

Agri-supply: An action plan for sustainable efficiency



Delivering a resilient UK
agriculture and food system

Introduction

This abridged version of the Agricultural Industries Confederation's Agri-supply: An action plan for sustainable efficiency provides some of the key areas of content from the full report which can be accessed from the QR code on the back page or alternatively on the sustainability page on AIC's website.

AIC's Sustainability Framework, informs the "Agri-Supply Action Plan" and builds upon AIC's 2020 "Agri-supply roadmap for a sustainable food chain".

The full report is structured to enable it to be read in sections rather than in one sitting, therefore allowing the areas that are of most interest to each individual to be read independently.

Included in this summary are actions for AIC Members to undertake coupled with the role that AIC can provide in supporting their Members. These are summarised in the Executive Summary.

The content in the full report provides the background to these actions and enablers and is divided into topics themed around the three pillars of sustainability – economic, environmental, and social. For each topic the following areas are covered:

- What does it mean.
- The importance to business.
- Where are we now.
- The external drivers.
- The ultimate destination.
- Actions Members can undertake.
- Enablers AIC can undertake to support Members.

By engaging with this Action plan Members and stakeholders alike will contribute towards the future resilience and prosperity of the agri-supply sector.



Executive summary

Agri-supply: An action plan for sustainable efficiency

Delivering a resilient UK agriculture and food system

Priorities

AIC is providing leadership

Members should:

- Use AIC's Sustainability Self-Assessment Framework to identify priorities and actions.
- Adopt sustainability metrics within operational activities.
- Apply circularity within production to maximise resource recovery.

AIC is encouraging collaboration

Members should:

- Share sustainability data with other value chain actors.
- Assess the environmental impact for all products.
- Support the development and implementation of innovations into sustainable technologies.

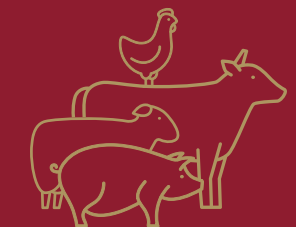
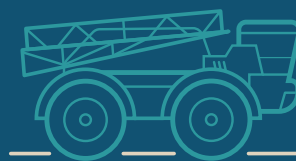
AIC is being an advocate

Members should:

