



Certifying products from Red Tractor Assured farms

This paper is designed to assist Official Veterinarians (OVs) in the certification of meat products from Red Tractor Assured livestock farms by providing accurate information on the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme.

About Red Tractor Assurance

Red Tractor champions British food and farmers and is the UK's largest food and farm standards scheme. We cover all areas of food production from animal welfare and food safety to traceability and environmental protection. The only UK scheme to do so.

When consumers buy Red Tractor branded food, they know it has been produced to the highest standards. Simply put, we assure food from farms to pack. And all our products are 100% British.

Around a third of Britain's 150,000 farmers are Red Tractor members. Through our own, and partner schemes, we now assure around 75% of UK agriculture. Red Tractor assured livestock accounts for approximately 95% of pigs and chickens slaughtered and milk (dairy cattle) produced in the UK. For cattle it's approximately 80% and 65% for sheep.

We set up Red Tractor two decades ago in the wake of the BSE and salmonella disasters. Our aim was to help restore trust in British food and farming. Since then, our story has been one of success. Today, consumers trust us more than any other time in our history.

Working with UK producers, we have helped establish British food and farming as the benchmark for quality across the world.

Our Purpose

A key reason why we exist, is to reassure consumers that UK food and drink is produced safely and responsibly. Shoppers choose Red Tractor because they know the supply chain has cared for the produce, animals, planet and people.

Who we are

Red Tractor is a not-for-profit company created by farmers and industry leaders in 2000. Together, they wanted to raise awareness of and increase consumer confidence in British farming produce. At the time, the sector was in crisis following the BSE, Salmonella and Foot and Mouth outbreaks. An NFU survey also found that 7 out of 10 people had no idea what foods their local farmers produced.

Over 20 years later, the Red Tractor logo on food and drink is recognised by consumers nationwide. It tells them these products are traceable, safe and farmed with care. British has become a byword for quality food, but that doesn't mean our work is over.



Today, we continue to champion the British food business, linking farming, food production, processing and packing. Our industry now faces several challenges. These include Brexit, future trade deals and how this will affect import standards, the Agricultural Transition Plan and Covid-19. That means we must redouble our efforts and maintain the very highest standards.

As a non-for-profit company we have six company guarantors: NFU, Dairy UK, Ulster Farmers' Union, AHDB, BRC and NFU Scotland. The Food and Drink Federation (FDF) also act as an observer.

The Red Tractor Assurance Schemes exist to certify and signify the compliance by each of its members to a series of rigorous standards that apply to different farming enterprises and different steps within the food supply chain.

Whole Chain Assurance Scheme



The Union Jack incorporated into the Red Tractor logo shows that food has come from British farms and is processed and packed in the UK; the tick represents rigorous checks at each step of the certified food supply chain and the heart means it's carefully farmed.

Our assurance scheme covers not just farms, but the entire British food supply chain. This means the Red Tractor logo or claim [see *below*] can only be used on food that is born (hatched for poultry), grown, reared, transported, slaughtered, processed and packed in the UK to the required standards (at each stage) as defined by our rules.

The word "claim" is to claim to source and supply Red Tractor Assured Products (a "Red Tractor Assurance Claim"), whether or not the logo is physically applied to such products, and to apply such a claim to Red Tractor Assurance Products is an implicit indication of the Red Tractor Assured status of the product sold.

Examples include:

- *Application of the Red Tractor Logo/s to **product**;*
- *A public statement made by a processor, packer or their supply chain customer, wholesaler, trader or food service operator (e.g. text on publicly accessible websites, marketing materials, emails) asserting that **product** sold is Red Tractor Assured;*
- *Documented identification of **product** as Red Tractor Assured (e.g. "Red Tractor", "RT", "RTA", "RT Assured" or "Red Tractor Assured") in accordance with section 5 of the Licence Agreements;*
- *Use of the Red Tractor Logo/s or terminology (e.g. "Red Tractor", "RT", "RTA", "RT Assured" or "Red Tractor Assured" on paperwork identifying or asserting the product is Red Tractor Assured e.g. invoices, delivery notes (which may be being used to supply RT product to meet a customer's buying specification)).*



