

# ADDING VALUE

## FOR AIC MEMBERS

2025 | Working in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture



Competitiveness



Productivity



Environment

# Welcome



2024 saw AIC respond to the General Election and engage with the team of new Ministers. With over 300 new MPs across the country, the continued close relationship between AIC and Members in engaging with new and existing MPs will be critical, something best done together with Member support.

2024 saw an updated AIC Sustainability Action Plan launched at AIC's Conference. This update shows Members where actions are needed to meet the statutory deadline for a UK Net Zero economy. It also sets out what tools are currently available for Members to use as well as what others in the supply chain are looking to do too. AIC's Sustainability Action Plan will prove to be an invaluable tool in making sure Member businesses and the agri-supply chain is ready for a net zero economy whether for the statutory deadline or customer led demand.

The merge of Pulses UK into AIC concluded at the end of the year, and will mean that three sector committees (Feed, Combinable Crops, and Seed) will now have representation from Pulses interests.

2025 will see continued focus on the development of Policy affecting agriculture and trade across the UK. A focus on food security, carbon metrics, and trade will be the headline

of AIC work for all Members, in addition to the sector priorities as set out in this publication.

In addition, the implications of the new Government's budget in October 2024 will also require attention, in particular where Members are concerned by the changes to Business Property Relief, as well as highlighting concerns that overall the budget has not set a growth agenda for the UK economy.

AIC is here to support your business. Please do get in touch if there is something you're concerned is not being picked up by AIC so that Member committees can look into it.

**Robert Sheasby**  
AIC Chief Executive



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This year's highlights

# Policy

## Key achievement 1

### General Election asks of new UK Government

2024 saw a **General Election** called earlier in the year than many anticipated, as July saw a Labour Government come to power with a large majority.

This brought many new MPs for constituencies and in many cases where there has not been Labour or Liberal Democrat presence for some time, if ever. AIC has been working with new Ministers including the Minister for Food Security, a new role evidencing the Government's intent to take this matter seriously.

In readiness for a General Election, **AIC launched its manifesto** in the spring to set out the agri-supply industry's key asks of the next UK Government. These asks focussed on improving trade with the EU and within the UK nations, standardisation of sustainability metrics, and a comprehensive, cohesive UK Government approach to our food security and land use.

This was received positively by many prospective parliamentary candidates from across the political spectrum, including the now Defra Minister Daniel Zeichner MP and Chancellor Rachel Reeves MP. It also facilitated initial contact with new MPs.

In the summer, AIC formed the **Food and Farming Fellowship Scheme** in partnership with the National Farmers Union (NFU), ABP UK, Arla Foods, Barfoots, British Egg Industry Council (BEIC), and food waste charity Fareshare.

The Scheme sees 20 newly elected MPs visit food and farming sector businesses, helping to build a deeper understanding of the entire food supply chain.



Cabinet Office Minister Rt Hon Nick Thomas Symonds MP addresses guests of AIC's reception in the House of Lords



## Key achievement 2

### Pushing for a SPS agreement between the UK and EU

Throughout the past year, AIC has advocated for a Sanitary/Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement between the UK and EU to help harmonise standards for animal and plant health. This would significantly ease trade friction by reducing the need for extensive checks and paperwork at borders.

In September, AIC hosted its annual reception in the House of Lords, with over 160 guests attending including Members, farmer representatives, and trade bodies - along with MPs and Peers, as well as **European Commission** and embassy officials.

The **Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP**, Minister for the Constitution and European Union Relations, gave a speech acknowledging the AIC and agri-supply industry's vital role in underpinning **food security**. He reaffirmed the Government's ambition to improve UK-EU trade by negotiating a veterinary or "Sanitary/Phytosanitary (SPS)" agreement.

In 2025, the Government has asked AIC to form part of core stakeholder engagement on this issue.



## Policy

### Key achievement 3 Uniting supply chain bodies to reverse UK oilseeds decline

Since August, AIC has been leading a group of supply chain stakeholders to support the UK's struggling oilseeds sector and find ways to increase the area grown domestically in the face of current challenges.

For more than a decade, the UK-grown area of oilseeds has been in decline. This has largely been driven by the withdrawal of neonicotinoid crop protection products in 2013, as well as agronomic and climate pressures, resulting in a 59% drop in the oilseeds area.

In a bid to reverse this trend and give UK growers greater confidence to produce oilseeds, AIC has united with other industry bodies that represent the supply chains which feed the nation.

