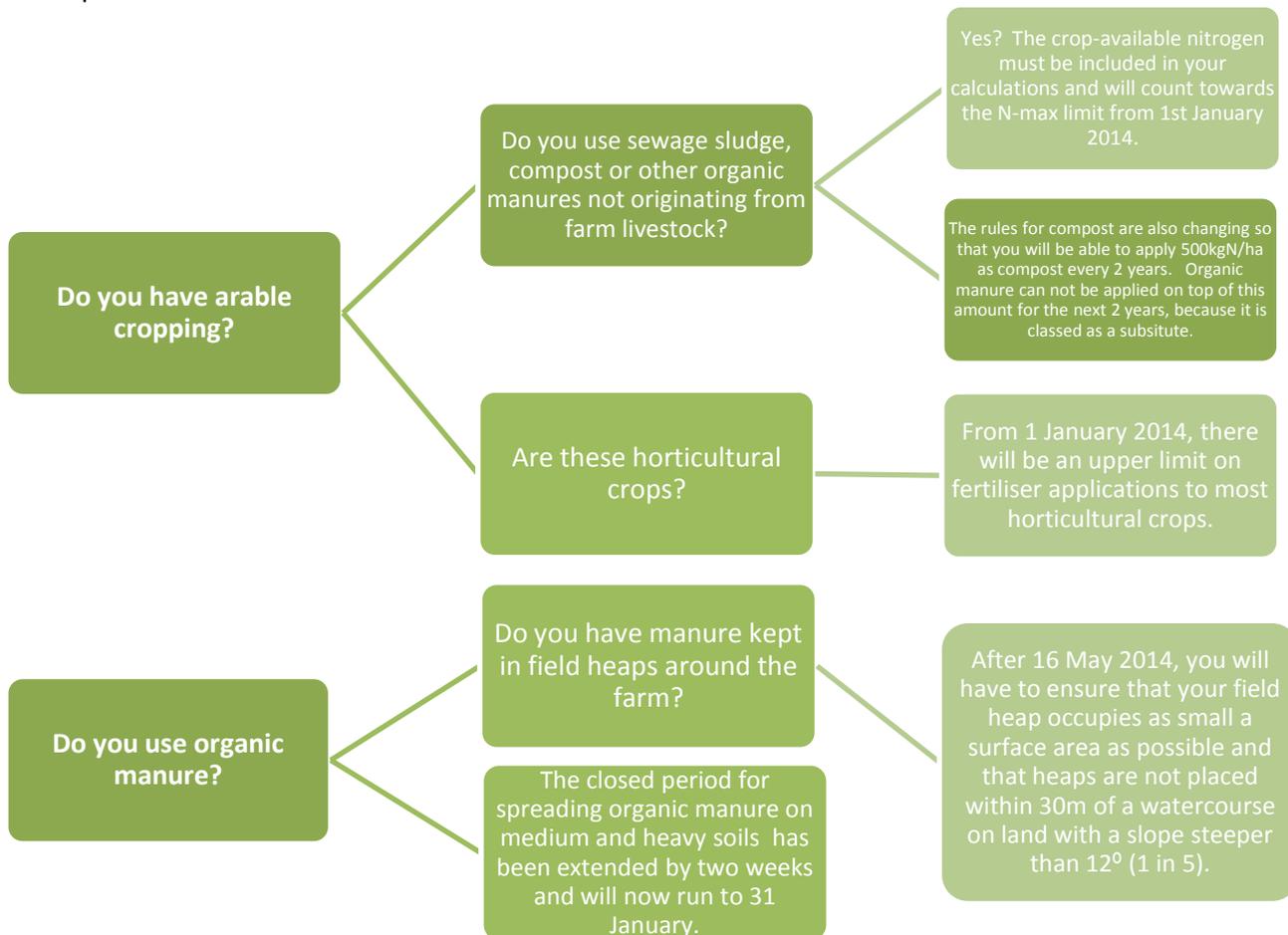


Teresa Meadows – Catchment Advisor  
PO Box 969, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0XL

E-mail Address: [teresa.meadows@nwl.co.uk](mailto:teresa.meadows@nwl.co.uk)  
Contact Numbers: 01268 664403 or 07792 169545

## Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) Changes – An Update

The NVZ guidance documents have recently been updated and new rules have been added. The diagram below contains a summary of the rules most pertinent to the Chelmer and Blackwater catchment. Follow the diagram to see if you are compliant:



The Chelmer and Blackwater Catchment Partnership has been providing advice and guidance to farmers in the catchment to ensure NVZ compliance for the last four years. Nicholas Reed of Bluegate Hall, Great Bardfield had a **Nutrient Management Planning Advice Visit** and said, “We worked through our records, including nutrient planning for the year ahead and manure and fertiliser applications. The visit gave me the reassurance that my records are compliant to the standard required for the future.” If you would like your records checked in a confidential and advisory way, your nutrient management plan completed to ensure NVZ compliance, or free manure analysis please contact Teresa Meadows on the details above.



## Think METALDEHYDE in Autumn 2013

Please remember to follow best practice **Metaldehyde Stewardship Group** guidelines. More information to follow in the Autumn newsletter, in the meantime, don't forget to....

Brush down in the field



Check for slug pressure



Careful filling and handling



Use high quality (wet process) low a.i. pellets



## Tips to move from Compacted to Corrected

More than 80 farmers from across Essex gathered at an event hosted by P.G. Ratcliff at Black Notley Hall Farm on 27<sup>th</sup> June, to hear about a variety of topics, including how to identify and remedy soil problems after a difficult year.



Following the very wet year and late spring, many farmers have witnessed poor germination and slow growth which will ultimately mean lower yields. Soil compaction and associated erosion from trafficking on wet land during the autumn, winter and spring are often compounding these issues. Furthermore, erosion events cause the loss of valuable soil and can impact water quality as pesticides and nutrients are carried into watercourses, attached to soil particles.

Focusing on the remedy from the comfort of his soil pit, soil scientist Philip Wright explained when and how to subsoil, but cautioned that it can become addictive, and, if done at the wrong time can add to compaction rather than solve it. He said: "There is simply no point in dragging metal through wet or 'plastic' soils in a bid to reduce compaction. If you can roll your soil into a thin sausage between your palms, it's the wrong time to subsoil."

Farmers were advised to dig diagnostic holes in the headlands as well as in the growing crop to examine closely what is going on in the field, before deciding an appropriate course of remedial action for each of these areas in advance of the next growing season. The soil specialist also advised farmers to check the angle of subsoiling tines (too steep and compaction can be worsened) and suggested varying cultivating depths as a means of avoiding a pan below the surface.



Farmers were also shown a biobed installed through the Capital Grant Scheme, talked through the changes to NVZ rules and cross compliance by the Farming Advice Service and shown options on the ground which are available in both Entry Level Stewardship and the Campaign for the Farmed Environment's Voluntary Measures.

Extract from an article by Jilly McNaughton, Campaign for the Farmed Environment.

### New Soil Husbandry Visit Available

Following this event and the importance of soil health for yield and water quality, we have the opportunity for you to walk a selection of your fields with a **soil specialist** to look at structure and remedial recommendations, if required – all for FREE.

To book a visit, at a time convenient to you, please call Teresa Meadows on 07792 169545, 01268 664403 or e-mail: [teresa.meadows@nwl.co.uk](mailto:teresa.meadows@nwl.co.uk).



Don't forget to renew your Environment Agency exemptions before **30<sup>th</sup> September 2013**.

### Celebrating Success

The success of the Chelmer and Blackwater Catchment Partnership was recognised by the water industry recently by being **shortlisted** as part of the **Water Industry Achievement Awards**. We were entered as one of the finalists in the *Partnership Initiative of the Year* category. This was an important appreciation of the work we are doing together to improve the water quality in the Chelmer and Blackwater catchment – thank you for your support.



Natural Environment Minister **Richard Benyon MP** visited our demonstration biobed at Robert Stacey's farm in West Hanningfield recently. The visit was an opportunity to show how effective partnership working is at helping to make a difference to reduce diffuse pollution in the catchment. Richard Benyon said: "I am always keen to hear about new ideas to help us tackle environmental issues. It is great to see local farmers working with the water industry to create biobeds and reduce pollution in our rivers."



Richard Benyon and Robert Stacey

Look out for the next catchment newsletter: Autumn 2013

The Chelmer and Blackwater Catchment Partnership is supported by:

