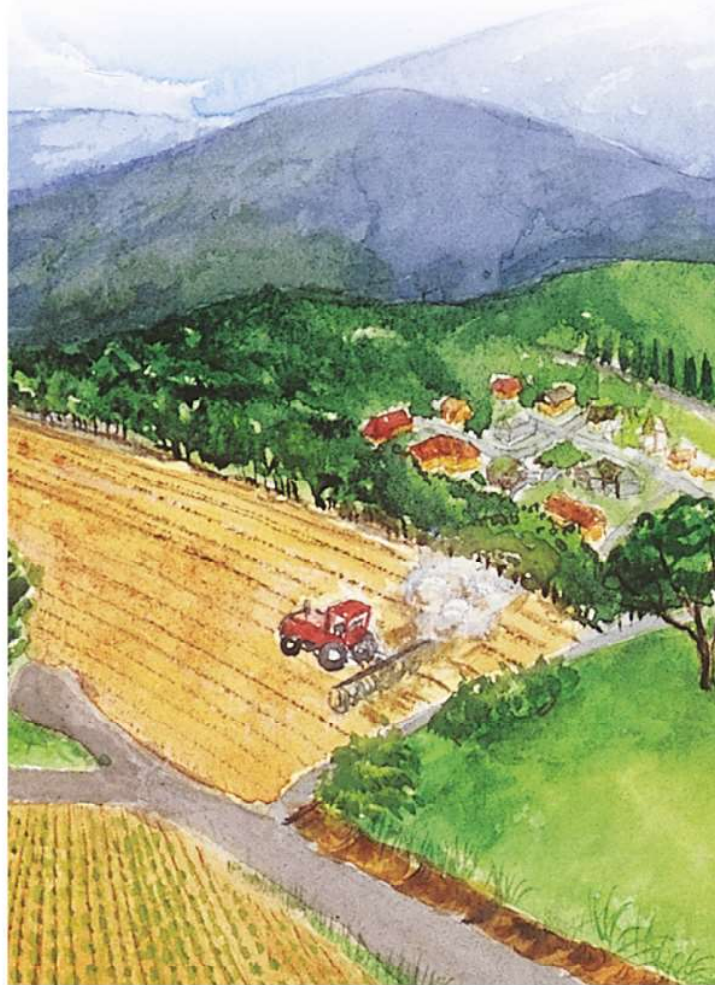




NOISE MANAGEMENT





Section 5: Noise Management

The Expected Environmental Outcome for Noise states

All reasonable and practicable measures should be adopted, within the constraints of a sustainable agricultural system, to minimise noise impacting on environmentally Sensitive Places at sensitive times (QFF 1998).

5.1 MINIMISE IMPACTS OF NOISE DURING SENSITIVE TIMES

A noise is considered to cause an impact when people have difficulty sleeping or holding a conversation within a dwelling. The emphasis of the Expected Environmental Outcome is on minimising impacts on environmentally sensitive places during sensitive times.

What constitutes a 'sensitive place' was covered previously in section 4.1 under, 'Air Management'. Unreasonable noise should be avoided particularly at sensitive times, between 10pm and 6am.

■ *Forming an opinion on a noise complaint*

Part 4 of the Environmental Protection Policy for Noise outlines the process that an administering authority must follow when forming an opinion on a noise complaint.

In summary, a person may make a complaint about unreasonable noise in writing to the administering authority. The administering authority will investigate the complaint unless the authority believes that the complaint is vexatious or that it would be more appropriately dealt with under another law (eg a local law).

To investigate the complaint the administering authority may issue a "show cause notice" to the person responsible for the noise. The person responsible then has the opportunity to make a written response to the administering authority, by a specified time, stating why the person considers that the noise is not an unreasonable noise.

Alternatively, the administering authority may issue a "noise abatement notice" if it is satisfied that the noise is an unreasonable noise. Any person in receipt of a noise abatement notice is entitled to make an application for a review of the decision and appeal under chapter 6, part 3 of the Environmental Protection Act 1994.

5.2 CONSIDER A BUFFER ZONE TO REDUCE NOISE

Buffer zones are useful to mitigate impacts of off target spray application. They may also help to reduce noise. Sections 4.2 and 4.3.8 deal with the design of a vegetated buffer zone.

☞ *Buffer Zones and New Residential Development*

The Planning Guidelines - Separating Agricultural and Residential Land Uses have adopted minimum effective separation distances between farming activities and areas of *new residential development* to ensure that the noise design goals for intermittent and long term noises, during the day-time and night-time can be adhered to (QDNR and QDLGP 1997).





Section 5: Noise Management

It is the responsibility of the proponent of new residential development adjacent to good quality agricultural land to comply with the Planning Guidelines.

Further detail on separation distances and how they are calculated can be found in the Planning Guidelines, including Appendices 3 and 4 (QDNR and QDLGP 1997).

5.3 MINIMISE IMPACTS OF NOISE FROM PUMPS

Where pumps are located close to residential areas consider changing from diesel to electric pumps. It is recognised that electric pumps will most likely run at night time, because lower electricity tariffs make it more cost effective. Night irrigating also allows for a more efficient use of water due to less evaporation.

Consider using muffling equipment where daytime intermittent noise levels are excessive. Where normal methods are not sufficient to reduce noise to acceptable levels, equipment that is continuously operated may require sound proofing or artificial mounds to help absorb and deflect the noise.

5.4 MINIMISE IMPACTS OF NOISE FROM SPRAYING EQUIPMENT

In some circumstances, it is accepted industry practice to use spray equipment late at night or early in the morning. Primary reasons for this include more suitable atmospheric conditions, lower wind speeds, greater relative humidity and no UV light for photo-degradation of sprays. The pests being targeted may be more active at these times compared to daylight hours.

Where intensive manual labour is needed in a block during the day, spraying late at night or early in the morning can allow for timely application without compromising field re-entry times.

Where sensitive places are close to noise, and night-time activity is essential, consider starting spraying closer to the sensitive place and moving away from there as night falls and 10pm is reached. The converse would apply to early morning spraying.

5.5 MINIMISE IMPACTS OF NOISE FROM OTHER MACHINERY

Some forms of seasonal activity or current and accepted industry practice like harvesting may require the use of machinery at night.

