

RESEARCH SHOWS WELSH FARMERS REMAIN CONFUSED BY WASTE REGULATIONS

15 September 2008: Research conducted by NetRegs.gov.uk among NFU members reveals that more than a third (38 per cent) of farmers still find the Waste Management Regulations difficult to understand. The research also finds that 46 per cent feel swamped by the amount of information they receive on handling waste effectively.

The new NetRegs Agricultural Waste Training Tool (www.netregs.gov.uk/training) for Wales is intended to combat this information overload by providing the Welsh farming community with a simple web-based guidance tool for waste issues. The NetRegs tool has been pre-tested by the farming community and includes six learning modules to help the user fully understand the different aspects of managing their waste.

Aarun Naik, Environmental Policy Adviser, NFU believes that the NetRegs Agricultural Waste Training Tool will make information on regulations simpler for farmers to understand and is an important step towards improved compliance, "The NFU already provide farmers with a wide variety of useful guidance on farm waste. However, this tool provides all the essential information in an easy to use format. More farmers are using the web these days to find the information they require. This single access point to all the information online will be a useful resource to help farm businesses to improve their environmental compliance."

The tool, specific to Wales means that Welsh farmers will not be bogged down with information that is relevant to other parts of the UK, but not to themselves.

Farmer, Michael Jones, has been involved in the pilot testing scheme, "The NetRegs tool really is very user friendly. It is a very useful one-stop-shop which helps you condense all the information surrounding waste management. Agricultural waste can

be an appalling pollutant and the farming community has a duty of care to exemplify best practice to the general public.”

Positively, the survey results also reveal that 53 per cent of respondents believe that the Waste Management Regulations 2006 have helped to make their business more environmentally responsible. However, 44 per cent believe that the regulations have affected their day-to-day work negatively.

This needn't be the case according to Richard Martin, Programme Manager at NetRegs, “Our research showed that farmers are currently receiving information from a wide range of sources. In fact, 83 per cent stated that they would welcome a simple tool that would give them all the farm waste information they needed. Understanding waste issues can be made much easier and we believe that the new NetRegs Farm Waste Training Tool for Wales achieves this.”

The Welsh version of the tool is supported by NetRegs' 'Farm Waste – No Bull' communications campaign to heighten the awareness amongst farmers of waste compliance issues.

- Ends -

Notes to editors:

- The NetRegs survey was conducted through the National Farmers Union and comprised 165 respondents.
- Testing of the web-based tool demonstrated that 75% of respondents found the tool helpful to understand legislation and that 97% that would recommend it.

About NetRegs:

- NetRegs - www.netregs.gov.uk - is a joint initiative between the Environment Agency in England and Wales (EA and EAW), the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.
- NetRegs was launched in 2004 to provide SMEs with guidance on complying with environmental legislation.
- The website currently offers specific guidelines for more than 110 industry sectors in the UK.

- NetRegs provides free guidance to SMEs in the UK, which is available without the need to register.

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