



Water and Air Quality Division, Circular No. 01/2024

Issued to FAS approved Advisers and approved eNMP online Providers,

18th April 2024.

Subject: Soil Phosphorus Build-Up Programme

Under Article 16(5) of the Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters Regulations (S.I. No. 113 of 2022 (as amended)), grassland farmers have the option of using increased Phosphorus (P) build-up allowances to rectify soil phosphorus deficiency. This provision only applies to more intensively stocked grassland farmers with a previous year's grassland stocking rate of ≥ 130 kg N/ha prior to manure export.

The clarifications provided in this Circular No. 01/2024 are effective from the date of issue of replacing previous Nitrates Division Circulars No. 01/ 2018 (dated 12th of February 2018) and clarifications of this circular dated (23rd October 2020).

To avail of the Soil Phosphorus Build-Up Programme these farmers must;

- 1 Submit a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) and the accredited detailed laboratory soil analysis report(s) to DAFM, and
- 2 Have undertaken a Soil P Build-Up course.

1. Nutrient Management Plan (NMP)

- I. Farmers wishing to avail of increased P build-up allowances must notify DAFM by ensuring that a NMP and including the ISO/IEC 17025:2017 laboratory accredited soil analysis results are submitted to DAFM using an approved on-line NMP¹, prepared by a Farm Advisory Service (FAS) approved advisor.
- II. For those farmers applying for a Nitrates Derogation and who wish to use the P build-up allowances, the on-line NMP submitted as part of their derogation application, satisfies Nitrate Derogation Requirements and DAFM's P build-up notification requirements.
- III. For non-derogation farmers who wish to use the P build-up allowances, a copy of the on-line NMP and the associated soil analytical reports no more than 4 years old must

¹ Teagasc, Farmeye or Grassland Agro



be emailed to DAFM at pbuildup@agriculture.gov.ie, before the 31st of December of the first year, in which the P build-up allowances are being sought.

- IV. The phosphorus fertilisation rate for soils with more than 20% organic matter (OM) shall not exceed the fertiliser allowance permitted for Index 3 soils as per Footnote 2 of Tables 13A and 13B of S.I. No 113/2022 (as amended). A P build up rate cannot be used for these soils.
- V. Article 16(3)(e) of the Regulations requires that soils shall be deemed to have an organic matter content of at least 20% as defined on a Teagasc-EPA Indicative Soils map, unless otherwise determined in soil tests carried out in accordance with S.I. No.113 of 2022 (as amended).
- VI. Farmers and advisors can determine if a land parcel area is defined as having an organic matter content of at least 20% through the DAFM LPIS mapping system and applying the OM layer.
- VII. A soil analysis to determine whether a soil is peat is not required if the parcel is identified on the Teagasc-EPA Indicative Soils map and assigned as “peat” on an NMP. If the farmer or advisor disagrees with this categorisation, a soil organic matter test result from an ISO/IEC 17025:2017 accredited laboratory is required.
- VIII. A test for soil organic matter must be taken for each individual soil sample (max 5ha) which displays overlap with the Teagasc/ EPA OM layer.
- IX. A soil organic matter test result is valid for a period of 12 years following sampling. This analytical report must be retained for a period of at least 12 years.
- X. The NMP must be valid and dated. A NMP cannot be more than 4 years old.

2. Soil P build Up Course

- I. To ensure the protection of the environment, farmers using the increased P build-up allowances are required to undertake a dedicated Knowledge Transfer (KT) programme, delivered by a FAS approved advisor, before the 31st of December in the first year the farmer seeking to avail of the build-up rates.
- II. This training should include nutrient management planning for best environmental outcomes, phosphorus loss risk and mitigation, as well as training on maximising the value of organic manures.
- III. A Nutrient Use Efficiency Course (NUE) with a P Build-Up module included, undertaken as part of the environmental training for Nitrates Derogation farmers, satisfies the training requirement under the P Build Up Programme.



- IV. If a farmer completed a P Build-Up and/or a NUE Course since 2018, and confirmation of completion was submitted to DAFM, i.e. to pbuildup@agriculture.gov.ie by the FAS advisor, there is no requirement for the farmer to participate in the same course again.
- V. Farmers will not receive payment for attendance at a P Build-Up Course.
- VI. A farmer should contact their FAS advisor for dates of delivery of this training.
- VII. At least seven working days, in advance of the planned training course, the FAS advisor should inform DAFM at pbuildup@agriculture.gov.ie with relevant details;
 - a. Course agenda,
 - b. Name and contact details of the course FAS approved facilitator(s),
 - c. Location; date and time of the course and the
 - d. expected number of participants.
- VIII. The course facilitators/FAS advisor must also provide confirmation of attendance, by submitting records on a DAFM Excel and Pdf template². Both the excel list and the PDF with original hard copy signed participants must be sent to pbuildup@agriculture.gov.ie within 10 working days of the course being completed.

² Circulated to approved FAS advisors as Annex 1. DAFM Register Template for P build and NUE Courses on the 18th April 2024. For a copy of this template email pbuildup@agriculture.gov.ie