

# Overgrazing and unsuitable supplementary feeding

The aim of these rules is to help protect important habitats that contain natural or semi-natural vegetation by preventing overgrazing and unsuitable supplementary feeding.

## A. You must not

1. overgraze<sup>1</sup>, or allow to be overgrazed, the natural and semi-natural vegetation<sup>2</sup> on your holding;
2. carry out unsuitable supplementary feeding<sup>3</sup>, except where it is necessary for the purpose of animal welfare during periods of extreme weather conditions.

## B. You must

1. have regard to any notification, of appropriate measures to prevent overgrazing and/or unsuitable supplementary feeding, sent to you on behalf of the Secretary of State;
2. comply with any written directions, in relation to land subject to overgrazing and/or unsuitable supplementary feeding, sent to you on behalf of the Secretary of State.

Where damage has been caused by trampling or supplementary feeding in the winter, it should be minimal enough to allow for the vegetation to recover to its original condition through natural regeneration by the end of the next growing season.

The rules of this GAEC standard (GAEC 9) do not apply if a derogation has been granted. Information on under what circumstances RPA can grant derogations can be found in the introduction to this guide. You must apply to RPA in writing for this derogation and wait for written permission before carrying out any work.



### Further advice and guidance

*Guidance for Cross Compliance in England: Management of Habitats and Landscape Features (rpa176)* is available on our website at [rpa.defra.gov.uk/crosscompliance/farmerguidance](http://rpa.defra.gov.uk/crosscompliance/farmerguidance)

Natural England: 0845 600 3078

- 1 'Overgraze' means grazing land with so many livestock that the growth, quality or diversity of natural or semi-natural vegetation is adversely affected.
- 2 'Natural and semi-natural vegetation' is defined as self-seeded or self-propagated vegetation characteristic of the area. This land includes but is not restricted to: moorland, unimproved grassland, grazed woodland or forest, heathland and sand dunes.
- 3 'Unsuitable supplementary feeding' means providing supplementary feed for livestock in a way that adversely affects the quality or diversity of natural and semi-natural vegetation through the trampling or poaching of land by livestock, or by ruts caused by vehicles used to transport feed.