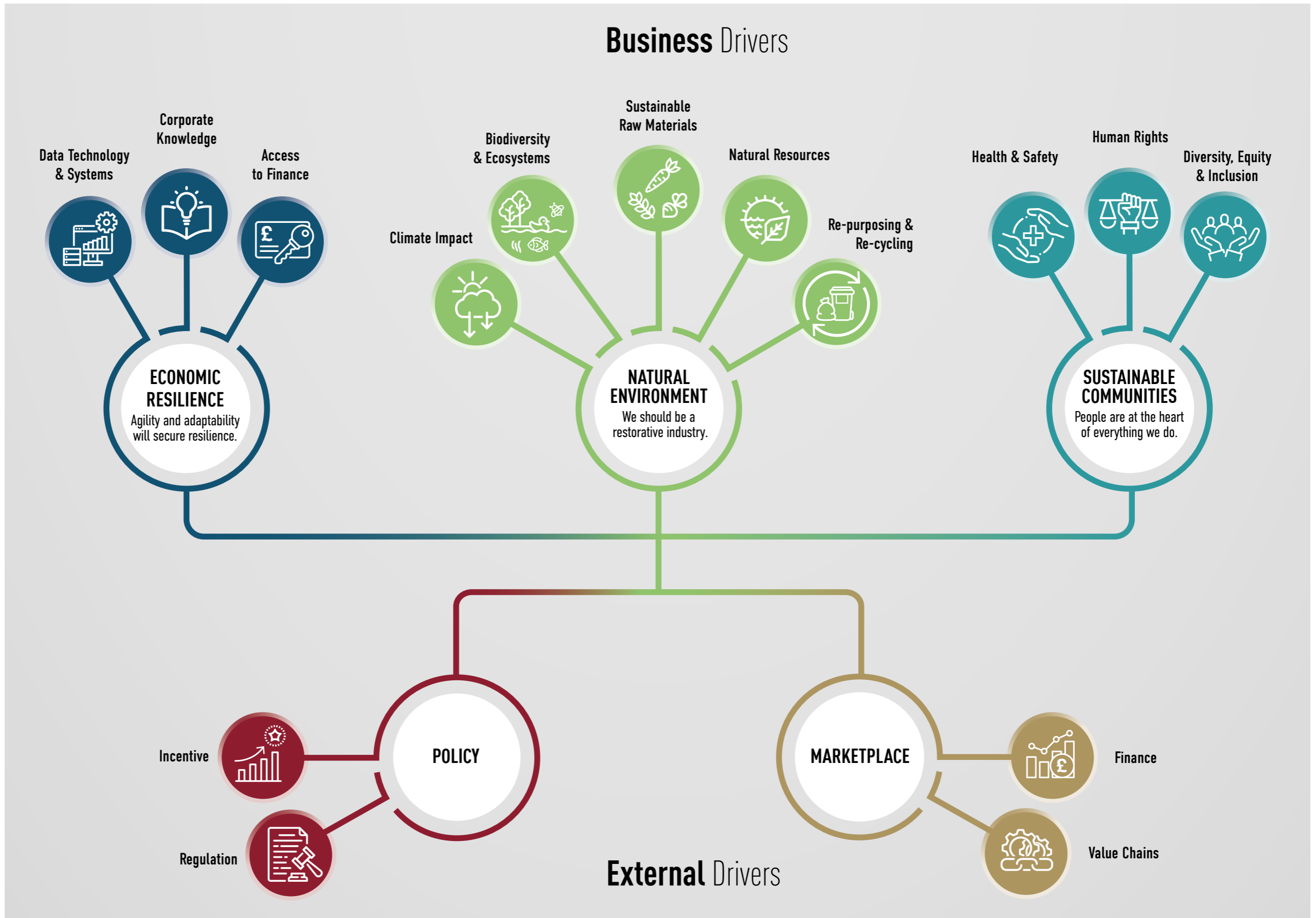
- Communicate sustainable business values and culture.
- Promote metrics relating to sustainability.
- Utilise voluntary standards to complement regulatory requirements.

What is needed to facilitate these priorities?

1. Cross government strategies on land use, food and energy security.
2. Investment in innovative solutions and infrastructure in communities and services to deliver a green transition.
3. A standardised approach to sustainability data combined with simplifying and streamlining reporting.






AIC's Sustainability Framework






Member Actions

Economic Resilience

Agility and adaptability will secure resilience

WHERE TO START	NEXT STEP	FURTHER STEPS
 <h3>Data, Technology and Systems</h3>		
Consider AIC's Sustainability Training for Board and Senior Managers delivered by SLR Consulting to identify sustainability priorities and KPIs for the business, what data will be required to report against them, and the systems that need to be in place.	Implement a sustainability management system which can be used to design, implement, and improve sustainability practices.	Explore the potential for automation of data gathering using market produced platforms/tools.
Complete AICs Sustainability Self-Assessment Framework to inform areas of strength and areas that need action.		
Map reporting requirements, which legislation or standard they relate to, who manages them, the data required, and when this is required.	Consider what systems are required to gather the data to meet the reporting requirements.	









 <h3>Corporate Knowledge</h3>		
Publishing company values and providing case studies on how they are demonstrated.		
Developing annual Personal Development Plans with individuals. Providing support and time for them to be completed, and supporting staff to be a member of, and remain on, professional registers.	Considering a range of options for personal development including job shadowing and mentoring, covering both soft and technical skills.	Developing internal shared systems to capture knowledge to support succession planning and staff turnover.
Communicate openly with customers on sustainability commitments.		

 <h3>Access to Finance</h3>		
Horizon scan for upcoming regulatory requirements.	Increase awareness and understanding of the various voluntary standards for disclosure currently being implemented.	Consider how to incorporate potential requests for information required by the disclosures into reporting processes.

