

Overview

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This guidance is effective from 1 January, 2026

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Greening was introduced to improve the environmental performance of farming in 2015. A new Enhanced Greening payment “for agricultural practices beneficial for the climate and environment” will be introduced as a part of the Agricultural Reform Programme (ARP), it will be a supplementary payment to the Basic Payment Scheme from 2026.

Under reform of the ARP, applicants to the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) who comply with Enhanced Greening requirements will receive a Greening payment that currently equates to 30% of the full BPS payment.

The Enhanced Greening requirement applies at a business level. This is the land under one Business Reference Number (BRN) – all the land your business claimed on your Single Application Form. Enhanced Greening is paid in accordance with the number of entitlements claimed against eligible hectares in the region concerned in each year of application, subject to meeting the requirements.

You may be subject to inspections throughout the year to ensure you are adopting relevant Enhanced Greening practices. If you fail to meet your Enhanced Greening requirements, this will result in a proportionate reduction being applied to your Enhanced Greening payment. In addition to this reduction, you may incur an administrative penalty which can be applied to your Basic Payment.

What does Enhanced Greening mean to me?

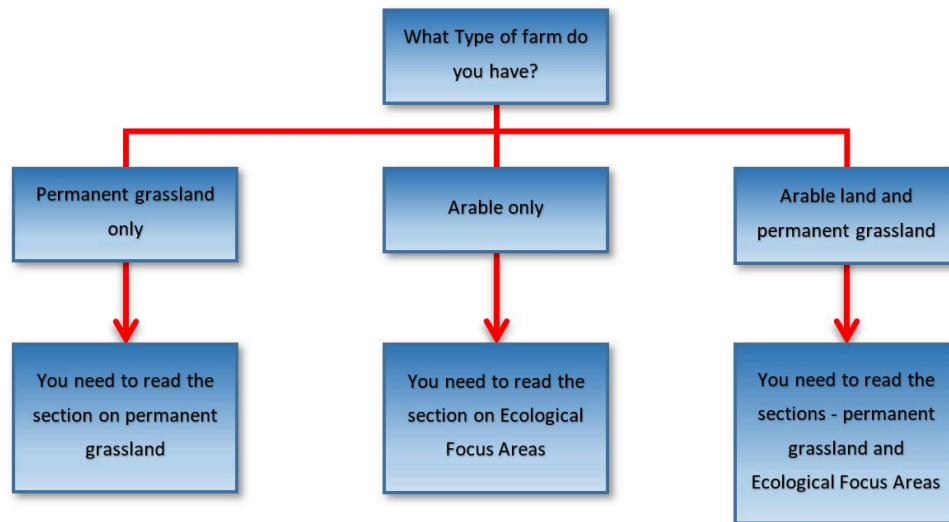
To make sure you receive the Enhanced Greening payment with your Basic Payment, you must comply with Enhanced Greening requirements. Many businesses already comply with Enhanced Greening requirements as part of their normal agricultural practices.

However, it is important you read this document to see which Enhanced Greening requirements apply to you. Enhanced Greening activities will include one or more of the following:

- protecting permanent grassland designated as environmentally sensitive grassland
- farming 5% of your arable area in a manner that promotes biodiversity, and or reduces emissions – known as an Ecological Focus Area (EFA)

What do I need to read?

This guidance will describe the Enhanced Greening elements and what you need to do for each of the requirements. Use our flowchart below to find out which parts of this guidance are important for you to read.



When considering this flowchart, for detailed definitions of arable and permanent grass, please see the [glossary](#).

Is Enhanced Greening the same as Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC)?

No, but a lot of the GAEC and Enhanced Greening practices complement each other. As with Enhanced Greening, you are also required to comply with GAEC, under Cross Compliance to meet Basic Payment Scheme requirements.

You should be aware of the following examples of GAEC:

- a requirement to keep a two metre buffer strip from the centre line of a hedge and a two metre buffer strip from the top of the bank of surface water
- GAEC 1 – you must not apply pesticides within two metres of the top of the bank of surface water unless the following exemption applies:
 - spot applications of pesticides to control injurious weeds, invasive species and, after prior written consent of the Scottish Ministers and / or other statutory bodies, certain other weed species
 - if you are carrying out this exemption, please be aware of SEPA's requirements for applying pesticides in or near water. Information on this can be found on [NetRegs website](#)
- GAEC 7 – you must not apply fertilisers or pesticides within two metres of the centre line of a hedge unless one of the following exemptions apply:
 - applications of fertilisers or pesticides to establish a new hedge. This applies from the time the land is prepared for planting the new hedge to the end of the hedge's third growing season
 - spot application of pesticides to control injurious weeds, invasive species and, after prior written consent of the Scottish Ministers and/or other statutory bodies, certain other weed species

This list is not exhaustive, the full guidance covering GAEC is available in the [Cross Compliance guidance](#).

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