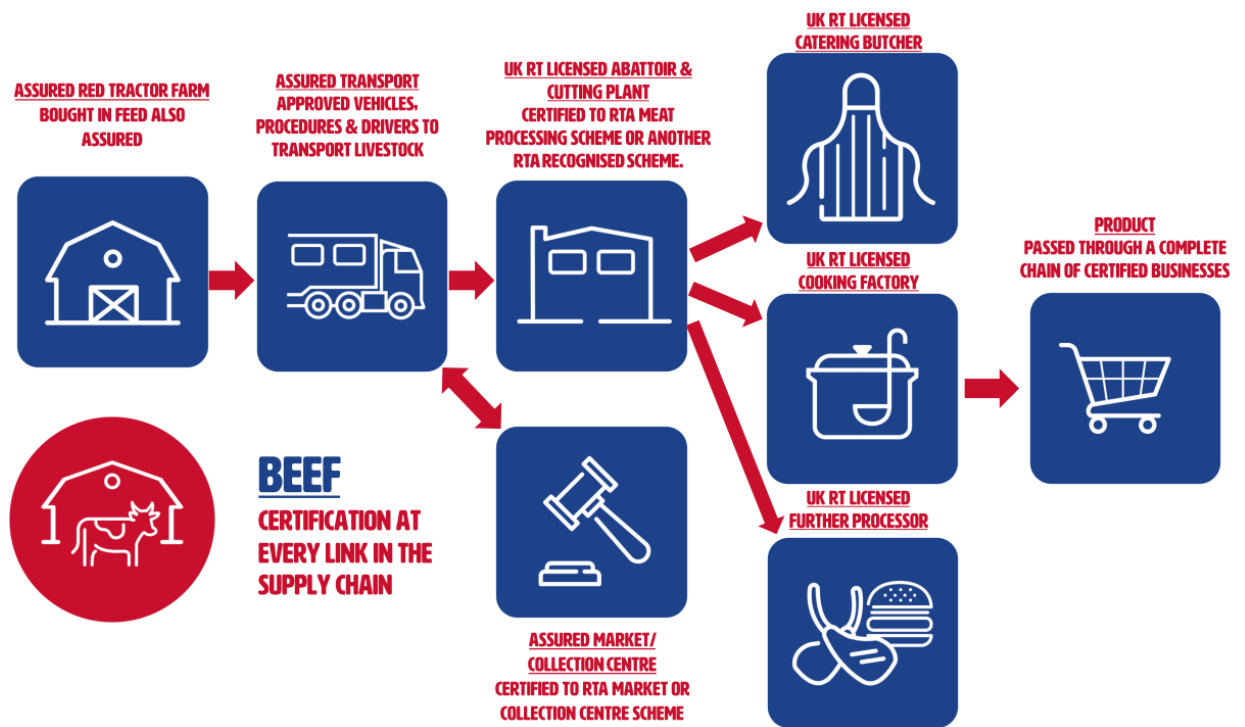
Red Tractor Licensing

Red Tractor Assurance operate and manage a process by which food businesses must be licensed (by us) to make a Red Tractor claim on product, paperwork (invoices/delivery notes etc), marketing material, menus and/or websites. Our licensing process is annual (the licensing year runs from 1st April to 31st March) and involves a technical approval, signing of the Licence Agreement (our legal terms & conditions) and payment of a licence fee. Once licensed, food business operators are permitted to make a Red Tractor claim on approved products they have declared, and the site is then subject to traceability challenges. We currently have over 800 licensed sites consisting of food processing/packing sites, wholesalers, traders and food service outlets in the meat (beef, lamb, pork, chicken, turkey and duck), dairy, crops, fresh produce and added value sectors. We also licence wool processing sites.

Eligibility criteria

Our licensing technical approval requires verification of our required eligibility criteria (third party certification). Our eligibility criteria for food processing/packing operations differs per sector and extends from required farm certification (including parent farms for poultry meat) through to post-farm gate certification (at transport, markets & collection centres (where applicable), abattoirs, cutting and further processing factories).

The following infographic provides an overview of a Red Tractor beef supply chain:





Red Tractor Traceability Challenge Programme

~ *ensuring traceability of Red Tractor claimed products*

Further to the eligibility criteria required to become a Red Tractor licensee, we also carry out independent, physical on-site traceability challenges at every licensed site, delivered by a dedicated pool of trained assessors. These are detailed checks of products to verify that the Red Tractor claim is being used in the correct manner and on product that meets our eligibility criteria. They are not system audits as this would duplicate the work which has already been completed for food producing sites to be licensed i.e. we do not duplicate the work undertaken at a third party certification audit (such as BRC Global Food Safety Standard). Therefore, traceability challenges are in addition to third party certification audits and are conducted unannounced at all processor & packer sites.

The frequency of traceability challenges at food producing sites is based on risk. Higher risk sites are those that handle numerous products, those that are several supply chain steps away from the farm, those that work with seasonal changeovers and those that use multiple ingredients. We may increase the traceability challenge frequency of a site based on the outcome of their last traceability challenge and also if we receive any intel on a particular site.

