



MEMBER MATTERS

News and updates from your Red Tractor Assurance team

SPRING 2024



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Championing your produce and protecting its reputation

Challenging DEFRA policy for your logo

Government plans to make country of origin labelling on meats pack clearer must be implemented to ensure consumers are not duped into believing food they buy is British when it is not.

This position which we know is shared by our farmers is submitted by Red Tractor to the Government's latest consultation on labelling. "We have always been a strong advocate for clear transparent labelling," said Philippa Wiltshire, Head of Operations, "which is why we insist the Red Tractor logo can only be used on assured products which have been born / grown and processed entirely in the UK".

We are concerned by their plans to rank the welfare of UK meat and poultry products purely by assurance scheme risks demonising the way British producers farm.

The proposals aim to encourage consumers to choose 'so-called' higher welfare products -but are both technically misguided and immoral, particularly during a cost-of-living crisis.

Under the poorly thought-out proposals, all Red Tractor-labelled



This might not be product of UK

product would currently rank just one level above goods which are either imported and in line with those just produced to legislation.

At a time when the whole food industry is facing more regulations than ever before, the plans would increase costs in the supply chain without adding any information of value. They could also mislead UK consumers or demoralise those who cannot afford free range or organic meat. Red Tractor will continue to persuade Defra to drop these elements of the proposals.

English beef and lamb confirmed as 'world leading'

Claims from English beef and lamb producers that they have 'world-leading' standards look to be correct, according to a new AHDB report.

The report compares Red Tractor with Australia's Livestock Production Assurance and New Zealand's Farm Assurance Programme. It found Red Tractor's beef and lamb standards are higher and more comprehensive than these counterparts.

Red Tractor CEO Jim Moseley welcomed the report, confirming the

leading standards English farmers meet – but said the findings made it even more important to differentiate on quality and provenance.

"What we have to do is make sure that when there's British supply, retailers are stocking it and shoppers are buying it," adds Jim.

"Red Tractor is a key reason most

UK supermarkets pursue 'British first' sourcing strategies in their fresh meat ranges. Furthermore, AHDB data suggests that since January 2022, there has been a consistent and positive price differential between cattle and sheep deadweight prices and those in New Zealand or Australia."



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Safeguarding trust in the Red Tractor Logo

More than 700 Traceability Challenges across all our food businesses each year. That's how Red Tractor preserving British provenance on your behalf and enforces strict criteria for the use of our Red Tractor logo.



The Red Tractor logo signifies a product has been processed and packed in the UK, meeting stringent standards at every key step of the assurance

supply chain. Just as you strive to meet these standards, so too must Red Tractor-licensed food businesses – through frequent audits, which for processors, packers and wholesalers are all totally unannounced.

Any food business making a claim under the Red Tractor scheme, whether by displaying the logo on products, incorporating Red Tractor in their marketing efforts, or using it as a buying specification, must be licensed. They are charged a fee for the use of the Red Tractor logo or claim on the products that they sell – providing

funds to plough back into promoting your products.

To ensure Red Tractor provenance, these businesses are subject to what's called a Traceability Challenge.

A Traceability Challenge involves assessments of the premises and paperwork of food processors and packers. During these visits at any licensed site in the supply chain, assessors select a Red Tractor-claimed product and request evidence from the supply chain, within a short time limit, of the assured farms that supplied it.

For instance, a visit to a licensed restaurant claiming Red Tractor status for the chicken they sell, will need to provide trace evidence back through each Red Tractor licensed stage of the chain, including the catering butcher, wholesaler, cutting plant and abattoir,



to ensure that all originating farms were Red Tractor assured.

The Red Tractor logo serves as a unique marker of British provenance, backed by this comprehensive traceability verification process. It sets it apart from packaging that merely displays the Union Jack flag.

Traceability Challenges also serve as a powerful tool for identifying misuse of the logo and weaknesses in the supply chain. They enable us to take swift action, suspending or revoking food businesses Red Tractor licences, against such issues and holding businesses accountable for necessary improvements on the rare occasion that things aren't right.

FIGHTING BACK AGAINST ACTIVIST SMEARS

Working behind the scenes over the last year, the team have been challenging more claims in the media from animal rights activists.

Spotlight: Earlier this year anti-livestock campaigners Viva! targeted a Red Tractor dairy farm, alleging mistreatment of cattle and even cannibalism to the Metro newspaper. Following our team's thorough investigations of the video footage provided by Viva! and then a rapid on-site spot check of the farm to verify the footage and veterinary paperwork, we found no evidence

of systemic issues on farm. While Viva!'s claims ended up in print, the investigations provided Red Tractor with evidence to robustly defend the farm in the Metro's article. Collecting this evidence is vital as it enables us to defend farms that comply with standards from allegations made by animal welfare activists.

