



SPECIAL EDITION



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MEMBER MATTERS

News, updates and advice from your Red Tractor Assurance team

SPRING 2023

WELCOME TO A SPECIAL EDITION OF RED TRACTOR'S MEMBER MATTERS NEWSLETTER

Dear Members

In March 2022, we launched the Member Matters monthly e-bulletin, to help scheme members stay abreast of the latest news from Red Tractor and be aware of opportunities to benefit their businesses. In this special edition of Member Matters, we revisit some key announcements, industry stories, and consumer research insights from the last 12 months.



As a member, you can benefit from access to a wealth of information and support, including regular updates on Red Tractor activities and initiatives online. By making sure your Certification Body has an up-to-date email address, or by signing up directly for our Member Services, you will receive Member Matters and be able

**IF YOU ARE READING
THIS AND HEARING ABOUT
MEMBER MATTERS FOR THE
FIRST TIME, YOU HAVE BEEN
MISSING OUT!**

to access other useful digital resources from Red Tractor.

I hope you find this special edition of Member Matters useful and informative – you can read all the previous editions in full on our website: www.redtractorassurance.org.uk. As ever, the Red Tractor team is always on hand to help and answer any queries: email us on memberhelp@redtractor.org.uk or call us on 020 7630 3320.

Best wishes,
Philippa Wiltshire
Head of Operations

CONSUMER MARKETING AT THE HEART OF RED TRACTOR

Last year we proudly highlighted how British farmers produce quality food that's traceable, safe, and farmed with care, with our TV advertising campaign.

Red Tractor continues to invest in TV advertising for you, as we know it's an effective way to reach our audience of main shoppers. With our TV advertising we want to make it clear to people that by simply looking

for the Red Tractor, they don't need to work hard or look very far to help foster a better future for British agriculture, farmers, growers, and producers. Our advertising does an important job to explain the principal purpose of Red Tractor, to reassure shoppers and diners that food and drink carrying the Red Tractor logo is farmed with care. Fulfilling this purpose has had a positive halo effect on all British food and farming,



building loyalty, so that it continues to be the preferred choice for consumers over imports.

E: memberhelp@redtractor.org.uk T: 020 7630 3320

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RED TRACTOR SUPPORTS MEMBERS WITH EARNED RECOGNITION

By demonstrating good compliance with Red Tractor standards, you are meeting the requirements of partner agencies, UK regulators and industry voluntary initiatives. As a result, you are rewarded with less frequent enforcement inspections. This 'earned recognition' is an important and little understood way in which we support your business by reducing audit burden.

How is Red Tractor eligible for earned recognition agreements?

Red Tractor uses independent certification bodies to manage the day-to-day running of sector schemes and carry out assessments on our behalf, so we don't mark our own homework. In addition, the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) accredits all our certification bodies to ISO 17065, which means that their performance is monitored through annual office inspections and shadow audits. They also make sure that any changes we make to our standards are fully auditable. With all this in place, it means that the Red Tractor scheme meets the necessary requirements for earned recognition arrangements with regulators.

Why don't all food and farming schemes have this arrangement?

This system only works if regulators are confident the scheme is robust and worthy of recognition. We must show them that assessments are robust, demonstrate the standards cover legal requirements adequately and share aggregated scheme performance data – we never share individual farm assessment data. In return the regulators have trust in the scheme and our members.

What does it mean for me?

When it works well, it is good for everyone involved and is a hidden benefit for you. It means fewer non-Red Tractor inspections than you would have otherwise had. It also means that regulators and

enforcement bodies can focus their resources on farms where the level of legal compliance is unknown. These farms can pose a significant threat to the reputation of British Agriculture which in turn means the reputation of your business.

View from a regulator: "We are pleased to be working closely with Red Tractor to provide assurance that food carrying the logo is safe and is what it says it is. The arrangements we have in place for approving assurance schemes, and for ongoing data sharing, mean that members of these schemes benefit by having fewer inspections from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and local authorities."

View from a farmer: A West Sussex Dairy Farmer "I've been a dairy farmer for more than 30 years, and still remember the bi-annual Dairy Hygiene Inspectorate visit. Being Red Tractor assured means that today there is only one of these inspections every decade."

OTHER EARNED RECOGNITION PARTNERSHIPS

Registering as a recognised scheme for the EU's Renewable Energy Directive (RED II), is a streamlined approach to ensuring that crops and sugar beet members are automatically granted free access to the growing biofuels markets in the UK and across Europe – reducing bureaucracy, costs, and inspections.

The Voluntary Initiative (VI) promotes the responsible use of pesticides. By incorporating these goals within Red Tractor standards, we evidence that you are adopting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plans and principles, lessening the likelihood of increased regulation.

DON'T MISS OUT!