All traceability challenges require a site tour of the facility by the assessor. The site tour is to ensure understanding of the traceability systems and working practices employed to ensure the separation of Red Tractor Assured and non-assured product and to aid the review of paperwork that the licensee provides during the traceability challenge.

A number of products are required to be traced (vertical traces – back to farm/s and forward) to establish the correct use of the Red Tractor logo/claim by checking the eligibility criteria at each stage of the supply chain. These products are selected on the day.

When selecting products for traceability challenges, assessors must consider and select (where applicable):

- Products that are subject to seasonal changeovers e.g. salads and soft fruit that switch to overseas supply at different times of the year.
- Products that are dual sourced to meet demands e.g. beef that may be UK or ROI supplied.
- Products that are regularly promoted by retailers and therefore may go short e.g. chicken breast.
- Products of high commercial value.
- Products in limited supply.
- Products with a long complex supply chain.
- Products identified at risk through market intelligence.
- Product that is killed in an abattoir which also practices non-stun slaughter to ensure Red Tractor product has been stunned.
- Where a licensee is using the Red Tractor Enhanced Welfare logo/claim and/or Red Tractor Free-Range logo/claim, product certified to these schemes must also be selected



All traceability challenges must extend back to farm/s (as a minimum*) and the Red Tractor (or recognised partner scheme) assurance status verified. To ensure assessors can verify the most up-to-date and accurate assurance status of a farm or post-farm gate operation, we provide a checker service which can be used to establish a Red Tractor scheme member's 'live' assurance status. This is important since the assurance status of a member can change at any time if they are suspended or terminated from a scheme. It is why scheme certificates should not be relied upon as a way to verify the assurance status of a farm and/or post-farm gate scheme member.

**for poultry (chicken, turkey and duck meat) the vertical trace is required to extend back to hatchery.*

Most traceability challenges will include a mass balance. Where raw material has been purchased from other licensees/suppliers, quantities are reconciled back to financial paperwork/invoice from the suppliers (i.e. purchase orders, delivery notes and invoices).

Licensees are given a maximum of 4 hours to provide the traceability paperwork back one step to delivery to site when conducting a back to farm/s trace.

As a minimum, and as outlined in clause 5 of our Licence Agreement (which each licensee signs annually), the licensee agrees to:

5. Segregation of Product and Traceability

5.1 The Licensee shall ensure that, and shall develop and operate an effective system of traceability ("Traceability System") to ensure that (having regard also to clause 5.3):

(a) the Logos and Red Tractor Assurance Claims are applied only on or to Red Tractor Assured Products;

(b) Red Tractor Assured Products are segregated from all other materials in the Licensed Site;

(c) the relevant supplier's membership of the Scheme or (as the case may be) Third Party Certification Scheme and if relevant the Red Tractor Assured status of a product (or livestock) are verified using and in accordance with the relevant scheme's verification systems and requirements (or, where product is being acquired directly from another Red Tractor licensee, that the licence status of that supplier is verified using the relevant RTA Checker at: <https://checkers.redtractor.org.uk/rtassurance/services.eb> when the product (or livestock) is received by the Licensee. Details of the relevant schemes' verification systems and requirements will be provided to the Licensee upon request and/or made available by RTA on its website from time to time at

https://checkers.redtractor.org.uk/rtassurance/services/licensee_services/documents.eb

(d) whether part only or all of the products at the Licensed Site are Red Tractor Assured Products, the Red Tractor Assured status of a product is documented on it leaving the Licensee's control using either "Red Tractor", "RT", "RTA", "RT Assured" or "Red Tractor Assured" (and not "Farm Assured"), in such a way that the recipient of that product will be made aware of its status, save that:



(i) where meat product (from cattle, sheep or pigs only) originates from a Third Party Certification Scheme and is a split carcase/sides or quarters, the Third Party Certification Scheme's descriptor can be used instead of referring to the product as a Red Tractor Assured product (the "Exception"), provided always that if such product is a primal cut it must be described as a Red Tractor Assured product in accordance with this clause and clause 5.1(e) and the Third Party Certification Scheme's descriptor can be used in addition, if desired; and

(ii) where Red Tractor Assured meat is mixed with non-Red Tractor Assured meat, such mixed meat product must not be described (and nor may any part of it be described) in any respect whatsoever as "Red Tractor", "RTA Assured" or "RT approved" (or any similar such description);

