



Sam Adams, Project Manager
sadams@soilassociation.org

Background

- Launched in 2011
- Part of the Soil Association department - 'Producer Support'
- Working with farmers across the UK
- Funding from the EU/Defra and Ashden Trust

THE ASHDEN TRUST

The logo for The Ashden Trust, featuring the text "THE ASHDEN TRUST" in a teal serif font, with a stylized teal wave graphic underneath.

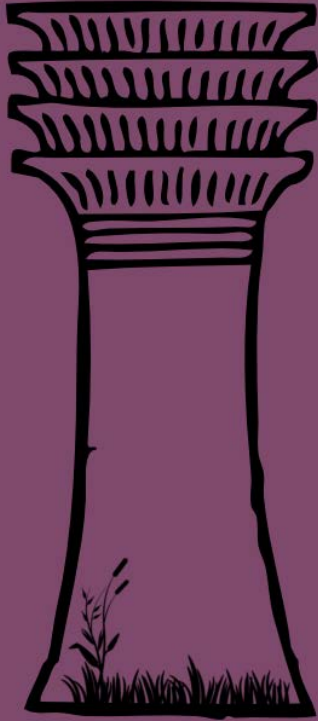
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas.



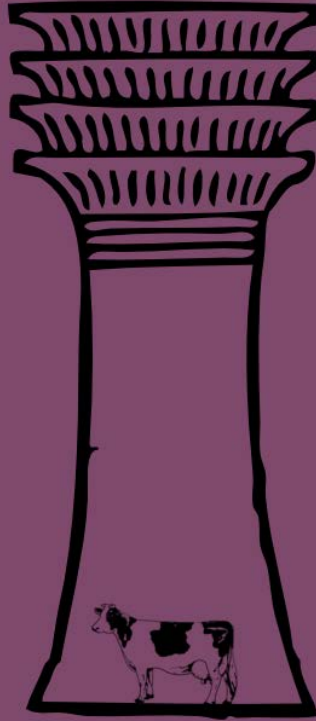
The Low Carbon Farming Project is part financed by the European Agricultural Fund for European Development 2007-2013: Europe investing in rural areas

The Four Pillars of Low Carbon Farming

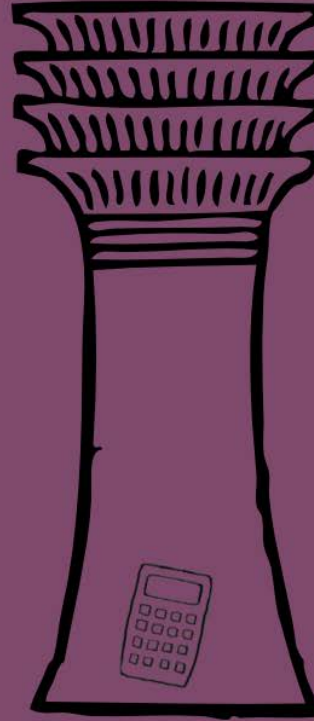
www.soilassociation.org/lowcarbon



**Soil and
Grassland
Management**



**Livestock
Management**



**Nutrient and
Manure
Management**



**Renewable
Energy**



Programme

- Knowledge Exchange: *Materials and Resources*
 - Fact sheets
 - Soil Association website
 - ASDA (retailer) network
 - Blog articles
 - Twitter
 - Mobile app (August)



Programme

- Knowledge Exchange: *Materials and Resources*
 - Handbook (August)



Programme

- Research
 - Case studies in Scotland and England
 - Quantifying economic benefits (ORC)

Measuring

- *Farm Carbon Assessment Tool* (FCAT)
- Launched November 2012
- Free, online tool for farmers
- Organic and non-organic
- Whole farm
- Self-benchmarking
- Scoring farm activities against low carbon 'best practice'
- www.soilassociation.org/fcat





FCAT - Farm Carbon Assessment Tool

Select Active Year: 2012

user : SmithLtd

User Guide

Energy

Nutrients & Manure

Soil & Grassland

Livestock

Report

User Guide

The tool is divided into 4 sections which assess:

- Energy and fuel use
- Nutrient and manure management
- Soil and grassland management
- Livestock production

Answer a range of questions to assess different aspects of your farm practices which contribute to your farm's carbon footprint. Your answers are assessed in relation to the impact that the selected management practice has on greenhouse gas emissions and scored to produce a results report which highlights areas where best practice is already occurring and where improvements could be made.

We recommend that you complete all relevant sections to gain a comprehensive assessment of your farm system.

GETTING STARTED - select the year to be assessed from the drop down list at the top of this page.



ANSWER QUESTIONS - work your way through the questions in each section - moving between sections using the tabs along the top of the page.

Hold your mouse over '**More information**' to view additional information about each question

CLICK 'SAVE CHANGES' TO ENSURE THAT YOU SAVE YOUR DATA BEFORE MOVING ON TO THE NEXT SECTION



VIEW YOUR REPORT - click on the 'Report' tab to display your results. Your answers are scored on a scale of 'best practice' where 5 is 'best'.



