



MEMBER MATTERS

News, updates and advice from your Red Tractor Assurance team

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Dear Members,

Welcome to the latest edition of Member Matters.

Last month we talked about how British food is more trusted than anywhere else in the world, but also even that trust like all other public institutions has been knocked in over the last 12 months. What has remained is that at the heart of the public's trust in British produce, is a clear sense that they believe in the rigour of our regulations and food and assurance schemes.

But as the scrutiny of food production ever increases, it is vital that members and those working on farms strive to meet every standard every day. Doing so not only protects your business, but the entire industry in which each one of you plays a critical role.

As someone who has had a life-long

connection to agriculture- growing up on a mixed livestock farm and working in the industry, I can appreciate the challenges faced by many of our members to achieve this.

So, at Red Tractor we have put in place and continue to build a bank of tools, tips and guidance to help support our members.

We all know with the nature of farming, and therefore also food assurance and assessments, it will never be stress free. But hopefully this edition will help to dispel some of the myths about assessments, assessors and the certification process, which will give you some insight into what is happening behind the scenes to make sure that your experience is as positive as possible.

Kate Cross
Compliance Manager

FAQS

HOW DOES RED TRACTOR WORK WITH ITS CERTIFICATION BODIES?

Certification bodies manage our schemes and carry out assessments on our behalf. We have rules and procedures to ensure they all offer the same standards of service, and their staff and assessors have the right training. We also monitor and supervise our certification bodies, and their assessors, to measure their performance.



FAQS

WHY IS GLOBAL ACCREDITATION SO IMPORTANT?

Accreditation spans all aspects of our everyday lives from the Health Safety practices which govern our workplaces, the classroom, to how we enjoy our leisure activities. Accreditation is the external recognition of how an organisation delivers standards.

All our certification bodies are assessed by the national accreditation body for the UK- UKAS to a globally recognised standard. This means they need to demonstrate that they have the competence, impartiality, and performance capability, so that as well as Red Tractor monitoring their performance, so too does UKAS.

I SPEND MOST OF THE WEEK BEFORE AN ASSESSMENT ON PAPERWORK. IS THERE AN EASIER WAY?

The Red Tractor Portal is effectively an online filing cabinet which is free for our members to use. By storing all your documents in one place throughout the year, rather than just ahead of your assessment should help to cut down your preparation time and the amount of time your assessor will need to be on farm.

CLICK HERE for instructions on how to sign up and use the portal.

WHY DOES RED TRACTOR CONSTANTLY CHANGE ITS STANDARDS?

We only routinely review our standards every three to four years across all sectors, to ensure members farm in a way that meets the expectations of consumers and the market as simply as possible. It is important because our standards are the bedrock of progressive farming. They underpin our industry's strength and credibility, by securing its future as a world-leader.

We've recently introduced some necessary changes for some our members because the farming industry has faced significant challenges over the last year, which includes avian influenza, rising input costs and labour availability, that have been driven by global events and other factors. The small but important changes which will come into effect in October 2022 for pigs, poultry, and combinable crops are to accommodate the impact this has had on food and farming. It is also in response to member feedback, and guidance from our Technical Advisory Committees - which are made up of farmer representatives, leading industry experts and supply chain stakeholders.

CLICK HERE to read about the changes, with explanations and helpful guides.

To read more of the Most Frequently Asked questions and learn more about Red Tractor's Risk based approach to assessments **CLICK HERE** (to the full Q&A)





INTRODUCING ONE OF OUR ASSESSORS

As a farmer's son, I was born into agriculture. I grew up working at our home dairy, beef, pigs, and arable farm. Outside the family farm, I worked for an agricultural

contractor, seed cleaning, and dressing company before setting up my own agricultural engineering business. Before becoming an NSF assessor, I spent 15 years working on farms and have worked in the agricultural sector my whole life.

As an assessor, it's essential to monitor current legislation and issues affecting the agriculture industry.

Apart from regular training with Red Tractor, reading the farming press and conversations with Red Tractor members keeps me up to speed.

The best part of my job is the people I meet and the places I visit. If you enjoy the freedom to manage your diary, have a broad knowledge and passion for agriculture, and like the opportunity to travel if you want to, then you would make a great assessor.

Andrew Walker, NSF Red Tractor Assessor

CLICK HERE To read the interview in full.

INCREASED SCRUTINY

We fully recognise that your farm is your workplace, and each is very different. But at this time of increased scrutiny of all the nation's public institutions, including food; meeting every standard, every day is one of the key defences we have to protect the reputation of British Agriculture. Here are a couple of tips for you to consider:

- Try to leave your farm as you would wish it to be found
- How might someone access the farm hidden from view?
- Would CCTV or time lapse cameras, positioned at particularly vulnerable points on the farm be helpful?
- Talk to your neighbours, the local rural community, and perhaps your local neighbourhood watch – and keep an eye out for each other.
- Ensure prospective workers are properly vetted- anybody applying for a role in good faith should be willing to provide certain basic information and references.

Lastly - If something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.



IN BRIEF

We would like to welcome Kit Papworth to our AFS board member and as crop sector chair. **CLICK HERE** to read the announcement in full.



OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN THE RED TRACTOR BOARD

We are looking for an Independent Director to represent the Veterinary profession on the Red Tractor Board.

CLICK HERE to find out more



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