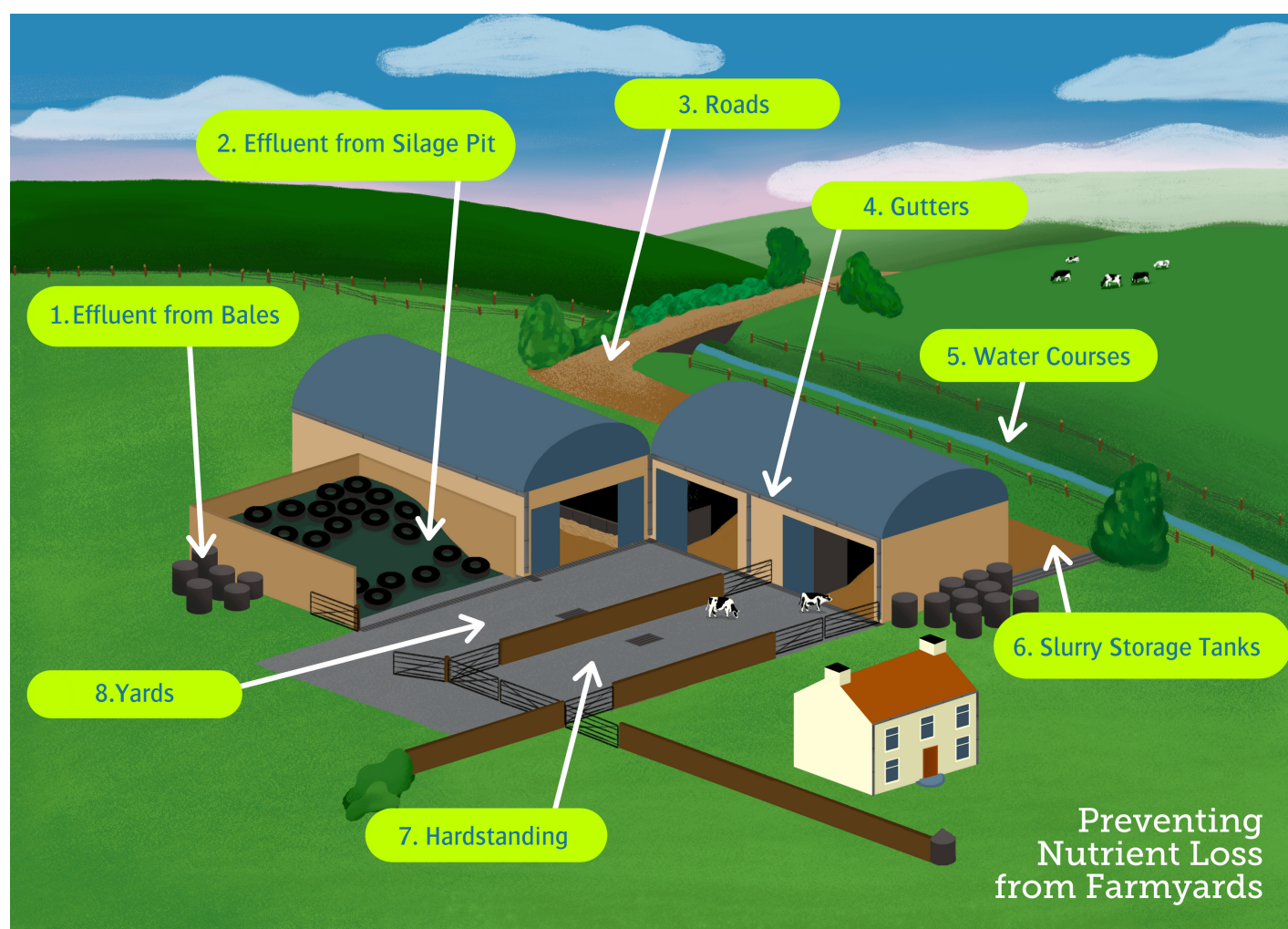


Preventing Nutrient Loss from Farmyards

Information Sheet

Farmyards are a potential source of nutrient loss from agriculture to watercourses. Sources of nutrients on farmyards are effluent from silage pits/bales, manure and parlour washings that can be washed off the yard during rainfall events. If nutrients enter rivers, lakes and estuaries it causes eutrophication, which impacts on fisheries, recreational activities, biodiversity and drinking water quality.

Minimising nutrient loss is dependent on good farmyard management, the design and maintenance of the yard and minimising the amount of rainfall that runs off the yard. By taking a few simple steps farmers can help minimise the amount of nutrients being lost from their farmyard.



Further Information

Northern Ireland - Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Prevention of Pollution of Water, Air and Soil
Republic of Ireland - Good Agricultural Practice for Protection of Waters Regulations 2018

Preventing Nutrient Loss from Farmyards - Key

1. EFFLUENT FROM BALES

Effluent from bales stored in the farmyard must be collected. Stacking bales in a single layer produces less effluent than multiple layers and should be preferred if you have sufficient space. Bales stored in fields should be kept more than 10m from a watercourse and the location moved each year.

2. EFFLUENT FROM SILAGE PIT

All effluent from the silage pit must be collected in a gully/pipe and routed to a storage tank.

3. ROADS

Roads should be cambered to direct runoff to the adjoining field.

4. GUTTERS

Gutters of farmyard houses should be intact and kept clear. Gutters and downpipes should direct rain water away from hard standing areas on the farmyard.

5. WATER COURSES

Regularly check any water courses adjacent to your farmyard.

6. SLURRY STORAGE TANKS

Ensure that slurry storage tanks are in good condition, with no cracks or faults. Manage and monitor regularly to ensure no overflow occurs.

7. HARDSTANDING

The hardstanding may become soiled by livestock. Rainfall that comes in contact with manure/urine is considered either dirty/soiled water or slurry so must be directed to the appropriate storage tank. To reduce this, scrape or sweep the hardstanding to remove manure before rainfall. On dairy farms, covered waiting areas in yards are recommended.

8. YARDS

Minimise soiled yard areas. Keep clean and dirty yards separate and don't let water from clean yards or surrounding fields flow onto dirty yards. Manholes and gullies should be kept clear.