

Sprayer Testing

UK regulation requires that all pesticide application equipment in use is tested by **26th November 2016**.

Equipment to be tested by this date includes:

- All boom sprayers over 3m in width, air blast sprayers, train sprayers and equipment mounted on aircraft.
- Boom sprayers of 3m or less.
- Other forms of pesticide application equipment including, slug pellet applicators, micro-granular applicators, weed wipers, fogging, misting and smoking equipment, seed treatment equipment, sub-surface liquid applicators and other forms of specialist application equipment.

Equipment then requires further testing at regular intervals (see overleaf).

New equipment has until its fifth anniversary to be tested for the first time.

Knapsacks, hand-held and pedestrian controlled equipment **DO NOT need to be formally tested but need to be regularly inspected**.

The UK's only recognised testing scheme is the National Sprayer Testing Scheme.

Why does this matter?

A well maintained and regularly tested machine helps to ensure pesticide operations are safe for the operator and environment, ensuring efficient and accurate on target application.

These measures are legal requirements. Non-compliance could lead to prosecution and threaten your farm assurance status and single farm payment. NB. Many farm assurance schemes require annual testing.

Why do you have to do this?

All EU countries are implementing the Sustainable Use Directive (SUD)*. The Directive sets minimum standards for the safe use of professional plant protection products (pesticides). Due to existing VI schemes: the National Sprayer Testing Scheme (NSTS), Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plans and National Register of Sprayer Operators (NRoSO), many farmers and growers are meeting most of the requirements of the Directive. However, those not currently having all their sprayers, granular applicators, slug pelleters and other pesticide application equipment in use tested or checked, will now need to do so.

What equipment is exempt from testing?

Knapsacks, hand held and pedestrian controlled machines do not require a formal test, however, they should be checked on a regular basis, against a checklist with a record kept.

For more detailed advice see over.

*The legal requirements are contained in the Plant Protection Products (Sustainable Use) Regulations 2012

Sprayer testing: What do I have to do?

By 26th November 2016

Ensure that all non-exempt pesticide application equipment in use, including slug pellet and granular applicators have been tested.

By 2020

Ensure all pesticide application equipment with a boom over 3m, air blast sprayers and aerial sprayers has been tested within the last 5 years.

After 2020

Ensure all pesticide application equipment with a boom over 3m, air blast and aerial sprayers are tested every 3 years. Boom sprayers of 3m or less need to be re-tested every six years, along with slug pellet, granular and other applicators.

For knapsacks, hand-held and pedestrian controlled machines ensure they are checked regularly, against a checklist available at www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk and www.nsts.org.uk and a record is kept.

Use this decision tree to help work out how often each piece of equipment you use needs to be tested:



NB Many farm assurance, grower and supermarket protocols require annual testing.