Learn more about earned recognition in the November edition of *Member Matters* available on the website

EARNED RECOGNITION – WHAT IT MEANS FOR RED TRACTOR MEMBERS			
FARMING SECTOR	AGENCIES/REGULATION	RED TRACTOR MEMBERS	NON RED TRACTOR MEMBERS
All sectors	FSA & Local Authorities (Food Hygiene)	2% inspected per year (once every 30 years)	25% inspected per year (once every 4 years)
All sectors (livestock feeding & arable growing)	FSA & Local Authorities (Food Hygiene)	2% inspected per year (once every 30 years)	25% inspected per year (once every 4 years)
Dairy farms	FSA Inspectors (Dairy Hygiene)	Inspected once every 10 years	Inspected a minimum of every 2 years
All sectors	Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide use (CRRU)	No licence or Certificate of Competence needed to buy professional rodenticides	License or Certificate of Competence needed to buy professional rodenticides
Livestock sectors	Export Health Certificates to EU for livestock products	Products from RT assured farms automatically qualify for export with no additional paperwork or checks needed at farm level	Paperwork required

WHAT MAKES RED TRACTOR CERTIFIED FOOD AND DRINK TRACEABLE?

Relying on spotting the Union Jack on packs is not a cast iron guarantee for consumers that the product originated in the UK. That's where Red Tractor's 'certified standards' logo comes in and makes a difference as it can only be used on products reared, grown, and processed in the UK. Whenever consumers buy and enjoy food and



drink that's certified to Red Tractor standards, they are reassured that the product is always British, and traceable, safe, and farmed with care.

How do we make sure that our traceability promise is maintained? We carry out rigorous checks to verify that each step in the supply chain is certified – this includes all licensed food processing sites, as well as your farms. Licensees are essentially food businesses we approve and license so they can make a Red Tractor claim on food and drink products.

These checks happen every day, with our inspectors randomly selecting, without prior notice, products which carry a Red Tractor claim at a licensee's site and tracing the production journey through the supply

chain to the British assured farms they originally came from. We even do isotope testing on products which scientifically verifies where it was produced/grown.

Earlier this year, an eagle-eyed farmer spotted a misprinted pack of German apples with the Red Tractor logo, at which point our traceability system jumped into action. We were able to swiftly figure out the misprint was down to human error at a packing plant. We are pleased to say that we got to the bottom of the problem very quickly and the misbranded apples were taken off the shelves promptly.

DOES THE BRITISH PUBLIC TRUST THE FOOD THAT IT EATS?

Each year Red Tractor publishes The Trust in Food Index to provide a helpful and unique perspective on this important question for the food industry.

Last year's report showed that confidence in British food is high and more trusted than anywhere else in the world. However, new research shows that recent global events and the cost-of-living crisis, has had an impact on consumer confidence. Shopping and eating habits are changing.



1 IN 4

FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN ARE **BUYING LESS MEAT**, 1 IN 5 ARE **BUYING FEWER FRUITS AND VEGETABLES** DUE TO THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS

A THIRD OF FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN ARE BUYING WHAT THEY CONSIDER TO BE **LOWER QUALITY FOOD**, DESPITE CONCERNS AROUND IMPACT AND SAFETY



OVER 40%

OF PARENTS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN BELIEVE THE **QUALITY OF FOOD** THEY CAN AFFORD **WILL DECLINE FURTHER** OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

Jim Moseley, CEO of Red Tractor said:

"This latest research lays bare the choices parents feel they must make thanks to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on food prices. We are making it clear to consumers that families should never have to make a choice between quality, safety and value when it comes to their child's nutrition. That's why assurance marques are so vital, so when parents see the Red Tractor logo they know that whatever the price point it's safe, traceable, and farmed with care."



Continued...



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Lindsay Boswell, CEO of food redistribution charity FareShare said:

“This report’s findings sadly tally with the stark findings from a survey we carried out last September with the 9,500 charities and community groups we provide with food and drink. 73 per cent of the groups said that the increase in demand for their services is from people needing help for the first time. The majority of charities (60 per cent) report an increase in families with children accessing their vital support.”

These changing habits present a challenge for the food sector, as shoppers believe that as circumstances force them to trade down to value ranges or away from brands, they are buying food produced to lower food safety and animal welfare standards. There is work to do as an industry to tackle this misconception.

Most people cite the UK’s robust system of high standards

and regulation as their number one reason to trust British food. Assurance schemes and labelling continue to play a major role in ensuring consumer confidence, as many shoppers look to food marques and assurance schemes to ensure food is safe and produced to high standards. Everyone needs to work together to reassure shoppers that when they purchase assured British food, they never have to compromise its safety because of their budget.

ALL ABOUT ASSESSMENTS



SAI GLOBAL



Why is global accreditation so important? All our certification bodies, who manage your Red Tractor membership are assessed by the national accreditation body 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.

Does my assessor know what they are talking about?

All our assessors must undergo training. They must prove that they have the required knowledge and training before they can come onto your farm. We have a training academy for assessors and all staff included in the certification process. We also make sure that assessors have the personal skills to be able to communicate effectively and show empathy, with all our members.

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 you to use. 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. You can find details about how to use the Red Tractor Portal on our website www.redtractorassurance.co.uk

Why does Red Tractor constantly change its standards? We only routinely review our standards every three to four years across all sectors, to ensure they continue to reflect legislation and to help you farm in a way that meets the expectations of consumers and the market. Keeping up to date with expectations is vital because our standards are the bedrock of

progressive farming. They underpin the industry’s strength and credibility which in turn secures its future as a world-leader.

To make sure you receive the monthly Member Matters e-bulletin

1 Visit the Member Matters webpage: redtractorassurance.org.uk/member-matters and click the green button, or **scan the QR code**, to sign up for member services



2 Make sure your Certification Body has an up-to-date email address.

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