

Our actions over the last 6 months have accelerated key elements of our roadmap ensuring these can be delivered by early 2024 not 2025 as originally planned.

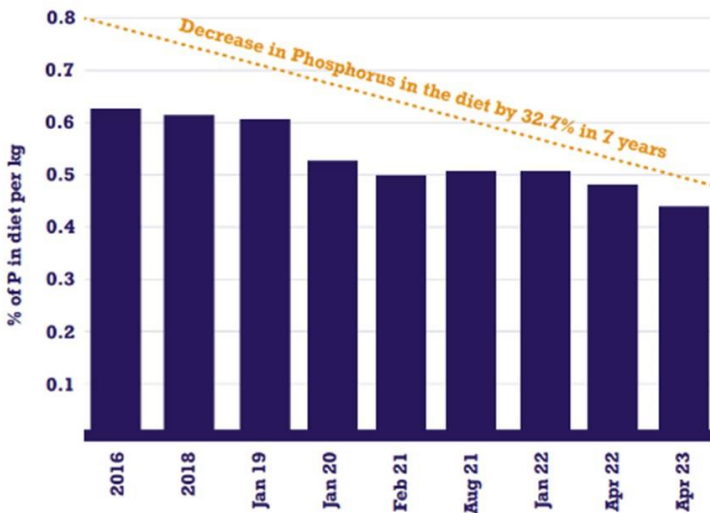
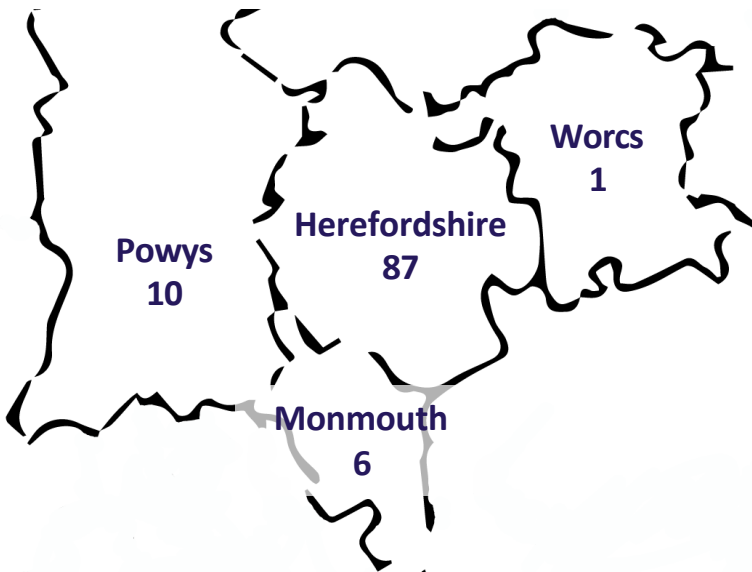
Ensuring that 70m people have access to a reliable supply of healthy, affordable food every day that is sourced here in the UK has many challenges, but it is one that we're proud to be part of delivering.

In January 2023 we published our [sustainable poultry roadmap](#), to address the impact of our supply chain in the River Wye catchment by 2025. Through a focus on practical solutions to divert manure away from land in the catchment, we will now deliver key elements of our roadmap by Jan 2024.

Our agreement with Gamber Poultry Litter means that, from January 2024, all sales of manure from our supply chain, for use as fertiliser within the catchment, will cease.

Avara Foods in the Wye Catchment

104 farms across four counties



Progress

We've made good progress against our roadmap - implementing near-term actions, that will have an immediate impact in 2024 while longer-term solutions involving all parties develop.