Member Actions

Natural Environment



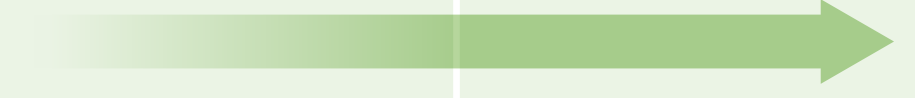
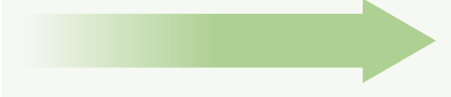
We should be a restorative industry


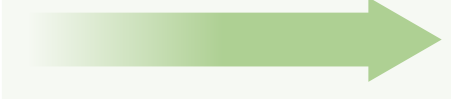


WHERE TO START	NEXT STEP	FURTHER STEPS
 <h3>Climate Impact</h3>		
Business and social		
Plan to continually improve Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions and communicate Scope 3 emissions and reductions.	Report carbon emissions in accordance with any regulatory reporting requirements as well as progress made against any voluntary targets and commitments.	Use recognised sector approaches to claim improvements in carbon footprinting of products.
Develop and implement a carbon emissions management plan.	Assess what climate change adaptations your business will require in the future and develop a plan that will deliver these.	
Processing and Production		
Continue to work to decarbonise business operations, replacing plant with low carbon energy sources or energy efficient options when they come to the end of their life.	Developing internal shared systems to capture knowledge to support succession planning and staff turnover.	
Continue to engage with AIC to provide insight on the impacts EU and UK Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanisms (CBAM) on Fertiliser sector Member businesses.		
Develop and offer seed varieties that are more resistant to extreme and variable growing conditions.		
Logistics and Storage		
To continue the emission reduction trajectory through the adoption of new technology as it comes to market e.g. renewable energy heating, lighting and refrigeration across all premises.	Take advantage of feasibility pilots and associated funding as they become available as part of the Government's low carbon transport strategy to move to low carbon solutions for HGVs.	
Circular Economy		
Look for opportunities to utilise recovered/ recycled materials within products to reduce energy demands/use from primary production processes.		Provide evidence to demonstrate reductions in carbon emissions in the manufacturing processes at a product level through the utilisation of circular economy processes.
Adviser and Farmer Relationships		
Maximising the greenhouse gas emission performance of farm inputs to support farmer clients to lower the carbon footprint of their products and for Members themselves to lower their Scope 3 emissions.	Set on farm targets for activity change with clients, combining the product offering with advice on efficient use to achieve an improved 'Product' plus 'Use' footprint.	

Member Actions

Natural Environment

We should be a restorative industry

WHERE TO START	NEXT STEP	FURTHER STEPS
Biodiversity and Ecosystems		
Continue to proactively engage, support and promote the Voluntary Initiative and its achievements.		Continue to explore research and development opportunities for seed treatments as well as precision breeding to broaden the scope of crop varieties and accelerate the delivery of special traits to market.
	Work towards the Soya Manifesto commitment of delivering 100% vDCFsoya by the end of 2025.	Support the development and implementation of innovations into sustainable technologies.
Roll out the latest FACTS knowledge to deliver improved Nitrogen Use Efficiency, reduce ammonia and nitrous oxide emissions to air and nitrate leaching to water.		
Ensure that there is sufficient seed in the country for farmers to be able to deliver the actions under SFI and provide early warning to AIC on any seed shortages to enable communication with government.	Continually develop training and advice offers for agri-environment schemes.	



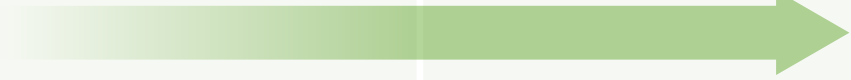
Sustainable Raw Materials		
Apply food and drink material hierarchy when considering use of 'waste' products.		Supporting development and implementation of sustainable innovations.
Aim to maximise recovery and efficiency of raw materials and products.	The Fertiliser sector to actively work with those developing methods to enable more efficient recycling and reuse of nutrients.	
	Explore options for lowering overall emissions reduction and environmental impact from production through to product offer and services.	Assess the environmental impact of all products, for example through the calculation of product environmental footprints.
Consider the added value of more joined up advice from across the full suite of professional registers.	Support UK agriculture, as appropriate to individual Member business priorities, to produce sustainable agricultural raw materials.	