(e) all paperwork relating to the product (including delivery documentation, intake checks and invoices) includes in the product description parts of such paperwork details of its Red Tractor Assurance status by reference to "Red Tractor", "RT", "RTA", "RT Assured" or "Red Tractor Assured" (and not "Farm Assured"), subject always to the Exception and the related proviso set out in clause 5.1(d)(i) and to clause 5.1(d)(ii);

(f) the product is clearly labelled at all times throughout the processing and packing processes carried on at the Licensed Site (and is appropriately labelled by any supplier supplying Red Tractor Assured Products to the Licensee);

(g) traceability challenges back to farm are regularly carried out to validate that the Licensee's suppliers are buying Red Tractor Assured Products;

(h) all of the Licensee's officers, employees, agents and independent contractors who are involved in the processes to which the Traceability System relates have been made aware of the purpose of the Traceability System in maintaining the integrity of the Logos and have received appropriate training in the tasks they are performing; and

(i) all other traceability related requirements RTA or an Assessor may reasonably impose on the Licensee from time to time are met.

5.2 The Licensee shall test the effectiveness of its Traceability System on at least a monthly basis (by verifying that RTA claims made on a reasonable number of randomly selected products were done so correctly), keep necessary records to demonstrate traceability (and such testing) and provide copies of such records to RTA upon request.

5.3 Details of suitable traceability systems and the Eligibility Criteria will be provided to the Licensee upon request from RTA and/or are available on its website from time to time at

https://checkers.redtractor.org.uk/rtassurance/services/licensee_services/documents.eb



5.4 The Licensee shall also have a system in place to deal effectively and efficiently with any product recall and shall with reasonable regularity test (and provide such evidence as RTA may reasonably request to demonstrate) the effectiveness and efficiency of such system.

Summary

Red Tractor operate a monitoring and enforcement regime, underpinned by legal terms and conditions which are agreed to by food business operators licensed by us to make a Red Tractor claim. Third party certification scheme audits provide an independent check of traceability systems, with Red Tractor traceability challenges delivering complementary additional checks. Working with a dedicated pool of assessors can aid linkage of information between traceability challenges.

To the best of our knowledge, Red Tractor Assurance is the only whole chain assurance scheme that operates a robust traceability challenge programme requiring licensed sites to conduct back to farm/s traces at every traceability challenge i.e. the programme is not operated as a chain of custody programme.

Red Tractor Logos

Our suite of Red Tractor logos are:



CORE 'CERTIFIED STANDARDS' LOGO

FOR PRODUCTS WHERE THE CERTIFIED INGREDIENT MAKES UP AT LEAST 95% OF THE FINISHED PRODUCT.

The Core 'Certified Standards' logo is for products where the Red Tractor certified ingredient makes up at least 95% of the finished product (we allow a 5% tolerance for seasoning).

It is used on single ingredient food such as meat, fresh produce and milk and can also be used for composite products such as a bag of mixed salad leaves.

B



CORE 'NAMED INGREDIENT' LOGO

FOR PRODUCTS WHERE THE CERTIFIED INGREDIENT MAKES UP 94% OR LESS OF THE FINISHED PRODUCT.

The 'Named Ingredient' logo is for products where the Red Tractor certified ingredient(s) makes up 94% or less of the finished product. For example, the 'chicken' in a chicken kiev or items in multi-ingredient products such as ready meals, sandwiches, hot and cold pies. Other licensing criteria apply, however a summary of key criteria for using this logo are:

- The characterising ingredient(s) must be named, this can include two Red Tractor certified ingredients such as chicken and mushroom
- 100% of the characterising ingredient(s) must be certified to Red Tractor standards
- Additional ingredients must meet the eligibility criteria, for example stocks, gelatine and eggs
- In products containing two proteins, such as steak and kidney or chicken and ham, both proteins must be certified to Red Tractor standards
- On multi-ingredient products, the claim must relate to the characterising ingredient and this will normally be the protein, for example the beef in a lasagne. We do not allow secondary ingredients to be highlighted if the characterising ingredients are not Red Tractor certified
- On multi-ingredient products, main ingredients other than the characterising ingredient, such as the potato in a shepherd's pie, will ideally be Red Tractor certified wherever possible

For more information, please contact our licensing team.



'ENHANCED WELFARE' LOGO

FOR CHICKEN PRODUCTS WHERE THE CERTIFIED INGREDIENT HAS BEEN ASSURED TO RED TRACTOR ENHANCED WELFARE STANDARDS, MEETS OUR ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND MAKES UP AT LEAST 95% OF THE FINISHED PRODUCT.

Underpinned by all the Certified Standards, the 'Enhanced Welfare' logo is for chicken products where additional welfare requirements have been met. These include the use of slower growing breeds with over 28% more space than is required by European legislation and guaranteed natural light.



