



Media Release

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New H2OK? Think Water Check it Out tool launched

A new online tool to help farmers and operators check their spraying practices has been launched by The Voluntary Initiative (VI).

The new tool was developed by the Crop Protection Association with support from Catchment Sensitive Farming and has 22 multi-choice questions covering Planning and Management, Filling and Handling, Soil Management and Field Practice. After completing the questions, users are given a score for each aspect of their spraying operation, and an overall score. A detailed report with recommendations on how they can improve their practices is also provided as a download. The tool has been allocated CPD points by both NRoSO and BASIS.

"Doing everything right in terms of water protection is really important if we are show that farmers are continuing to use pesticides responsibly," says the VI's Patrick Goldsworthy. "The Check it Out tool will help farmers and operators to review how they are doing, what they can do to improve and where to get further advice... I hope everyone check's it out!".

UK and international pesticide application expert and Farm Sprayer Operator of the Year (FSOOTY) founder Tom Robinson welcomed the new tool: "This is a simple and easy to use tool which should help every operator check the key factors for keeping pesticides out of water, and evaluate their own farm practices. It gives you useful feedback on accepted best practice, and highlights the opportunities to improve."

The tool, which operates using web-based PC software, can be found at www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk/checkitout

ENDS

1. The Voluntary Initiative is a programme of measures which promotes responsible pesticide use. It is sponsored by the Agricultural Engineers Association, Agricultural Industries Confederation, Country Land and Business Association, Crop Protection Association, National Association of Agricultural Contractors, the NFU, NFU Scotland and the Ulster Farmers Union.
2. The Crop Protection Association represents companies in the UK engaged in the manufacture, formulation and supply of crop protection products for use in agriculture, horticulture, forestry, home gardening, amenity, industrial, and local authorities www.cropprotection.org.uk
3. Catchment Sensitive Farming is a partnership project between Defra, Environment Agency and Natural England which offers advice and support to farmers to reduce diffuse water pollution from agriculture in over 79 catchments in England. For further information see www.gov.uk/catchment-sensitive-farming-reduce-agricultural-water-pollution
4. The Voluntary Initiative is working in partnership with the Campaign for the Farmed Environment (CFE) to help promote best practice advice for farmers and advisers to reduce diffuse water pollution from use of pesticides in agriculture. www.cfeonline.org.uk

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