FACTSHEETS - download targetted information to support you in moving towards better low carbon farming practice.



MONITOR IMPROVEMENT - reassess your farm annually and compare results year on year.



FCAT - Farm Carbon Assessment Tool

Select Active Year: 2012 [Logout](#)

user : SmithLtd

User Guide

Energy

Nutrients & Manure

Soil & Grassland

Livestock

Report

Soil and grassland - 2012

This section looks at soil and grassland management and scores practices depending on their impact on nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide emissions and carbon sequestration.

- Answer ALL questions within this section answering as accurately and honestly as possible
- Select most appropriate/best fitting answer from drop down boxes
- Click either 'yes' or 'no' where applicable - a box must be ticked for each option

**** Make sure you save your changes before moving to the next section**

Grass management

How long are grassland leys down for within your rotation? [more information](#) Combination of short and long term leys/permanent pasture

How species rich are the grassland leys generally grown on your farm? [more information](#) Limited mix species/variety (2 or more)

Do you include legumes in your grassland leys? [more information](#) Simple legume species/variety included

Soil management

What do you do to reduce the occurrence of bare soil? [more information](#)

N/A All land under grass ☐

Undersow to maintain good cover and reduce the presence of bare soil	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Select autumn crop species/varieties which develop quickly to provide cover over winter	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Leave stubbles from previous crop standing over winter	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Grow a nitrogen 'lifting'/holding' winter cover crop (e.g. phacelia, mustard)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Manage grazing carefully to ensure cover is not compromised	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No

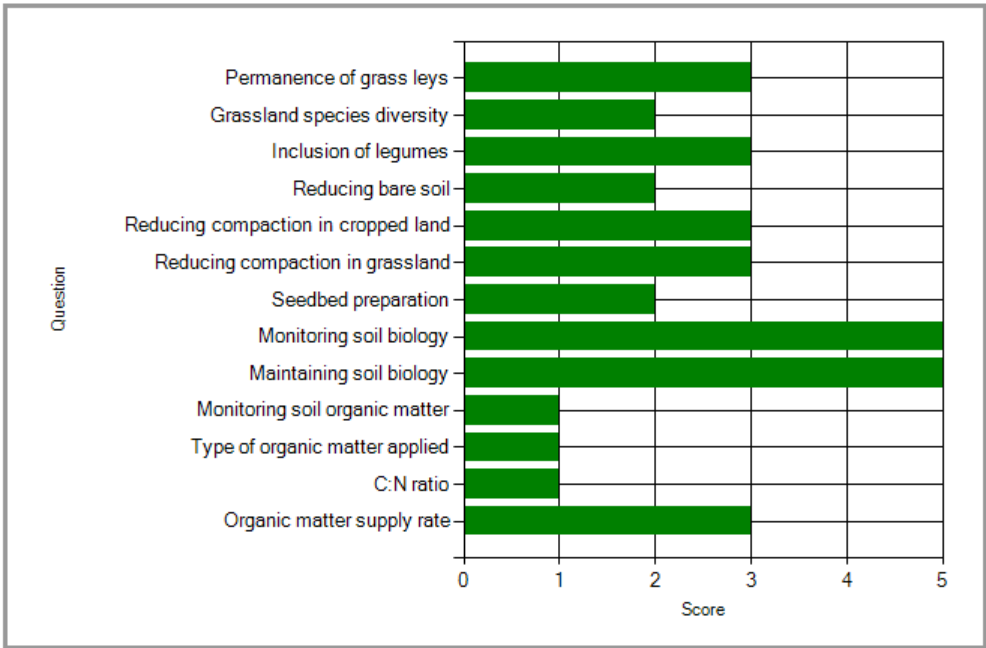
How do you reduce the risk/presence of soil compaction in cropped/arable land? [more information](#)

N/A No arable land ☐

Establish autumn crops/cover crops when soil conditions are drier	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
Cultivate compacted tillage soils to increase aerations and water infiltration	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Use wide tyre/minimum tyre pressure/tracked vehicles to reduce ground pressure	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Use lighter machinery/reduced payload where possible	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Controlled traffic - vehicle wheels are confined to semi permanent tracks.	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No

Soil and grassland

Your answers regarding soil and grassland management have been assessed and scored on a scale of 1 to 5 depending on the impact that the different practices have on greenhouse gas emissions. Your results are displayed on the graph below. Practices scoring '5' are considered to be 'best practice and are minimising the possible impact on emissions. Lower scoring practices have a negative impact on greenhouse gas emission and measures can be taken to reduce this impact and minimise emissions.



You should aim to score as highly as possible within your own farm's constraints – it may not be possible to score 5 in certain areas within your farming system, in which case you should aim to improve practice as much as is feasible over time and within the constraints of the farm.

For support and information on improving soil and grassland management download the appropriate factsheets:

- [Introduction – the role of soil and grassland management in reducing farm emissions and increasing carbon sequestration](#)
- [Grassland management](#)
- [Soil management](#)
- [Soil biology](#)
- [Organic matter management](#)

Legacy

- Project will complete in November 2013
- Online course
- Policy work
- Carbon trading