A better story: In BBC Radio 4's series 'Fed' (Ep5), celebrity doctor

Chris Van Tulleken's goes behind the scenes of the UK's chicken industry and reflects very positively. As part of his investigation into the UK's most popular food, Red Tractor took him to a Moy Park chicken unit in Lincolnshire where he shadowed a Red Tractor assessment.



Maximum markets for minimum audit: latest success stories on adding value to your business

Red Tractor helps to grow the British oat drink market

In March, a milestone was achieved as the Wessex Oat Company, a brand created by drinks business Framptons, became Red Tractor-licensed for their oat drinks.

This means the oats in their drinks range, sourced through Robin Appel Ltd, are proudly British and now carry the Red Tractor logo. Framptons, a licensee for dairy-based products for several years, recognises the Red Tractor British assured credentials of the oats in their products.

This is significant for the UK oat

sector, where > 80% of oat drinks are currently imported. Now UK oat growers have new market opportunities.

There are more than 650 Red Tractor licensees, from processors to wholesalers, traders to food service operators - the absolute best food businesses who play a crucial role in



promoting British agriculture.

Our mission is to increase our presence in stores, on packaging, and on menus, guiding millions of consumers to support farmers like you.

Cereals members have access to biofuels market protected

Arable farmers will continue to enjoy access to the vital European Union (EU) biofuels market, thanks to Red Tractor's successful application to the European Commission (EC) to be recognised under the Renewable Energy Directive (RED).

Despite the challenges posed by Brexit and subsequent changes to the EU's RED, two years of Red Tractor's collaboration with the EC have now paid off.

This positive outcome means significant ongoing benefits for Red Tractor cereals farmers. Not only will they avoid additional audit requests, but their grain can no longer be displaced by imported RED-certified grain.

Kit Papworth, Red Tractor's Crops

& Sugar Beet Chair, acknowledged the significance of the EC's decision. "It's a victory for all UK arable farmers, potentially boosting grain prices for all crops growers. This achievement is a testament to the skill and dedication of the Red Tractor technical team in delivering tangible results for UK agriculture."

Matt Culley, former NFU Crops and Oilseed Chair, echoes this

sentiment, emphasising the crucial role played by Red Tractor and industry stakeholders in ensuring continued access to the EU biofuels market. "Without this collective effort, arable farmers in England and Wales could have faced significant challenges. Thanks to the team's persistent work, we've overcome these hurdles and secured access to this vital multimillion-pound market."

Market access to California for UK pig farmers – a major milestone

UK pig farmers have secured a significant export win: through Red Tractor, they can now seamlessly tap into new Californian markets to sell safe and traceable UK pork.

Throughout 2023, Red Tractor and its Certification Body NSF worked with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to give UK pig farmers access to Californian markets. These negotiations were successful, with NSF becoming one of the first UK certification bodies to offer California's

Proposition 12 (Prop 12) certification for UK pork, which ensures animals meet strict new legislative standards on space and freedom to move.

But here's the good news: Red Tractor's existing outdoor bred Core Standards already meet these higher welfare standards. And for indoor

breeding farms willing to provide additional space, achieving Prop 12 certification is within reach. Other states are also developing similar proposals to California and further opportunities could present themselves to UK pig meat producers more widely in the US in the future.



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Reducing audits for Tesco dairy farms

A step forward in audit efficiency! Red Tractor has now introduced streamlined audits for its 450 members in the Tesco Sustainable Dairy Group (TSDG).

The welcome change has been made possible by incorporating the physical elements of the TSDG Livestock Code of Practice into routine assessments, meaning these producers no longer undergo separate audits.

Enthusiastic about this development, dairy farmer and Tesco supplier Will Hosford said: "This change is a game-changer for Tesco dairy farmers. Now,

with the Red Tractor audit covering all TSDG elements, we can focus on one comprehensive assessment instead of juggling multiple visits by different inspectors."

This collaboration marks a step forward in efforts to strike a balance between providing the assurance customers need while reducing administrative hassle for hardworking



dairy farmers. Red Tractor is keen to find ways to extend similar support to other businesses in the supply chain that will benefit farmer members in other sectors.

Promoting your products to consumers

Shoppers should see Red Tractor wherever they go this Spring, thanks to new promotional campaigns encouraging them to look for the logo while they shop.

In March it was announced that Red Tractor's £2.5 million TV campaign, funded entirely by food businesses, was returning to screens throughout 2024. The team has also been busy launching our brand-new poster advertising, which will be located on sites near 280 selected Tesco stores throughout May – and on trolleys too! We look forward to updating you during the year on the impact of these campaigns, which – combined – will reach 44 million UK adults!

In April, Red Tractor supported Ladies in Beef with Great British Beef Week by joining AHDB in a collaborative industry campaign promoting the production and cooking of quality British Beef across our Facebook and Instagram channels. The content highlights the hard work of British beef farmers to produce high quality beef to world class standards and underlines the confidence consumers should have in their products.



Read all the previous editions of Member Matters in full on our website: www.redtractorassurance.org.uk

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