Member Actions

Natural Environment

We should be a restorative industry

WHERE TO START	NEXT STEP	FURTHER STEPS
 <h3>Natural Resources</h3>		
Provide annual data to Defra of all fertiliser sales, including details on treatments of products containing urea.	Influence farmer compliance with ammonia mitigation to avoid legislative intervention.	Invest in research to identify new technologies and practices to optimise nutrient use while minimising environmental impact.
Member businesses advising on farm need to continue to re-emphasise soil health and land capability in the agronomy and crop and livestock nutrition advice that they provide, therefore improving and protecting soil health.	Optimise feed conversion rates as part of the process of developing whole farm nutrient budgets.	
Use soil and Nutrient Management Plans proactively, ensuring crop nutrient requirements are met but not exceeded, and identifying and managing any risks to water and air from applied nutrients.	Integrate FAR and FACTS advice on farm to improve Farm Nutrient Balance (FNB). Members driving FNB campaign (across all sectors).	Continue to invest in trials and research to underpin BASIS, FACTS and FAR Qualified Advisers.
Encourage uptake of sustainable Integrated Pest Management practices (IPM).		





 <h3>Repurposing and Recycling</h3>		
Implement the waste hierarchy to minimise the use of packaging.	Engage with packaging suppliers/manufacturers to find solutions – minimise waste, increase recycled content, improve recyclability.	Integrate data collection and monitoring processes into the business to enable progress towards the target of eliminating avoidable waste by 2050.
Join existing initiatives such as Green Tractor Scheme and/or Agriculture, Plastics and Environment (APE).		



Member Actions

Sustainable Communities

People are at the heart of everything we do

WHERE TO START	NEXT STEP	FURTHER STEPS
Health & Safety		
Regular review, update and sharing of risk assessments.	Offer mental health support and training.	Explore innovative safety technologies – wearables, real-time and predictive analytics.
Report at Board level against health and safety KPIs.		
Develop training protocols and procedures.		
Human Rights		
Conduct risk assessment and report at Board level.	Develop and publish an annual Modern Slavery Statement if not already a regulatory requirement.	Consider adopting voluntary standards such as B-Corp or SMETA.
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion		
Link DEI with the values of the business and engage employees.		Adopt the National Equality Standards and consider B-Corp.
Provide training and opportunities for feedback.		

AIC Enablers

Economic Resilience

Agility and adaptability will secure resilience

LEADERSHIP

COLLABORATION

ADVOCACY



Data, Technology and Systems

Consider the development of a database for regulatory and voluntary standards relevant to sustainability for UK agriculture.

Encourage cross-industry collaboration on how data could be communicated in the supply chains.

Use aggregated data from AICs Self-Assessment Framework for benchmarking and to identify areas where further support is needed.



Corporate Knowledge

Broaden the Future Feed Forum project to include all AIC Sectors.

Continue to work with and across the professional registers to ensure that CPD is relevant, joined up, and complementary to equip employees with the skills and knowledge required by the industry.

Contribute to industry-wide initiatives that project agriculture as a viable and interesting career.