'FREE RANGE' LOGO

FOR POULTRY PRODUCTS WHERE THE CERTIFIED INGREDIENT HAS BEEN ASSURED TO RED TRACTOR FREE RANGE STANDARDS, MEETS OUR ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND MAKES UP AT LEAST 95% OF THE FINISHED PRODUCT.

Underpinned by all the Certified Standards, the 'Free Range' logo is for poultry products where the birds have had access to outdoor ranges for at least half of their life.

All artwork incorporating a Red Tractor logo must be approved by our Licensing Manager before use.

Checking of Red Tractor Assured status

Livestock

The robust and accurate way to check a farm members' Red Tractor assurance status is through the Red Tractor Industry Checker Service. To register for this free service, click [here](#)

The Industry Checker can be used to verify the Red Tractor Assured status of livestock, even if the meat/product is not destined to be sold with a Red Tractor claim. Red Tractor Assured status at any stage of an assured food supply chain (i.e. not just farm, but also post-farm gate), where membership to a Red Tractor scheme operates, can be confirmed using the Industry Checker.

We also provide a historic date checking service within the Industry Checker which allows verification of Red Tractor Assured status at a selected moment in time i.e. if the user wishes to confirm whether cattle were Red Tractor Assured on the day they moved off the farm holding. Please note, that for recognised partner schemes e.g. Quality Meat Scotland (QMS), the assurance status of livestock (farms) must be checked by using the partner scheme's checker service.

Product

(checking of Red Tractor Licence status)

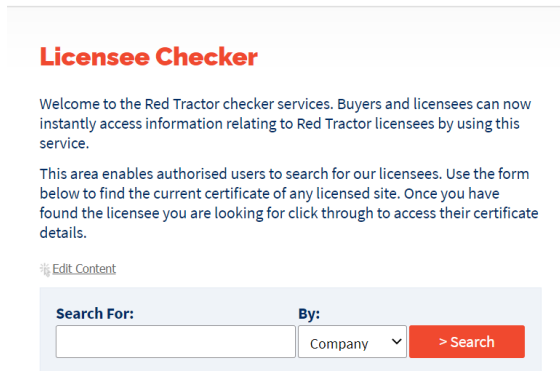
If wishing to check whether a food business operator e.g. an abattoir and/or meat cutting plant, is Red Tractor licensed, this is achieved through use of the Red Tractor Licensee Checker. Registration is free (use link provided above). Further details are provided below:



Login and click on “Licensee Checker”. The Checker can be accessed by clicking on “Licensees” (see below) and a drop-down box appears where the user chooses “Licensee Checker”.

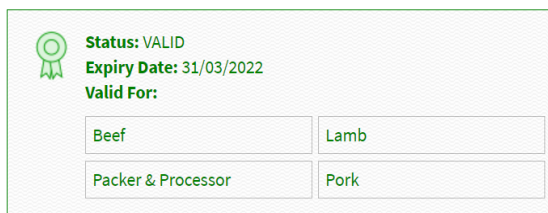


The user can then search for a Red Tractor licensed supplier – see below:



If there is a match, the company’s name appears and then the user needs to click through to view the licensee’s certification status. The certification status then appears as follows:

Licensee Certificate



Green = current licence
 Orange = licence in grace
 Red = withdrawn licence

Verification that a food business operator holds a valid Red Tractor Licence should provide piece of mind that the site:



- o is technically approved to make a Red Tractor claim on approved product/s (and therefore meets our eligibility criteria)
- o has agreed to our Licence Agreement
- o is receiving traceability challenges to ensure where a Red Tractor claim is being made, it is being done so correctly only on eligible product/s.

N.B. as highlighted in clause 5 of our Licence Agreement, there is an exception in that not all abattoirs making a Red Tractor claim are required to be Red Tractor licensed. Where an abattoir is slaughtering Red Tractor Assured cattle, sheep and/or pigs and only selling split carcasses, sides and/or quarters with a Red Tractor claim, they are permitted to without a Red Tractor Licence. If the abattoir is selling offal and/or primals with a Red Tractor claim, they must hold a valid Red Tractor Licence.

For those abattoirs only selling split carcasses, sides and/or quarters [beef, sheep and/or pig meat] with a Red Tractor claim to Red Tractor licensed customers, they are required to meet our eligibility criteria i.e. our eligibility criteria (third party certification) still applies.

Contact:

Joanna King

Senior Technical Manager

(Licensing and Meat & Poultry Processing)

joanna.king@redtractor.org.uk

M: 07881 378086

END

Oct 2022