Stakeholders working with AIC include the [Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board \(AHDB\)](#), the [British Society of Plant Breeders \(BSPB\)](#), [CropLife UK](#), the [Food and Drink Federation \(FDF\)](#), the [National Farmers Union \(NFU\)](#), and the [Seed Crusher and Oilseed Processors Association \(SCOPA\)](#).

Given that we now have a Minister for Food Security and a recently elected Government with priorities including improving cropping diversity and pollinator numbers, this stakeholder group believes that now is a crucial time to push this advocacy work together.

The group of trade bodies will work together to lobby MPs and government officials, as well as inform wider stakeholders including think tanks, NGOs, and the media.



### Priorities for 2025

1

To further engage with the new MPs, Committees and Ministers from across the political spectrum, and work with Members to facilitate visits to their businesses. Members will be central to this advocacy work with their new MPs, especially as AIC continue to highlight the impacts of the 2024 Budget.

2

Prepare for a number of policy initiatives from Government as we expect formal strategies to be published covering trade, land use, food, farming, and business red tape.

3

Provide support and detailed information to Government as it seeks to formally engage with the EU on an SPS-Veterinary agreement.



Further information:  
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# ► Policy - Environment

## Key achievement 1

### Developing SFI

We have continued to support Defra and the RPA in developing the content of, delivery and operation of the ELMs schemes, particularly the Expanded SFI offer which saw the number of actions available to farmers in 2024 rise to 102, and there now being over 30,000 SFI agreements in place.

Our place on the Farming and Countryside Senior Stakeholder Roundtable allows us direct access to Directors in Defra. This place, alongside only six other bodies, provides us with a forum to review, discuss, and question the delivery of their agri-environment schemes and services.



## Key achievement 2

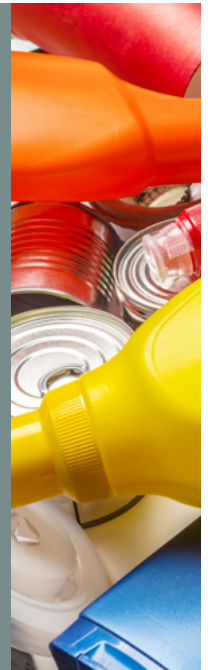
### Navigating introduction of the Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging

Working with Defra to refine the definition of household packaging to reduce the items that Members place on the market that will be caught by the scheme.

This year saw the Government focus development on the long-awaited waste reforms take shape with the extended producer responsibility.

Working on behalf of Members' interests to ensure that the reporting and financial burden are as low as is practicable.

Companies that produce or sell packaged products in the UK will pay for the collection and sorting of household packaging waste. The aim is to incentivise producers to reduce waste that's difficult to recycle.



## Key achievement 3

### Farming Rules for Water Statutory Guidance Rapid Review

AIC submitted a response to Defra's rapid review of the Farming Rules for Water Statutory Guidance. This review follows a High Court ruling on the interpretation of crop need at timing of application and how this was being enforced by the Environment Agency, coupled with pressure from the Office of Environmental Protection.

In addition to its individual response, AIC collaborated with nine industry bodies to submit a coordinated joint response.

## Priorities for 2025

- 1 To work with Defra's Farming and Countryside Programme and the Rural Payments Agency on the content and delivery of the SFI Expanded Offer and updated Countryside Stewardship.
- 2 To contribute to the Government's 25 Year Farming Roadmap and the Land Use Strategy.
- 3 On the back of the launch of AIC's Sustainability Action Plan, to support Members to implement sustainable practices within their businesses.

Further information:  
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## Sustainability

### Key achievement 1

#### Launching AIC's Sustainability Action Plan

AIC has published a new strategic resource offering invaluable guidance for UK agri-supply businesses, helping them to successfully navigate the sustainability landscape and promote greater efficiency.

Unveiled at AIC's Conference in November, "Agri-supply: An action plan for sustainable efficiency" is a comprehensive blueprint dedicated to delivering a resilient UK agriculture and food system. It has been created with the valuable input and support of AIC Members.

The Action Plan provides insight and inspiration for companies operating in the major agri-supply sectors – Animal Feed, Combinable Crops, Crop Protection and Agronomy, Fertiliser, and Seed – helping them to enhance their sustainability credentials while becoming more efficient and fit for the future.

The report covers the fundamental areas for sustainable agriculture and food production, including economic resilience, climate impacts, biodiversity, and sustainable communities.

It includes a summary of actions for the agri-supply industry, clearly outlining where businesses can make a start and take further actions to build resilience.

