

N-Cap FAQs

Where can I go for more information about the nitrogen cap?

The Ministry for the Environment fact sheet about the synthetic nitrogen cap is found at [Synthetic nitrogen fertiliser cap | Ministry for the Environment](#). While the nitrogen cap applies to all pastoral land uses, dairy farmers have an additional reporting requirement.

What do I do to comply with the reporting requirement?

To comply with the rules, dairy farmers are required to submit records of synthetic nitrogen purchase and application in the twelve-month period from 1 July in the previous year to 30 June in the current year and reported by 31 July of the current year, if:

- they are milking dairy cattle which graze on the farm or are provided with forage crops from the farm area and;
- the farm area is greater than 20 hectares.

So, for the 2023 recording period this would be from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023.

The records are collected into a central data store and made available to regional and unitary councils for them to report to the Ministry for the Environment. In 2022 the regional and unitary councils worked with Ballance and Ravensdown to create or enhance on-line tools for collecting the required data.

Those three tools are:

- Ravensdown's *HawkEye* app
- Ballance's *MyBallance* app
- The Regional Sector's Webform named N-Cap ([Synthetic nitrogen use recording tool \(teurukahika.govt.nz\)](https://teurukahika.govt.nz))

The deadline for submitting my Nitrogen use information to the councils is 31 July 2023. It's after 31 July, what do I do?

Do record your synthetic nitrogen use in one of the tools available. Each council has a different approach to follow up activity, however the most important requirement is for you to submit your records so that a full picture of synthetic nitrogen use on dairy farms in Aotearoa New Zealand can be formed and that information can be relied on to make good decisions about management and stewardship of our whenua.

You could also discuss your intention to submit your records with your regional council compliance team so that any follow up activity can be agreed to a timeline.

Can I submit data early?

The tools are available now – you can submit if you are certain you will not be using any more synthetic-N fertiliser before 1 July 2023.

How many farms submitted data for 2022?

In the first year of regulated reporting just over 4,000 dairy farms submitted data about the use of synthetic nitrogen on farm.

What fertiliser is included in the reporting requirements?

Synthetic nitrogen fertiliser contains nitrogen but also has other ingredients. For the purposes of the regulation, synthetic nitrogen fertiliser is any solid or liquid fertiliser, not of plant or animal origin, where the **dry weight** is more than 5 percent nitrogen.

If you choose to mix fertiliser containing synthetic nitrogen, for example urea, with water, it will still need to be counted in the cap. This is because the N content of the dry weight of the urea is 46% even if the resulting fertiliser and water mix is under 5% N.

What is the N percentage in Ravensdown and Ballance products?

You can access the latest product list for Ravensdown at:

<https://www.ravensdown.co.nz/services/product-availability/price-list> in the Fertiliser and Lime section. Each product has a stated percentage of synthetic N in the list.

You can access the latest product list for Ballance at: https://ballance.co.nz/Fertiliser-Products/c/All-Product-Ranges?gclid=CjwKCAjwo7iiBhAEEiwAslxQEd6c2U_0qP0rn1D6_lfimjFrFlajqnsMT0vJfN6j6KLlzuosMfc0OxoCBf0QAvD_BwE by downloading the full price list. Each product has a stated percentage of synthetic N in the list.

Fertiliser data is already recorded and reported to milk supply companies. Why can't that be used?

We are aware that many farmers already supply some fertiliser data to their dairy company. The new regulations require different data than what is currently provided. The development of the new tools by the councils and fertiliser industry has been carried out to meet those different requirements and provide a consistent way for farmers to submit data to their regional or unitary council.

Do I need to provide fertiliser receipts when I submit my nitrogen application information?

You are not required to provide fertiliser receipts, but you are required under the Regulations to keep the physical receipts or other documents of purchase on file, so they are available if there is any query by your council.

The Ministry for the Environment guidance on synthetic nitrogen recording provides a section on what dairy farmers must report to the regional council. It states that farmers must provide "records of all synthetic nitrogen fertiliser purchased during the year". The N-Cap reporting systems require farmers to record their fertiliser purchases.

In the *MyBallance* and *HawkEye* systems these date, type and quantity details will be automatically populated from your current purchases.

In the Regional Sector N-Cap Webform you will need to enter purchase records in fill-in boxes to capture the fertiliser supplier name, purchase date, product name and quantity purchased.

I've split the fertiliser purchase with another person/business – what do I do to record the application rate information?

Sometimes fertiliser costs are shared by a farm owner and sharemilker, either by splitting an invoice for payment or each buying independently for the same property. The information needed to meet the council and MfE requirements is the application rate of synthetic nitrogen on pastoral land, regardless of the terms of purchase or payment.

You should record the application rates for all synthetic nitrogen fertiliser used on the grazed area; this should be recorded only once for each contiguous landholding. You should keep the physical receipts of purchase on file, so they are available if there is any query by your council.

Is there any other way to submit data for this season? Or other forms that councils will accept?

The preferred way of recording synthetic nitrogen use is through one of the fertiliser company portals – *HawkEye* or *MyBallance*. If you are not signed up with either of these, then you can use the N-Cap Webform online tool provided by the Regional Sector.

If you cannot access any of these tools, then the best way forward is to contact your regional council to discuss how else you could provide the necessary information.

