


The Voluntary Initiative


# VI Overview 2007

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## What and Why



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- Origins of the VI
- Structure
- Achievements

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# What and Why




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## What and Why

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# What and Why



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## Why the VI ?

- Agreed with Government as the alternative to a possible £125m pa tax on pesticides
- A better more targeted way to deliver the environmental improvements

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## What and Why



### UK Environmental Impacts

- Water
  - 7-9% surface water samples >0.1ppb
    - Phenoxy, Triazines, Substituted ureas
  - Groundwater... concerns
  - Treatment costs
- Biodiversity
  - Farmland Birds
    - 80% decline in populations since 1970s
    - Grey Partridge, Corn Bunting, Yellowhammer

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NATIONAL  
FARMERS'  
UNION OF  
SCOTLAND



A.E.A.  
EST 1875



## Management



Implementation is overseen by the VI Steering Group

- Chair Prof. Barry Dent
  - Signatories
  - Stakeholders
  - Observers
- 
- Oversee and guide VI
  - Report to Ministers



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The VI comprises:

Research

Training

Communication &  
Stewardship



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Research

RSPB

LINK

Crop Protection Association

LEAF

THE NATIONAL TRUST

BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL

syngenta

Sainsbury's

HGCA

MORRISONS

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SAFFIE: Sustainable Arable Farming For an Improved Environment

Skylark Plots

ELS = 10pts per ha

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Training

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## Training

### National Register of Sprayer Operators



- Identifies Active Operators
- Encourages & supports operator training
  - Continuous Professional Development CPD
- Open to all
- 30 CPD points over 3 years
  - Approx. one day training pa

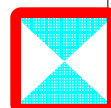
[www.nroso.org.uk](http://www.nroso.org.uk)

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## Training



- Roadshows



- Agronomists



- IFM Training Manual




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## Communication & Stewardship

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## Stewardship




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### NSTS - Sprayer Testing

- Based on AEA scheme
- AEA administered
- Boom sprayers and granule applicators
- Special sprayer tester training
- 57% sprayers tested need prior work to pass test
  - nozzles
  - leaking joints



[www.nsts.org.uk](http://www.nsts.org.uk)



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## Stewardship



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- Crop Protection & Environment
- Annual self-audit
  - Crop Protection, Water, Biodiversity
  - Profile -Poor (D), Basic (C), Good (B) and Best (A)
  - Prioritise and 'Action Plan'
- Modest but meaningful
- Available as a download from VI website or farming unions



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## Achievements

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76% of the UK Sprayed Area covered by NSTS


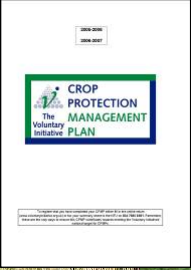




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2.4m ha (>50%) of the arable area expected to be covered by CPMPs

80% of UK Arable Area covered by NRoSO



Up to 98% improvement in water quality in VI  
Pilot Catchments





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To find out more...

[www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk](http://www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk)

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