



**FOR ALL RED TRACTOR UPDATES!**

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# MEMBER MATTERS

News, updates and advice from your Red Tractor Assurance team

**FEBRUARY 2023**

## WELCOME TO RED TRACTOR'S FEBRUARY MEMBER UPDATE

### Dear Members

Last month, Red Tractor and YouGov published research about how the cost of living crisis is changing British shoppers' food spending habits. This research, which featured on the Daily Express's front page, the Daily Mail and Bloomberg News, confirmed fears that inflation is making the food shop very difficult for consumers. We even found that 1 in 5 families with young children are swapping out meat and vegetables for carbs to save money, with many of them saying that British food is becoming too expensive.



remains high. Shoppers continue to rely on the Red Tractor logo to differentiate which products on the shelf are British and have been produced to high standards. But we can't be complacent. Red

Tractor's reputation has been hard won over two decades, and while British food is now more trusted than food from anywhere else in the world, demonstrating compliance with standards must remain front of mind for members.

Shoppers need not feel that good British food is beyond their budget. We will be reminding consumers of this in our upcoming advertising campaign – that all major UK supermarkets stock multiple ranges of Red Tractor products, to suit every budget.

Despite these being tough times, we know that trust in British food



The popular Clarkson's Farm, which returned to screens this month, demonstrates yet again to a consumer audience that assurance and compliance with standards is fundamental to being a Red Tractor farm. It is therefore important that Red Tractor farms strive to meet every standard, every day, particularly so as awareness levels of food production increases.

We all know food assurance and assessments will never be stress free and we are always looking at ways to improve your experience with the assurance process. We often hear members despair at the level of 'audit duplication,' so we have several projects aimed at trying to reduce audit duplication and the administrative burden.

If you have any questions, please drop us an email on [memberhelp@redtractor.org.uk](mailto:memberhelp@redtractor.org.uk) or call us on 020 7630 3320.

Best wishes,  
**Kate Cross**  
Compliance Manager

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## THE ASSURANCE OF IMPORTED WHEAT SHOWS THE VALUE OF RED TRACTOR SAYS UK FLOUR MILLERS

According to a recent statement by UK Flour Millers the milling industry's use of imported wheat is not undercutting UK growers.

Farmers have expressed concerns that the requirements of the Red Tractor scheme are putting them at a competitive disadvantage. UK

Flour Millers do not think this is the case as these wheats are not imported on the basis of price, and evidence suggests assurance requirements in some origins used by UK millers are equivalent to those of Red Tractor. Where equivalence is not met, the seller must provide extensive food

safety and quality test results for every 200 tonne batch of wheat. This is a significant cost borne by the seller, as such is a clear demonstration of the value of Red Tractor to UK growers.

**CLICK HERE** to read the UK Flour Millers statement in full.



## ASSESSOR CONSISTENCY IS A PRIORITY

### CATCH UP WITH A NEW RED TRACTOR ASSESSOR

David Stuffins recently joined the pool of assessors

who undertake Red Tractor assessments for the certification body, SAI Global.

We recently caught up with him about his role as a new assessor, the route he took to become an assessor and how Red Tractor has supported his learning and development.

#### What was your background before becoming an assessor?

At home we run about 200 ewes lambing through February and March, and also manage two herds of Pedigree Hereford Cattle – which means my wife is now very busy. I have worked on mixed farms and had a spell selling agricultural machinery.

#### What led you down the career path that is on-farm assessing?

I have always enjoyed farming as my first passion but needed to support our enterprises at home. From previous experience of selling machinery, I knew I enjoyed meeting and talking to farmers, so I looked for something that gave me that opportunity.

#### You were recently 'signed off' as an assessor – can you share something of the process/training you went through to become an assessor?

Red Tractor provide online training videos for each set of standards which was followed up with training organised by the Certification Body I work for. I went on multiple farm audits to see and learn how other assessors carry out the audits. I was then

“shadowed” by other assessors, when carrying out my first few audits whose support was invaluable.

#### Can you tell us a little about what the red tractor academy is and what tests this included?

It is an online training facility with thorough videos explaining the standards, followed by online multiple-choice exams and written exam questions. These were very thorough and an excellent way of ensuring I understood the standards and how they are applied on farm.

#### How does red tractor support you in your work as an assessor? It is of course important that as assessors you know the standards, but the interaction with

Continued...

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## our farming members is equally important– was this ‘assessed’ at all?