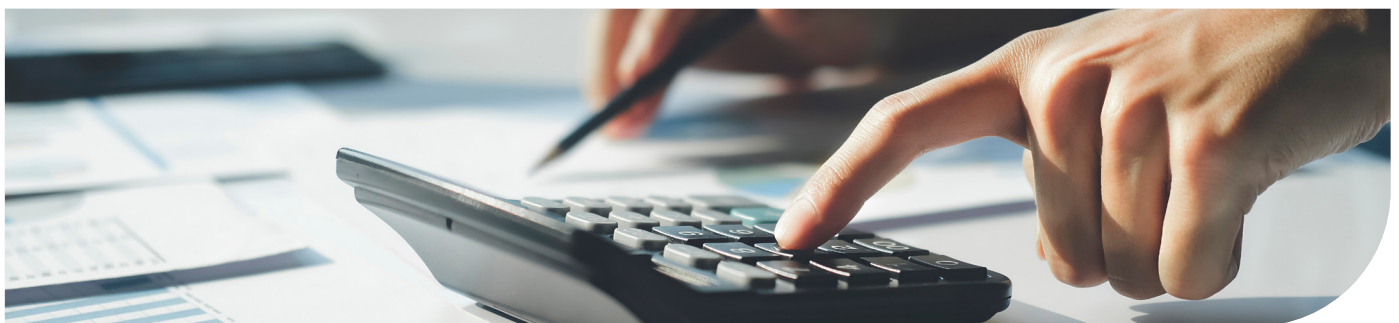
Develop a sustainability module in farm trader and merchant training.



Access to Finance

Signpost or provide information on future regulations and their impacts.


Advocate to Government the need for a consistent approach to sustainability reporting.



AIC Enablers

Natural Environment

We should be a restorative industry

LEADERSHIP	COLLABORATION	ADVOCACY
 <h3>Climate Impact</h3>		
Update Members on policy developments and resources in relation to Scope 1 and 2 emissions and carbon reporting.	Work with allied bodies to widen the scope for financial support to all systems which can verify carbon emissions reduction.	To lobby to have power generated from onsite renewables or green energy to be recognised in future Climate Change Agreements (CCAs) and for targets to be based on carbon savings not simply on energy efficiency.
Influence Food Data Transparency Partnership (FDTP) and Scope 3 Food and Drink sector emissions (i.e. farming emissions) to ensure approaches accurately reflect AIC Members' actions.	Identify and signpost to alternative funding opportunities to drive forward research for climate resistant crop varieties.	Continue to advocate for the use of co-products that achieve reductions in greenhouse gases rather than them being used to generate energy through anaerobic digestion.
Lobby for Member activities upstream of the farm gate to be included within WRAP's revised Scope 3 protocols guidance so that carbon reporting in the food supply chain is comprehensive and consistent.	Signpost to technological developments and opportunities to participate in pilot studies and access available funding as national policy and infrastructure in this area develops.	Advocate for the expansion of NUTS2 to cover a wider range of UK crops.
Continue to work with Members to influence the future direction of CBAM, Energy Trading Scheme (ETS) and Climate Change Agreements (CCAs) so that there is a safe and stable transition to decarbonisation.	Work with providers of carbon calculator tools to ensure that UK activity data and data for farm inputs is as representative of the agri-supply industry as possible.	
Help Trade Assurance Scheme for Combinable Crops Participants in a pre-competitive way to decarbonise fleets and logistics operations – rural proofing their businesses whilst wider infrastructure projects are rolled-out.		
Ensure that Members are aware of work that results in the update and alignment of key carbon calculators to new science and guidance.		

Biodiversity and Ecosystems

Ensuring advice is integral to delivering policy outcomes and is formally recognised and incentivised.	Encourage plant protection product registrations, including those used as seed treatments through the streamlining of GB's plant protection product regulatory regime.	Use AIC Integrated Pest Management infographics to help communications with farmers and stakeholders.
Ensure that both FACTS and FAR advisers are recognised by policy makers and farmers for their proactive effort to encourage farmers to set targets for Nitrogen Use Efficiencies and reduce ammonia losses.	Ensure market access for precision bred commodities.	Continue to engage with Defra on the development and operation of the SFI scheme, including continuing to highlight where import trade is affected.

LEADERSHIP	COLLABORATION	ADVOCACY
Ensure that there is sufficient seed in the country for farmers to be able to deliver the actions under SFI and provide early warning to AIC on any seed shortages to enable communication with government.	AIC continues to support discussion with UK authorities to bring forward legislation that will expand compliant feed sources.	
AIC's development of a voluntary Sustainable Commodities Scheme which will help businesses demonstrate compliance with UK FRC regulation.	Work collaboratively to ensure that there is a common understanding of Nitrogen Use Efficiency across the industry.	
AIC's continued engagement with the supply chain to ensure that commitments by retailers and processors work for our Members.		



