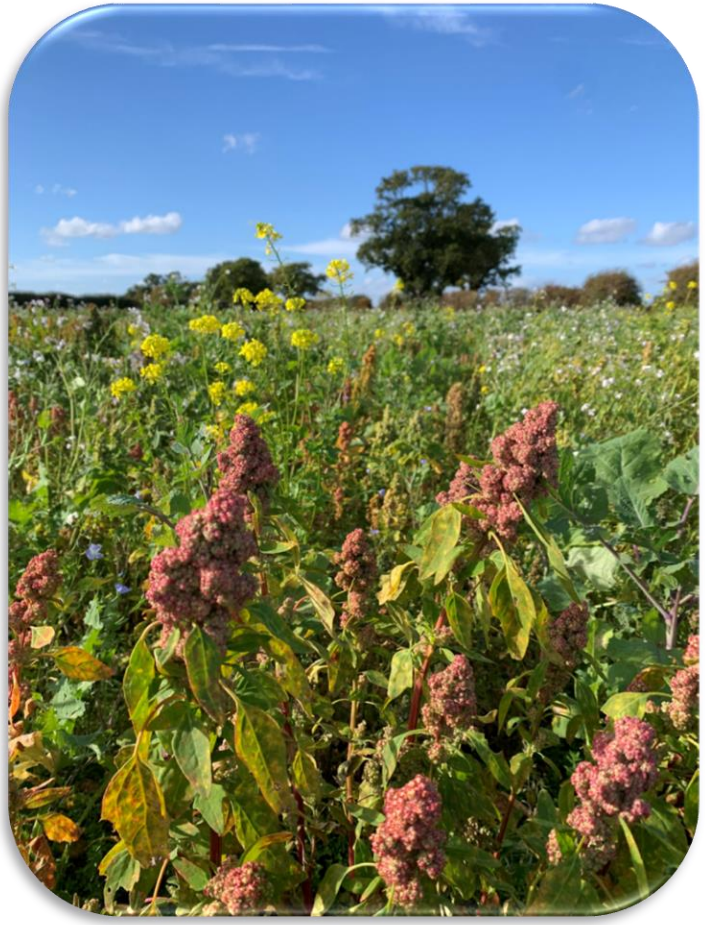
Wildlife-friendly farming increases crop yield: evidence for ecological intensification.

Detailed arable crop yield mapping from the Hillesden Research Platform (red = high / green = low)

- 6 year experiment on 1,000ha commercial farm
- Removed 3% to 8% of low-yielding land from cropping
- Created habitats for beneficial species (pollinators, pest predators)
- No net loss of yield.
- Evidence of sustainable intensification

Richard F. Pywell, Matthew S. Heard, Ben A. Woodcock, Shelley Hinsley, Lucy Ridding, Marek Nowakowski and James M. Bullock

Deliver your agreement well.



Thank you

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