By implementing the recommendations in the Action Plan, businesses can make tangible progress towards reducing their environmental impact, aligning with government policies, improving market access, and opening up wider investment opportunities.



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### Key achievement 2

#### Climate Change Agreements

AIC submitted a response to the consultation on future Climate Change Agreements which was followed by a long-awaited response from the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero in the autumn.

With a new scheme starting in January 2026, AIC will be working with SLR Consulting to update Members as details are released alongside providing ongoing feedback to the Environment Agency as they continue to develop how data will be captured and reported, and targets set.

## Priorities for 2025

- 1 To promote the Sustainability Action Plan with Members and stakeholders, while identifying opportunities for collaborative working and messaging.
- 2 To maintain input into the Food Data Transparency Partnership and its associated projects.
- 3 To gather evidence to negotiate a new Climate Change Agreement target with the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero for next Climate Change Agreement scheme.

## ▶ Scotland



### Key achievement 1

#### Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act passed

June saw the Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act passed by the Scottish Parliament. This framework piece of legislation provides broad powers to Scottish ministers to provide flexible support payments in a range of areas. While the flexible approach is welcomed, AIC Scotland has pushed the Scottish Government for more detail to enable the agri-supply industry to plan.

AIC Scotland has been working closely with Scottish Government officials on the detailed design of the new four-tier support framework. It is likely the support changes will create opportunities for Members in a range of areas. Guidance includes a recommendation to use a FACTS-qualified adviser when making nutrient management decisions and a BASIS-qualified adviser for IPM plans.



Further information:  
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### Key achievement 2

#### Urging Scottish Government to rethink stance on precision breeding

AIC Scotland has led food and farming industry calls for the Scottish Government to end its opposition to precision breeding technology. In October, a letter co-signed by AIC Scotland, NFU Scotland, and GB Potatoes was sent to the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs Mairi Gougeon MSP calling on the Scottish Government to set up an independent expert working group with industry to consider precision breeding technology.

The group would assess the issues and evidence covering impacts on EU alignment and trade, agricultural productivity, scientific application, comparative international regulatory developments, and the cost of enforcing divergent gene editing policies. AIC Scotland continues to engage with stakeholders.



### Priorities for 2025

- 1 ▶ Positively influence the implementation of the Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act.
- 2 ▶ Work with stakeholders to support the development of equivalent Precision Breeding legislation for Scotland.
- 3 ▶ Continue to engage with MSPs and MPs across the political spectrum to increase understanding of Member concerns.

## ► Cymru



### Key achievement 1

#### Growing AIC Cymru's recognition and influence

Two years since its creation, AIC Cymru's prominence and engagement with Welsh Government and stakeholders has grown significantly.

There is now a strong working relationship with key Welsh Government policymakers, helping to shape and provide an industry perspective on the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) and other key rural affairs policy issues.

AIC Cymru's annual drinks reception at the Welsh Royal Show was well attended by Members and industry stakeholders. This event is a valuable opportunity to interact with senior Welsh Government officials and stakeholders. The aim is to further enhance this event in 2025 with wider political party engagement.



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### Key achievement 2

#### Pushing Welsh Government for more workable Sustainable Farming Scheme policy

In November, the Welsh Government dropped controversial plans to require Welsh farmers to have trees on 10% of their land to qualify for payments under the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS).

The move came after widespread opposition, with AIC Cymru and farming unions calling for a major rethink of proposals. Since March, AIC Cymru has been collaborating with NFU Cymru and the Farmers' Union of Wales to urge policymakers to engage with the industry and listen to overwhelming feedback.

AIC Cymru has had constructive engagement with the Deputy First Minister Huw Irranca-Davies MS since he was appointed Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, including at an industry roundtable.

AIC Cymru will continue to make the case for a more workable SFS ahead of its planned introduction in 2026.

### Priorities for 2025

- 1 To develop the voice of Members as clear, pragmatic, and approachable.
- 2 Maintain AIC Cymru's momentum by holding four Committee meetings in 2024.
- 3 Renew and evolve AIC Cymru's Committee with the succession of the Chair and Vice Chair positions, and to add an additional Member.
- 4 Provide a thorough consultation response to further government consultation on the SFS, positioning AIC Cymru as an enabler of the scheme.
- 5 Maintain the highly co-operative, co-ordinated, and mutually advantageous approach with Welsh farming unions.



# ▶ Animal Feed

## 2025 Outlook

Our sector will focus on supporting Members on the UK Forest Risk Commodities Regulation (UKFRC) and EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR). Whilst these pieces of legislation are due to be implemented in late 2025, both will likely have far reaching consequences. AIC will continue to represent Member concerns about the consequences of compliance.