Sustainable Raw Materials

Facilitate a discussion on how to address any evidence gaps on the impact of changing practices.	Work with the feed sector to incorporate home-grown branded feed and UK activity data into GFLI and farm carbon footprinting tools to ensure the tools reflect UK production methods and products used by UK farmers.	Continue to advocate for former foodstuffs to be exempted from any future UK Forest Risk Commodity legislation.
Keep Members up to date with the latest drivers and commitments of value chain actors.	Continue to work on an enabling regulatory environment to facilitate the safe introduction of novel proteins into the agri-supply sector.	
	Continue to work with the water industry and our fertiliser Members on the feasibility of incorporating recovered nutrients into fertiliser products in the UK.	
	Collaborative working with industry stakeholders to ensure that Nutrient Management Guide (RB209) and Scotland's equivalent remains a relevant and comprehensive guide for crop nutrition.	
	Consider how CPD can be complementary between BASIS, FACTS and FAR in recognition of the dependencies and synergies between the technical areas they cover and the need for a whole farm/system approach to management and actions.	
	To work with stakeholders e.g. AHDB to consider how data on Nitrogen Use Efficiency could be gathered and shared to provide evidence on optimal nutrient use on farm, demonstrate and share best practice.	
	Work with others in the industry to analyse data on uptake of farm support policies to identify where there may be adverse impacts on productivity.	

AIC Enablers

Natural Environment

We should be a restorative industry

LEADERSHIP

COLLABORATION

ADVOCACY



Natural Resources

AIC will establish and maintain robust data collection on fertiliser sales and efficacy of products inhibited/treated to furnish Defra with data on compliance with the inhibited urea measures. Defra will model the ammonia mitigation.

AIC will continue to ensure that FACTS and FAR qualified advisers are equipped with the latest knowledge and best practice to deliver changing policy themes by contributing to the direction of their annual CPD training.

AIC will input into the proposed Defra review of water regulations impacting on agriculture.

AIC will input into future government initiatives and consultations on soil health.



Repurposing and Recycling

Working with the supply chain to promote that Plastic Tax should be ring-fenced to boost UK recycling capacity.

Working with the supply chain to promote that EPR proceeds should be ring-fenced to stimulate increased plastic recycling infrastructure, as demand currently outstrips supply.

Research is needed in the animal feed sector to address the challenge of increasing recycled content/recycling in packaging.



AIC Enablers

Sustainable Communities

People are at the heart of everything we do

LEADERSHIP

COLLABORATION

ADVOCACY



Health and Safety

Complete and implement learnings from AIC's Agri-Supply Health & Safety Module when published.

Share incidents and near misses with AIC for industry learning through AIC's Business Insight E-Newsletter.



Human Rights

Create products to support Members in demonstrating due diligence in their supply chain.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Broaden AIC's Future Feed Forum project to include all AIC sectors.

Promote agriculture and the agri-supply industry as a viable and interesting career for all.

Provide case studies on the breadth of careers available in the industry.



About AIC

Formed in 2003 from the merger of three agri-supply associations, the Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC) represents businesses in five major sectors within the supply chains that feed the nation.

Our Member businesses supply UK farmers and growers with the animal feed, fertiliser, seed, crop protection products, trusted advice and quality services that are essential to producing food, as well as trading crops and commodities across the globe.

With over 230 Members representing £17.8 billion turnover at farmgate, AIC works on behalf of its Members providing leadership, advocacy and collaboration, delivering information, providing trade assurance schemes, and offering technical support.

AIC REPRESENTING

230
COMPANIES

£ **17** BN
TURNOVER

£ **2.5** BN
EXPORTS

We welcome all interested parties to come together and work with us to deliver a sustainable UK food system.



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