

Practices to improve soil and deliver public goods

Defra is currently exploring how to incentivise farmers and land owners to manage their land in ways that can deliver so-called public goods, as well as food security. These goods could include improved water quality, flood protection and carbon storage.

The proposed changes to the way farm subsidies are awarded has presented iCASP with an opportunity to make a helpful contribution. Recognising that healthy soil underpins the delivery of many public goods, iCASP has carried out a rapid review of evidence on the effectiveness of ten agricultural practices for improving soil health. The ten that were selected are those that are adopted most frequently by Yorkshire farmers signed up to current agri-environment schemes.

The results provide some useful pointers for policy-makers and farmers which the team are communicating in a series of hand-outs for different target audiences.

Partners and advisors:

Dales to Vales River Network, Environment Agency, Leeds City Region Local Nature Partnership, Natural England, National Farmers' Union, Nidderdale AONB (and Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership), Sustainable Futures, University of Leeds, University of Newcastle, University of Sheffield, University of York, White Rose Forest, Yorkshire Water.

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