AIC will continue to engage with the FSA/FSS on consultations relating to reform of the regulated products approval process, and on proposed amendments to TSE Regulations. Having more expedient access to new GMOs, feed additives, and protein sources is a priority for Members. AIC will impress upon regulators that access to new technologies matters for competitiveness.



**Joanne Gatcliffe,**  
Sector Chair,  
Animal Feed

### Key achievement 1

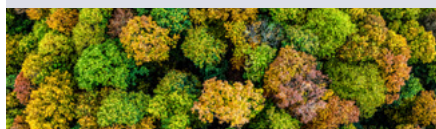
#### EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and UK Forest Risk Commodity Regulations (UKFRC)

AIC has worked to keep Members abreast of developments regarding EUDR and UKFRC, with the latter delayed due to the UK General Election.

A one-year postponement of the EUDR application date was agreed in late 2024. AIC has worked closely with its European associations on this issue and supported the call for a delay of its entry into force given the EU Commission's lack of legal clarity.

The EUDR has been in force since 29 June 2023 and its provisions were due to be implemented from 30 December 2024. The implementation will now be deferred to 30 December 2025 for large companies, and 30 June 2026 for small companies.

AIC has also worked with UK beef supply chain partners to aid understanding of the likely compliance requirements for UK beef entering the EU market. To further support, AIC published a Frequently Asked Questions resource online.



### Key achievement 2

#### Future Forum launches careers booklet to encourage new animal feed sector entrants

In 2024, a careers booklet aimed at attracting new entrants into the animal feed supply chain was published by the Feed Sector Future Forum.

The booklet - "Careers in the Animal Feed Supply Chain" - was created to equip the next generation with the knowledge and understanding of what a career in the UK's livestock feed industry looks like and why it's so rewarding.

Available as a hard copy and a **digital download**, the booklet offers information on a wide range of roles within the sector.

### Key achievement 3

#### Joining GFLI secures valuable access to feed lifecycle analysis data

April 2024 saw AIC secure access to feed lifecycle analysis (LCA) data for its Member businesses by joining the **Global Feed LCA Institute (GFLI)**, a global feed industry initiative.

AIC's membership brings additional benefits to its Member businesses in the animal feed sector. AIC maintained the supply of LCA-related services to Members by joining the Institute. The move supports the ambition of AIC's Feed Executive Committee to drive progress on sustainability matters.

## Priorities for 2025



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- 1 ▶ Engage with UK Government on implementation of the Forest Risk Commodities Regulation to ensure evidence to demonstrate compliance is pragmatic for industry. Continue to work with Members and supply chain partners on EUDR and its implications.
- 2 ▶ Continue to pressure FSA and Ministers to deliver timelier Regulated Product approvals, specifically for feed additives and GMOs, and support future proposals on regulated product reform.
- 3 ▶ Proceed with a green feed labelling proposal and Food Data Transparency Partnership work.

# ▶ Combinable Crops

## 2025 Outlook

Given recent economic and geopolitical challenges, it is essential that our industry presents a unified voice on a wide range of pressing issues. Supporting food security, sustainability efforts, trade dynamics, and innovation, our collective response will play a key role.

Amid ongoing changes within the NFU, AHDB, and Red Tractor, AIC is uniquely positioned to align and strengthen understanding with these pivotal organisations.

The Committee is committed to continuing direct engagement with other industry stakeholders to promote a deeper understanding of the arable trading sector.



**Tom Wood,**  
Sector Chair, Combinable Crops

### Key achievement 1

#### Working with industry on Digital Passport for Combinable Crops

Significant changes were made to the Business Case for a Digital Passport (Combinable Crops) to take account of feedback around data, funding, and accessibility, following an industry-wide consultation which closed in February 2024.

AIC and the other Digital Passport Leadership Group members, supported by the Development and Data Groups, reviewed industry comments and almost 80 questions submitted during the consultation phase, amending the Business Case to consider these.

AIC insisted there be a period for its Members to review the changes to the Business Case and consider answers to key questions. Discussions on funding and ownership are ongoing.

### Key achievement 2

#### Representing Member interests on AHDB levy rebate review

AIC has been working on behalf of Members to secure a positive outcome regarding the administration fee paid to all levy collectors to cover associated admin costs.

AHDB proposed a significant cut to the rate and AIC has robustly challenged this.

While discussions are ongoing, AIC has made the case that levy collectors' voices must be heard on how any "recovered" rebate money to AHDB is spent in future.

