



A clear solution for farmers

CATCHMENT SENSITIVE FARMING

Reducing the impacts of indoor and outdoor pig operations in Norfolk

Gipping & Orwell Catchment (31)

CSFO: Gary Hodgetts

Farm descriptions

CSF contractor Tim Schofield reduced pollution at two separate pig farms affecting the Gipping and Orwell Catchment. In the first instance he advised a farmer with indoor pigs how best to cut run-off. Secondly he reduced water pollution from an outdoor pig farm bordering a tributary of the River Gipping. The second farmer – who rotates his land between pigs and cereals - wasn't involved in any Environmental Stewardship Schemes. Tim (supported by the local CSFO) dealt with an emerging serious problem as the number of outdoor pig units grows in the catchment.

Pollution Issues

At the indoor farm the farmer's two pig units were separated by an open concrete yard. Although the farmer was diverting rain water off the roofs of his pig units, clean water falling into the yard was mixing with contaminated water and increasing the amount of dirty water needing disposal, leading to the potential for disposal occurring at more risky times. The farmer stored all contaminated water in a lagoon adjacent to the yard.

At the outdoor pig farm Tim found enriched run-off from a farm roadway was reaching the river. Further Run-off occurring from the fields was exacerbated by the lack of green cover in the pig fields. Poor soil structure in the fields – on mainly sandy loam and sandy clay loam – increased run-off and soil erosion.

Solutions

1. At the indoor pig farm Tim advised roofing the open concrete yard between the two pig sheds. This stops clean water mixing with contaminated water and will reduce the number of times the lagoon had to be emptied, thus minimising the risk of untimely slurry spreading. The farmer has applied for funding under the CSF grant scheme which he hopes will cover a third of the overall roofing cost.
2. At the outdoor pig farm, Tim advised minimizing vehicle access to the fields to reduce the risk of run-off via vehicle tracks. He suggested cultivating 10 meter buffer strips around the pig fields to absorb run-off, suggesting wider buffer strips on the steeper slopes. He advised sub soiling adjacent to the track ways to aid percolation and further reduce run off. The farmer hadn't been approached by advisory bodies prior to Tim's visit nor was he under any ES schemes. He's now in the process of entering into an ELS agreement that includes resource protection as a priority.

Farmer Engagement and Motivation

Both farmers are acting on Tim's advice. The CSFO plans to revisit the farms to see what further assistance she can offer through other specialist CSF advisers.

Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer (CSFO)

Gary Hodgetts

Natural England

07747 837621

gary.hodgetts@naturalengland.org.uk

www.naturalengland.org.uk/csfo

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