



Department
for Environment,
Food & Rural Affairs

Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI)
will reward your business for doing
nature-friendly farming actions
alongside producing food.

Planning your fertiliser and nutrient use



Tools and tips to help you plan nutrient
use, including relevant SFI actions

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© Michael Trolove / Top dressing winter wheat

Sustainable Farming Incentive actions: improve nutrient use efficiency and reduce reliance on fossil fuel-based fertilisers

Given the current pressure around volatile fertiliser costs and the impact this is having on farm business planning, we're highlighting a range of SFI actions that can help reduce reliance on fossil fuel-based fertilisers which you may want to consider if applying to SFI in 2026.

SFI action name and description	Payment rate	Comments
Variable rate application of nutrients (PRF1)	£27/ha	<i>Using precision farming equipment to apply all major nutrients reduces the over application of nutrients.</i>
Multispecies winter cover crops (CSAM2)	£129/ha	<i>A non-cash crop grown primarily to improve soil health and fertility and help prevent soil erosion.</i>
Multispecies summer-sown cover crop (SOH3)	£163/ha	<i>This will improve soil health, manage weeds and build soil fertility in subsequent crops.</i>
Legumes on improved grassland (CNUM2)	£102/ha	<i>Legumes on improved grassland help manage nutrient efficiency without the use of inorganic fertilisers.</i>
Herbal leys (CSAM3)	£224/ha	<i>Planting a mixture of grasses, legumes and herbs or wildflowers produces a high volume of forage with minimal use of inorganic fertiliser.</i>
Legume fallow (CNUM3)	£532/ha	<i>Helps manage nutrient efficiency and improve soil health without the use of inorganic fertilisers.</i>
Companion cropping (CIPM3)	£55/ha	<i>Planting companion crops with a main arable or horticultural crop can better manage nutrient efficiency.</i>

Search Sustainable Farming Incentive 2026 (SFI26) for full information on GOV.UK.

Tools and guidance

There are also several tools which can help you plan nutrient use with more confidence for the season ahead.

Milling wheat application guidance

Search ***"AHDB nitrogen management for milling quality in wheat"*** for guidance to help decide how much nitrogen to apply based on weather, crop analysis, previous results, and fertiliser and grain prices.

AHDB's nitrogen adjustment calculator for arable

AHDB's nitrogen fertiliser adjustment calculator can help you work out the most economical nitrogen rate for cereals and oilseeds.

Search ***"AHDB nitrogen fertiliser adjustment calculator for cereals and oilseeds"***. The calculator shows how changes in fertiliser and grain prices can affect the most economical nitrogen rate for your crop.

AHDB's nitrogen adjustment calculator for grassland

Search ***"AHDB cost benefit calculator for nitrogen fertiliser use on grassland"*** to see AHDB's tool which can help you decide whether it's more cost effective to apply fertiliser or to buy feed.

Defra's Nutrient Management Planning Tool

Search ***"NMPT GB"*** to access Defra's Nutrient Management Planning Tool which is designed to help make nutrient planning simpler and more effective.

The tool uses information from your farm, including soil analysis, cropping and expected yields, alongside RB209 guidance to provide tailored recommendations for fertiliser, manure and lime applications.

The Crop Nutrient Management Guide (RB209)

Search ***"AHDB Crop Management Guide"*** for independent, science-based guidance to help you match nutrient applications to crop need, soil supply and field conditions.

Visit the [Defra Farming Blog](https://defra.farming.blog) for further information: [defra.farming.blog.gov.uk](https://defra.farming.blog)

