



Farm Environmental Management Plans



A Farm Environmental Management Plan (FEMP) can be created by following this guide, or by using an industry specific plan and inserting Southland-specific information. Every landholding over 20ha needs a FEMP.

It must be reviewed every 12 months by the owner or their agent, and the outcome of the review should be documented. The FEMP will need to be provided to Environment Southland upon request.

From 1 May 2019 all dairy platforms and any landholding that undertakes intensive winter grazing will need a FEMP. From 1 May 2020 all other

landholdings above 20ha will need a FEMP.

The following details need to be recorded in the plan: physical address, description of the landholding ownership, owner's contact details, legal description(s) of the landholding and a list of all resource consents and the date of their expiry.

You will need to apply for a consent if you can't meet the permitted criteria. It is recommended that you contact the consents team at Environment Southland to talk about your application. Please note cultivation in ephemeral waterways is permitted under Rule 20(aa).

The FEMP should contain separate maps/aerial photographs that clearly show:

- The farm boundary
- Physiographic zones and relevant variants
- Soil maps
- Water bodies
- Existing and proposed riparian fencing
- Stock crossings marked as a bridges/culverts/fords
- Known subsurface drains and their relative outfall points
- Land that may be cultivated over a 12-month period
- Land that may be intensively winter grazed between 1 May and 30 September; highlighting:
 - critical source areas
 - intended setbacks from water bodies
 - land with a slope greater than 20 degrees



Nutrient Budget

For all landholdings above 20ha, the FEMP needs to contain a nutrient budget. This is to be calculated with the latest version of OVERSEER in accordance with the latest version of the OVERSEER Best Practice Data Input Standards. This is to be repeated when:

- A change in land use associated with the farming activity occurs, including a change in crop area, crop rotation length, type of crop grown, stocking rate or stock type. A new OVERSEER nutrient budget will need to be completed at the end of the year in which the change occurs and also every three years after the change occurs.
- Each time a nutrient budget is prepared for a landholding, the input data should be reviewed to ensure it accurately reflects the farming system. A record of this review should be kept by the owner.

Good Management Practices

The FEMP contains good management practices that have been implemented since 3 June 2016. These good management practices need to be reviewed every 12 months and the outcomes documented within the FEMP. These good management practices must include;

- How you intend to reduce sediment and nutrient losses from critical source areas
- The cultivation techniques to be used, such as contour ploughing, strip cultivation or direct drilling
- The paddocks intended for intensive winter grazing
- How riparian areas are to be maintained, documenting any planting and the type of riparian vegetation to be planted

- Water bodies that stock are to be excluded from and how they are to be excluded
- Ways to minimise the discharge of contaminants to surface water or groundwater with specific reference to the contaminant pathways on your farm

The Environment Southland, DairyNZ and Beef + Lamb New Zealand websites have examples of good management practices. 'Industry-agreed Good Management Practices relating to water quality' has examples to follow.

Common questions and answers

Q: When will I need to have a FEMP?

A: From 1 May 2019 all dairy platforms and any landholding that has intensive winter grazing will need a FEMP. From 1 May 2020 all other landholdings above 20ha will need a FEMP.

Q: Where do I find the information to write a FEMP?

A: Appendix N of the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan provides an outline of what needs to be included in your FEMP.

Q: Who can put a FEMP together?

A: A Farm Environmental Management Plan can be developed by you if you follow the guidelines in the plan, or you might wish to employ a consultant to complete it for you. You may need to employ a consultant to complete the nutrient budget for you. The land sustainability team at Environment Southland is available to assist with information that is required for the FEMP.

Q: Will I still need to develop a FEMP if I am already operating at good practice?

A: Yes you will, however if you are already operating at good practice, there will be fewer risks that you will have to identify and fewer actions for your landholding.

Q: If I already have a Sustainable Milk Plan or a Land Environment Plan, will I need a FEMP?

A: If your Sustainable Milk Plan or Land Environment Plan is already complete it may need some additional information inserted into it to ensure it meets Council's requirements.

Q: Who needs an OVERSEER nutrient budget?

A: Any landholding over 20ha will need an OVERSEER nutrient budget as part of their FEMP.

Q: How often do I need to have an OVERSEER nutrient budget prepared for my landholding?

A: You will need to have an OVERSEER nutrient budget prepared initially and then for any material change on your property. This could include a change in crop area, crop rotation length, type of crops grown, stocking rate or stock type. The OVERSEER nutrient budget will need to be prepared at the end of the year in which the change occurs. However, you will also need to update this every three years after the change occurs.

Q: Who can develop an OVERSEER budget for my landholding?

A: An accredited nutrient management advisor or accredited consultant with a good understanding of nutrient management tools and farming systems, will be needed to help develop a nutrient management plan for your farm. You will find a list of these people on the Nutrient Management Advisor Certification Programme website, www.nmacertification.org.nz/tools/clients/directory.aspx?SECT=southland

The information provided is based on Rule 20 and Appendix N in the decisions version of the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan, April 2018.

If you're thinking about making a change to your farming activity, it's important to remember what the proposed Southland Water and Land Plan is striving towards. Don't forget to address the objectives and policies

alongside of the relevant rules when you are making an application for resource consent. The objectives and policies are the key drivers of the rules and need to be considered carefully.