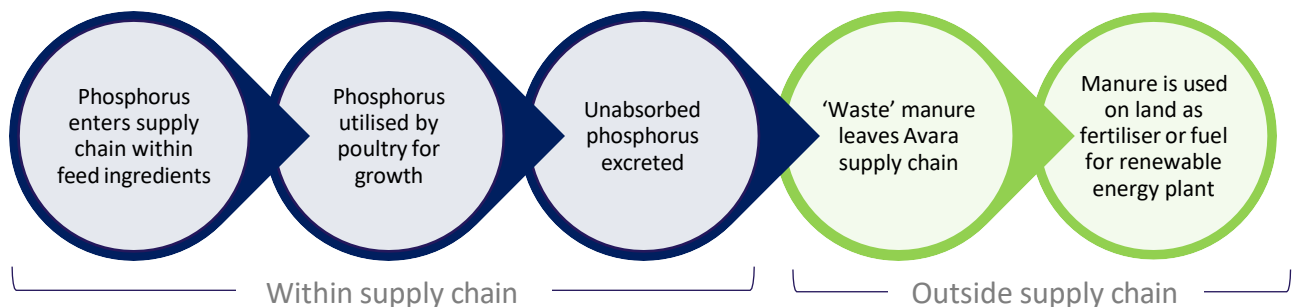


Data

Accurate data is vital: it underpins our approach in the Wye and should be at the heart of any plan that seeks to improve the condition of the river.

Our roadmap has been built, and depends, upon accurate data. By mapping phosphorus flows in, and through, our supply chain, we have developed an accurate picture of where and in what volume phosphorus enters our supply chain, how much is utilised for healthy growth, how much is excreted and, most importantly, the end destination of the excreted phosphorus.

We have mapped Phosphorus flows in and through the Avara supply chain



We have shared our data with Lancaster University, who have incorporated it into their Phase 2 RePhoKUs update, but **comparable data from elsewhere in the catchment is lacking.** This is urgently required to help establish a clearer, more granular picture of phosphorus ownership and flows in the catchment, to ensure that all contributors are playing their part in the solution.

Diverting litter

From January 2024, poultry manure from our supply chain will not be available for sale, as fertiliser, within the Wye catchment.

We have an agreement with Gamber Poultry Litter, who will help us ensure that manure either leaves the catchment, or is directed to approved renewable energy plants, where it can contribute to a circular economy. This is a major step for us, our farming partners, and the wider farming community in the region, and will effectively divert manure from approximately 75 farms away from catchment land.

However, this is a relatively small proportion of all phosphorus and farmland in the catchment, and will only be effective if part of a wider transformation in the way soil and land in the catchment is managed.

Progress

Effective management of soil, with robust third-party assurance, is fundamental to any long-term solution. That is why we are piloting an independent assurance standard.

Soil standards

To be confident that farms in our supply chain are managing their land responsibly, we committed to adopt independent assurance standards that cover the use of poultry manure and digestate. This is not an 'Avara' standard, but one that is independently managed, subject to external assurance and, crucially, will be available for others to adopt.

In October, we started piloting a new standard, which is being developed by Red Tractor, independently of their Greener Farm Standard. This has been drafted to meet existing legislation, with input from experts, including WWF, WRAP and the Environment Agency, and is audited by an independent, professional auditing body. So far, 6 farms have completed pilot audits, with the remainder being organised as quickly as resource allows.

However, we only have 30 farmers in catchment who use manure on their land. More robust standards need to be adopted and audited far more widely to ensure consistency, better soil quality and enable regulatory bodies, like the EA and NRW, to prioritise their resources toward more high-risk operations in the region.

Technological solutions/circular economies

Our long-term goal remains to utilise a greater proportion of the manure from our supply chain in technology that creates new products and supports local circular economies. Developing these solutions and implementing them at scale will take time, which is why we have focused on diversion and enhanced assurance in the short-term.

Our supply to an in-catchment anaerobic digestion plant continues to increase, where it is used to create renewable energy. This plant is also developing Nutrient Management Technology, which is undergoing rigorous testing. Successful implementation will enable phosphorus to be recycled and made available as a product for wider use: a potentially significant development given the overall global shortage of phosphorus.

Alternative avenues for poultry manure are emerging, like pyrolysis, which we will investigate further and incorporate into our roadmap, if appropriate.

Collaboration

Throughout the development and implementation of our roadmap we have sought expert help to validate, challenge and assist our progress. In particular, the Wye and Usk Foundation, WRAP, WWF, Herefordshire Rural Hub and the Environment Agency have been, and continue to be, invaluable.

As just one piece in a much larger jigsaw, we will share what we have learnt and develop a blueprint for action so that others in the catchment, and beyond, can learn more about our experience as they fulfil their own obligations.