

Introduction and updates

Date published: 30 July, 2026

For recent changes to this guidance, please see the [bottom of the page](#).

This guidance is effective from 1 January 2027.

This guidance provides details on the Enhanced Greening conditional elements of the Basic Payment Scheme and should be read in conjunction with the guidance for the Basic Payment Scheme and Cross Compliance.

- [Basic Payment Scheme](#)
- [Overview of Cross Compliance](#)

Please ensure that you read all the relevant elements of this updated guidance (including [the annexes](#)) if you are intending to apply under the Basic Payment Scheme.

Rule Changes to existing EFA requirements

Changes for EFA for 2027 onward:

The area required for the management of Ecological Focus Areas increases this year. If you have more than 15ha of Arable land, including Temporary Grassland (TGRS) instead of managing 5%, **you will now be required to manage 7%** of your land for Ecological Focus Areas.

Changes for EFA Fallow 2027:

- covers should be established by the 1 May

Changes for EFA Margins 2027:

- covers should be established by the 1 May
- added the legal rights on responsible access

Changes for Herb and legume rich pastures 2027:

- ley(s) should be established by the 1 June

Changes for Enhanced Agro-forestry Low Density Planting 2027:

- new planting of trees must be completed before the 1 May

Establishment of EFA options for 2027 onward

Due to the level of change for 2026, we allowed a relaxed period of establishment up to the 15 July 2026. EFA Agro Forestry Low density planting had no deadline for establishment. For 2027, activities that are associated with the creation of an EFA option have deadlines for creation earlier in the year. There should be no production activities other than what is permitted within the EFA option guidance, but cultivation and sowing to create a habitat that has been specified within the EFA option guidance will be permissible. We would recommend retaining seed labels to evidence what you have sown in case of crop failure.

Examples:

- sowing wild bird seed into an area declared as EFA fallow on the 16 April 2027
- sowing a wild-flower mix into an area declared as EFA margin on the 20 March 2027

Previous versions

[Previous versions of this page](#)