

P2007349: Assessment and analysis at AHDB Strategic Cereal Farms

Strategic Cereal Farm East: Work Package 4 – Marginal land

Work package 4 is an analysis of multiple farm datasets to classify areas of land on the Strategic Cereal Farm East that provide agricultural value, and to identify those areas of land that have little agriculture value and potential for profit and can be referred to as marginal land. The farm data sets include historic yield maps, soil maps, electrical conductivity scans, normalised difference vegetation index (NDVI), field yields, soil tests, drainage maps, environmental option maps and tramline locations.

Under future agricultural policy, farmers will be paid for work that enhances the environment. It is therefore important that farmers are able to identify the opportunities for implementing environmental areas on their farm. The aim of the work included in Work Package 4 at the Strategic Cereal Farm East is to develop recommendations for cropping plans for the farm that maximise the use of land that provides agricultural value and consider the role of marginal land to deliver environmental benefits. The design of the new Environmental Land Management scheme (ELMs) is still to be confirmed. Therefore, this work package should focus on the objectives of ELMs that have been outlined, specifically clean air, reductions in environmental hazards and pollution, thriving plants and wildlife, clean water, enhanced landscapes and measures to minimise the effects of climate change.

The analysis should also include the crop rotation. For example, winter crops only, spring crops only, winter and spring cropping, and how the rotation can be designed to deliver maximum economic and environmental return.

The output provided in this work package should include a report of the analysis and recommendations, including costings. The report should also consider the timescales over which the different recommendations would be applied and the time for achieving an economic and environmental return on investment.