

A strategy for the creation of biodiverse meadow grassland

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www.ukagriculture.com/conservation/meadows

Revised Recommendations

The new ELS and HLS environmental management schemes should be amended to allow farmers partaking in them to practice a new "biodiverse meadow" option for the management of their permanent sown set-aside.

The following rules should apply:

The option must be undertaken for a minimum of five years. After this period the farmer retains the right to withdraw and revert to an alternate management option.

A cut of hay *must* be taken after 15th July each year.

Farmers cannot graze the land between the end of March and the taking of the hay crop.

Farmers may graze the land with their own or other farm livestock as a management tool to encourage biodiversity.

Fertiliser cannot be applied unless a derogation is obtained – such derogation to permit only small applications of P and K.

The farmer will receive only a nominal payment under the environmental schemes for the first five years of continuous management.

The farmer will receive additional payment under the environmental schemes for the sixth and subsequent years of continuous management .