Where is the Ravensdown HawkEye system?

Where is the MyBallance system?

Where is the N-Cap Webform?

You can link to the log in page for HawkEye at <https://www.hawkeye.farm>. For information about how to complete the submission, see: <https://www.hawkeye.farm/support/nitrogen-reporting-quick-guide>

You can link to the log in page for MyBallance at www.myballance.co.nz

You can link to the log in page for the N-Cap Webform at <https://n-cap.teurukahika.nz>

I've put my nitrogen use information in via *MyBallance/HawkEye*. Do I need to record it again in the N-Cap webform for my council?

The simple answer is no. You only need to enter data through one system.

If you purchase from both Ravensdown and Ballance then you can submit your records for both companies through either of their tools. Each company can record fertiliser purchased from another company and from on-farm stored fertiliser.

I've put my nitrogen use information in via the N-Cap Webform. Do I need to record it again in *HawkEye* or *MyBallance*?

The simple answer is no. You only need to enter data through one system.

If you choose to record your synthetic nitrogen information in the N-Cap Webform, you do not need to record in *HawkEye* or *MyBallance*.

I'm a dairy farmer and I have not used any synthetic nitrogen on my grazed land – what do I need to record?

If you have not purchased or applied synthetic fertiliser in the 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 period, please record the synthetic nitrogen use as 'zero' in HawkEye, MyBallance or the Regional Sector N-Cap webform. This will be the same requirement for any year when you do not use synthetic nitrogen fertiliser.

I'm a dairy goat farmer, do I need to report my synthetic nitrogen use to my council?

I'm a dairy sheep farmer, do I need to report my synthetic nitrogen use to my council?

I'm a dairy deer farmer, do I need to report my synthetic nitrogen use to my council?

You do not need to. The MfE Regulations state that all farms need to record synthetic nitrogen use, however the requirement for reporting this to councils is only for dairy farms milking cows on greater than 20 hectares of effective land.

What if my farm has a grazed area synthetic nitrogen application rate which is over the 190 kg N/ha limit for the year?

If you have a total rate greater than 190 kg N/ha, you will need to contact your regional council. They will discuss your options and provide advice on whether you can apply for a resource consent for a non-complying activity. Your fertiliser or dairy farming rep may be able to provide advice on reduction of synthetic nitrogen use on farm to bring your farming practices into compliance with the Regulations.

I have just purchased a farm for the new season, and I don't have complete synthetic fertiliser records for the 12 months to 30 June. What information do I need to record?

With the National Environmental Standards for Freshwater in place from 2020 the records of synthetic nitrogen fertiliser use will need to be part of your Due Diligence for potential farm purchase.

If you have purchased or applied synthetic fertiliser in the 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 period, this amount needs to be recorded in your fertiliser supplier's tool (*HawkEye* or *MyBallance*) or the web portal supplied by the Regional Sector. If you have records available from the previous owner this can also be recorded; your complete record for the next season will be required.

If you have not purchased or applied synthetic fertiliser in the 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 period, and do not have records from the previous owner, please record the synthetic nitrogen use as 'zero' in your fertiliser supplier's tool (*HawkEye* or *MyBallance*) or the N-Cap Webform supplied by the regional sector. Your complete record for the next season will be required.

I've used different areas of my farm for grazing and cropping, how do I record this?

There is good guidance available from the Ministry for the Environment (MfE) about how to record synthetic nitrogen use for these different land uses. The guidance from the MfE website is [here](#).

What is the difference between recording and reporting synthetic nitrogen use?

The use of synthetic nitrogen fertiliser must be **recorded** for all pastoral use land.

As well as recording synthetic nitrogen use, dairy farm businesses that milk dairy cows must also submit their annual records of fertiliser use to the regional and unitary council/s with compliance responsibilities for the physical area of the farm.

The councils **report** the aggregated records to the Ministry for the Environment.

The fertiliser application records you submit through *MyBallance*, *HawkEye* or the Regional Sector N-Cap webform enable this reporting and meet the MfE requirements.

How do I know what's been recorded about synthetic nitrogen use on my farm?

HawkEye, *MyBallance* and the N-Cap webform each have functions which allow you to view and download a PDF copy of the information that you, or your representative, have entered for your farm. This is a summary report of all the information you have authorised for submission to the N-Cap data store for reporting to councils and MfE.

The information flows directly to the N-Cap data store and is reported to the regional councils to assist with identifying compliant and non-compliant synthetic nitrogen application rates.

Summary data by region, without individual farm contact information, will be provided to the Ministry for the Environment and used by the system administrators to monitor progress in reporting. Council's will hold the submitted data for compliance purposes. If you have any questions about the information held for your farm, please contact your council.

I use liquid fertiliser on my farm, how do I record this?

You will need to record the purchase of liquid fertiliser which contains synthetic nitrogen, this needs to be recorded in one of the fertiliser supplier's tools (*HawkEye* or *MyBallance*) or the web portal (N-Cap webform) supplied by the Regional Sector.

The calculation for the dry weight equivalent of synthetic N is the information needed to record the fertiliser applications and percentage of N in the product. This may be supplied or available from the sales company or the fertiliser spreading contractor if used.