Red Tractor are very good at organising ongoing webinar-based training to update assessors on changes and audit feedback. I was relieved, from my farming perspective, how Red Tractor wanted to come on farm

themselves and assess my auditing. It was good to see how interested Red Tractor were in how I communicated with farmers and carried out the audit.

**Assessors have the dual role of gathering details to show compliance and representing the brand**

## of red tractor – what challenges can this bring?

For me this is one of the reasons I enjoy the job – the challenge of applying the standards and helping the farmer to meet them. Auditing for me is not looking to find faults, but to work with members to show them how compliance can be demonstrated.

## MEMBER WEBINAR

### Do you want to know what Red Tractor is doing to promote your produce?

Red Tractor is hosting a webinar to let you know all about the work we are doing on your behalf promoting the Red Tractor logo to consumers. **REGISTER TO JOIN US** on March 23rd at 7pm to hear about all our marketing campaigns, plus see an exclusive premiere of our new advert ahead of it hitting the TV the following day.



## ACCESS NEW FUNDS THROUGH THE ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE PATHWAY

The Animal Health and Welfare Pathway supports continued improvements in farm animal health and welfare in England. It is very much a partnership, designed by farmers, vets and Government. The first step on the pathway, The Annual Health and Welfare Review, a funded annual visit from your chosen vet or team of vets, is now being rolled out. During the visit, your vet will provide you with bespoke advice. They’ll also carry out some diagnostic testing around endemic diseases.

If you are an eligible BPS farmer we really encourage you to consider signing up. It’s a great opportunity to boost your productivity and prevent you from losing money through endemic disease and conditions such as lameness. **CLICK HERE** to register your interest.

## RED TRACTOR ON THE ROAD...



The Red Tractor team was delighted to meet with members and stakeholders at the recent NFU Conference in Birmingham.

Red Tractor Chair, Christine Tacon and CEO, Jim Mosely spoke with Thérèse Coffey, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, about how our collaboration with regulators reduces the audit burden for members.



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## Make time to talk

Now in its sixth year, the Farm Safety Foundation's mental health awareness campaign brings together 300 partners from across the industry to promote the importance of mental health in farming and rural communities.

**CLICK HERE** to download the Little Book of Minding Your Head. It is a valuable resource detailing mental health conditions, signs

to look out for and how to cope if you or someone you know is suffering with their mental health.

Farming is uniquely challenging at any time. Poor mental health and personal resilience are some of the biggest threats to the industry. Red Tractor recognises that assessments can be a stressful time. Our Certification Bodies try to be compassionate and empathetic,



working hard to balance the needs of members whilst meeting Red Tractor's rules and expectations. There are a number of resources you can access and many charities which offer specialist help - details can be found on the Red Tractor Assurance website. Often working alongside our Certification Bodies, their practical advice, guidance and support can make a huge difference.

## ARE YOU A UK GROWER EMPLOYING SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS?

The ALP (Association of Labour Providers) and Stronger Together, with FNET (Food Network for Ethical Trade), FPC (Fresh Produce Consortium) and BRC (British Retail Consortium) are collaborating to deliver several roadshows to support the soon to be issued UK Grower Seasonal Workers' Toolkit & Checklist. The roadshows will provide you with an update on the Seasonal Workers' Scheme and share good practice for the coming season.



**THE DATES AND VENUES ARE AS FOLLOWS. PLEASE CLICK ON THE LINKS TO BOOK YOUR SPACE.**

- 8 March 2023**, 9am-1pm, *Ely, Cambridgeshire* - [Book Here](#)
- 9 March 2023**, 9am-1pm, *Lincoln, Lincs* - [Book Here](#)
- 15 March 2023**, 9am-1pm, *Ledbury, Herefordshire* - [Book Here](#)
- 16 March 2023**, 9am-1pm, *Penzance, Cornwall* - [Book Here](#)
- 21 March 2023**, 1pm-5pm, *Arbroath, Scotland* - [Book Here](#)

They are supermarket funded and are free to attend

## HELP TELL THE INDUSTRY HOW THEY CAN SUPPORT YOU

England Marketing have partnered with Hillsgreen, the marketing and agricultural PR agency, to provide research expertise on their annual Marketing to Farmers Report which delivers intelligence on how farmers behave online and their social media activity. The agriculture industry is often perceived as being behind the times when it comes to technology, the internet, and consumer behaviour, but that is just not the case. The report is developed to help inform how the agricultural industry communicates with you.

The more responses they get, the more informed and accurate the report will be. For every completed valid response, there will be a donation of £5 to RABI and they would really like to beat last year's donation of over £3.2k.

