

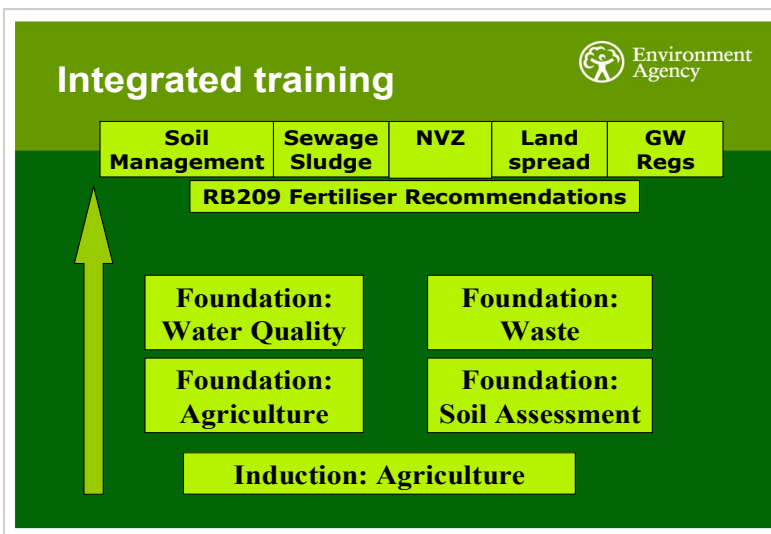


Government Engagement

Training in Agriculture and Soils for Regulatory Compliance and Pollution Prevention



Bespoke training courses have been provided by Harper Adams University College to the Environment Agency since 2003 and to the Rural Payments Agency since 2007. These courses fit into the respective Agency training schedules for staff development and particularly play an important role in new inspector staff training. Harper Adams is seen to be providing an interface between academic, agricultural and environmental management and practical 'on-the-ground' farming contact. All courses offered have a strong practical element utilising the College farm and neighbouring commercial farm units - one of the factors as to why Harper Adams was successful in its tender for this training contract.



Courses delivered to the Environment Agency cover all tiers of their internal integrated training model - a one-day induction in general agriculture, a three day foundation in agri-regulation, a one-day foundation in soil assessment and a one-day specialist level course in soil management. To aid the training experience, Harper Adams staff assisted the Agency in producing a 'virtual' interactive training tool - Farming in Focus - that encourages ongoing development in work-based learning. A combination of the various levels of training competence have succeeded in a formal accreditation process through the Harper Adams modular system - this has been used by certain Environment Agency staff as part of their career professional development



Soil assessment training has also been taken up by the Rural Payments Agency utilising the Harper Adams contract with the Environment Agency, but adapting the detail to make it relevant for this other Agency's regulatory needs. RPA training has also benefited from the relationship between Harper Adams and other educational providers in the land-based industries - this has allowed RPA training delivery by Harper Adams staff at sites in the north and south of England (Askham Bryan College, York and Wiltshire College, Lackham respectively) in addition to Shropshire based training on the Harper Adams campus site. Both the EA and RPA training have allowed a successful two-way knowledge transfer to be developed with staff and students at Harper Adams benefiting from contacts developed throughout this training period. It is important that the College remains at the forefront of such collaboration, in this case with Government agencies linked directly to its educational core principles and remit.

