

Slug Pellet Use this Autumn



As harvest draws nearer, thoughts start turning to the final phase of the year for this current crop and planning for the coming crop ahead. With slug pressure high at the moment, please consider your slug pellet use carefully this autumn. As you know, the main ingredient in the majority of slug pellets used, metaldehyde, is difficult to treat at the water treatment works, in order to reach the 0.1µg/l level needed for drinking water quality compliance.

In order to meet this standard, Essex & Suffolk Water will be managing when they abstract water from the rivers Chelmer and Blackwater, which your land feeds into, to take the river water only when the metaldehyde levels are sufficiently low. However, this will not work in isolation and your help is required to minimise the amount of metaldehyde that reaches our watercourses.

This autumn, as you buy your slug pellets and consider application, please follow these guidelines:

- **Consider the type of slug pellet you buy** – choose where possible, a ferric phosphate pellet, wet process/pasta based metaldehyde pellet or a pellet with a low active ingredient such as 1.5% metaldehyde. Do discuss the pellet options that are available with your agronomist or distributor.
- **Do not apply pellets within 6m of a watercourse.**
- **Do not apply pellets when heavy rain is forecast.**
- The **maximum application rate of metaldehyde is 210g active ingredient/ha between 1st August and 31st December**. This equates to 7kg/ha of a 3% metaldehyde pellet, such as Gusto. If further applications are required or land drains are running, please consider the use of a ferric phosphate pellet.
- Ensure precision application of pellets – use a precision peller where possible and make sure your machine is calibrated.

Consider the best pellet to buy



Check for slugs and conditions (e.g. land drains running, weather forecast)



Apply pellets in a precision way, keeping 6m from all watercourses

Catchment Water Quality

Looking at the results from the weekly catchment sampling round last winter for metaldehyde and propyzamide between the 1st September and 31st March, the rivers in our catchment can be ranked as follows:

River Catchment	% of metaldehyde and propyzamide samples over 0.1µg/l
River Can	53%
Sandon Brook	31%
River Pant	29%
River Chelmer	26%
River Wid	23%
River Blackwater	23%
River Ter	8%
Roxwell Brook	8%

Can we turn the tables this year, or keep the instances of these two important actives down to the levels in the River Ter and Roxwell Brook? By following the advice overleaf and best practice guidance for propyzamide (eg. Kerb) applications, this is possible.

Note - Recent cross compliance inspections have been checking spray records to include water rates, harvest interval timings, compliance with buffer strip widths for spray applications and buffer strip widths on the ground (1m from the top of a ditch bank). Do ensure that you read the label and that your spray records are kept up-to-date. Feel free to ask Teresa if you have any questions or require further clarification.

Our Catchment Achievements

Do have a look at the enclosed leaflet, which celebrates the achievements of the Chelmer and Blackwater Catchment Partnership in conjunction with yourselves and your advisors. Thank you for your involvement with the Partnership to-date and we look forward to continued success for our catchment and water quality.

Free On-Farm Advisory Visits Available

Farm visits are available for your farm business through the Chelmer and Blackwater Catchment Partnership. Contact Teresa (07792 169545) to sign up for your free visit now:

- **Farm Compliance Check** (including NVZ's)
- **Nutrient Management Planning**
- **Sprayer Filling Area Design**
- **Countryside Stewardship Advisory Visit**
- **Soil Husbandry Visit**

Dates For Your Diary

Greenstead Green Ploughing Match	Saturday 16th September 2016	Black Notley Hall, Black Notley, CM7 8LF	Greenstead Green E-mail: paulgoodchild@hotmail.co.uk Secretary: Ken Vince 01376-325363
Ongar Ploughing Match & Clay Pigeon Shoot	Saturday 24th September 2016	Marks Hall, White Roding, CM6 1RT	Ongar E-mail: opmsecretary@btinternet.com Secretary: Miss Helen McTurk 01279-876151 or 07831-138403
Rochford and County Ploughing Match	Saturday 1st October 2016	Great Stambridge Hall, Rochford, SS4 2BF	Rochford E-mail: d.milbourn@whirledgeandnott.co.uk Secretary: David Milbourn 01702-783377

Look out for the next catchment newsletter: Autumn 2016

The Chelmer and Blackwater Catchment Partnership is supported by:

