

# Ploughing along contour lines

*Ploughing furrows across, instead of along the hill, on sloping fields slows down surface runoff hence reducing erosion and nutrients leaching off the field.*

Similar terms: contour plowing, contour farming, contour plowing, contour tilling

Ploughing and harrowing along elevation contour lines increases water holding capacity of the soil, which reduces surface run-off and increases water infiltration. This method also reduces soil erosion and nutrients leaching, especially on fields with steep slopes.

## Maintenance

- No extra maintenance needed

## Economics

- Could increase or decrease fuel consumption depending on the profile of the field

## Application

Working along contour lines should be considered on sloping fields whenever possible.

At least the edges of the field should always be dealt in line with the contour lines.



*A headland that is ploughed across the slope should be wide (red arrow).<sup>9</sup>*

Photo: Airi Kulmala, Baltic Deal

## Further information:

[Baltic Deal – Tillage](#)

[Minnesota Department of Agriculture – Contour farming](#)

Sources: 1) Kulmala, A. 2012. Baltic deal, tillage. Searched 3/2018. ([Link](#))

2) Minnesota Department of Agriculture – Contour farming. Searched 3/2018. ([Link](#))