



organic farming technical summary

Derogation On Utilisation Of Set-Aside Land On Organic Farms

OFTS13

- A derogation has been introduced into the rules for managing set-aside land which allows organic farmers to **utilise their set-aside land** for grazing or cutting.
 - This derogation will continue in future years - it is not related to the foot and mouth outbreak and is not limited, therefore, just to the year 2001.
- The Set-aside land must be **sown with a legume fodder crop** from within a specified list of species (see below).
- The grazing and cutting must be for use by the **farmers' own livestock**, and must not be used for sale or letting. There must be no payment received in cash or kind.
- This derogation only applies when the **whole of the holding** is registered as organically managed.
 - In this context, 'holding' is defined as your IACS holding, i.e. all the production units in the UK farmed by you or made available to you for farming including any land held on a short term letting/licence and declared on your IACS form.
- The Set-Aside rules specify a minimum area of obligatory set-aside – for 2001 10% of the total claimed AAPS arable area (i.e. area claimed in AAPS eligible crops plus the claimed set-aside area) - but also permit up to 50% of the total claimed area to be put into voluntary set-aside. However, be aware that increasing the AAPS area will decrease the forage area and may have an impact on livestock subsidies and extensification payments.
 - This derogation permits grazing and cutting to be carried out on all of the set-aside, not just the obligatory set-aside.

- The legumes which this derogation applies to are as follows:

Lucerne, Sickle Medick, Birds foot trefoil, Lupins (excluding sweet lupins), Sainfoin, **Clover**, Melilot/Sweet Clover, Wild Vetch, Chickling Vetch, **Field Beans**, Fenugreek, **Peas**, Hairy Vetch, Podder Vetch, Soya Bean, Dwarf Chickling Vetch, Narbonne Vetch, One-leafed Vetch.

- These legumes may be **sown in mixture** with other species (e.g. grass or cereals), but the legume must be the **dominant component** of the mixture.
 - 'Dominant' in this context means that the legume must have a **higher ground cover** than the non-legume component. It does not relate to the composition of the seed mixture.
 - Clearly, in Scotland, the most likely species to be used in this situation are the clovers (red and white).
 - In good grass/clover leys, it will be easy to demonstrate clover dominance in the July/August/September period, - more difficult to do so at other times of the year.
- Thus, on an organic farm, **much of the grass/clover ley could be designated as set-aside**, provided that at least an equal area of eligible crops is also grown (i.e. no more than 50% of eligible land is in set-aside).
 - As such, it will attract a set-aside payment at the going rate (£202/hectare and £185/ha on non-LFA and LFA land respectively in 2001 after adjusting for base area penalty and modulation).

David Younie
SAC Plant & Crop Science Division
Craibstone Estate
Bucksburn
Aberdeen
AB21 9YA

Graham Kerr
Rural Business Unit
SAC Advisory Office
Bush Estate
Penicuik
Midlothian
EH26 0PH

September 2001