

# When drought happens

Fact sheet for farmers - June 2011

**A drought is a natural event. Extremes in weather across the UK, including the combination of drier summers and wetter winters, could become more frequent as a result of climate change.**

## What this might mean for you

Farmers most at risk are those who rely on abstracting water directly from rivers without putting it into storage.

Low river flows may mean that some farmers will have to stop abstracting water. This is often determined by conditions set out in their abstraction licences.

In some cases where drought is particularly severe, we may require farmers to stop taking water for spray irrigation activity. We will try to give plenty of warning before we introduce any restrictions on spray irrigation use.

We will work with farmers and will try to avoid restrictions where possible.

## What can you do now?

Use water as efficiently as possible:

- Irrigate in the evenings or at night (provided it is safe to do so) and check for any leaks
- Do not irrigate if it is windy
- Use low trajectory sprays to reduce evaporation
- Ensure irrigation is uniform, with appropriate rates and droplet size
- Ensure irrigation pipe work is properly lagged, and check regularly for leaks
- Avoid over-irrigating
- Speak to us about your concerns as soon as possible. If you feel that you need to extend the season on your abstraction licence to bulk up your yields, please contact us as matter of priority on 03708 506 506 (Mon-Fri, 8am - 6pm).