AIC successfully pushed back on proposals requiring levy-collecting businesses to provide the AHDB with information on who they collect the levy from.

The levy administration changes were due to be implemented from October 2024. AIC argued for more time, and changes will now come in April 2025.

### Key achievement 3

#### Supporting understanding on imported crop standards and ergot

To inform industry stakeholders and the public on two key issues relating to the Combinable Crops Sector, AIC has published online resources to aid understanding and counter misinformation.

An online resource on imported crop standards was published in January 2024, supported by an animated video. This explains how and why crops are traded, and how imports are verified as meeting the same legal food and feed safety standards as UK-grown crops.

With ergot more prevalent this harvest, AIC published an FAQs resource in September explaining how the industry manages contamination to ensure feed and food safety.



## Priorities for 2025

- 1 ▶ Maintaining strong representation in the Digital Passport project for an efficient approach to managing food and feed safety data transfer across the supply chain.
- 2 ▶ Ensuring food security remains a priority and addressing the challenges faced by Combinable Crop Members due to the decreasing land available for crops.
- 3 ▶ Collaborating closely with Pulse Members to ensure that interests and concerns are effectively addressed, fostering a unified approach to our shared goals.



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# Crop Protection & Agronomy

## 2025 Outlook

We must ensure the UK is a world-leader in applying the best scientific and risk-based approach to crop protection. Therefore, our sector's priorities revolve around food security and sustainability, including robust stewardship of PPPs as part of the world-class agronomic advice offered to growers.

This forms a key part of our drive towards the common goal of sustainable crop production. AIC will maintain the promotion of our sector's important work on this and ensure Members' concerns and requests are heard by key policymakers. This includes lobbying the Government for a pragmatic and more efficient GB PPP regime.



**Ronan Hughes,**  
Sector Chair, Crop Protection & Agronomy

### Key achievement 1

#### Engagement with stakeholders to demonstrate the value AIC Members deliver

The sector has continued engagement with policymakers on the back of new staff being hired and churn with existing employees. The engagement over 2024 included hosting seven visits throughout the UK for 57 staff from CRD/HSE and Defra, HCP, and CropLife UK at a variety of AIC Member trial sites during the summer months.

Included for the first time was a visit to various horticultural businesses to broaden the scope of topics discussed. Feedback from attendees highlighted the value they gained from being able to hear discussions first-hand on farm practices and the issues facing the agricultural and horticultural sectors.

### Key achievement 2

#### Promoting Integrated IPM in the grassland sector

In May 2024, AIC published an infographic explaining how Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices are used effectively in grassland.

It was created to assist Members in conversations with policymakers and industry stakeholders on IPM and the many important actions taken to deliver this on grassland farms supported by BASIS registered agronomists and feed advisers.

This resource complements AIC's horticulture and arable infographics, which have been referenced by Defra's website as a useful information source for IPM.

### Key achievement 3

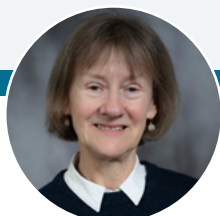
#### Planning for publication of the National Action Plan for Sustainable PPP Use (NAP)

The NAP was expected to be published during 2024. However, this has been delayed following the UK General Election as Defra is working with the Labour Government to understand its priorities and ambition for PPPs ahead of publishing the document.

In the meantime, the sector continues to highlight the asks made by AIC in its response to draft NAP consultation in 2021. Linked to the NAP publication is the rollout of an independent GB PPP regime, which has also been delayed. AIC aims to gain a better understanding of both in the year ahead.



## Priorities for 2025



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- 1 Use AIC Members' extensive trials network to demonstrate their role in the development and promotion of IPM with farmers and growers.
- 2 Work with Defra and CRD to deliver the National Action Plan for Sustainable PPP use to ensure a more efficient, less bureaucratic regime and capture opportunities presented by EU Exit.
- 3 Promote the work of AIC's Crop Protection and Agronomy Members in helping growers produce crops sustainably.

# Fertiliser

## 2025 Outlook

The past year has again been a tough trading period with a levelling off of demand for compound fertilisers exacerbated by low farmer confidence and prevailing bad weather during planting.

In 2025, it is vital that the sector continues to assertively promote the value and importance of our products as essential for productivity and food security – “Fertilisers feed the plants that make our food”.

We must continuously demonstrate to the Government, industry stakeholders, and the public that our sector takes its obligations and responsibilities on safety, nutrient efficiency, and the environment seriously.



**Robert Ingham,**  
Sector Chair,  
Fertiliser

### Key achievement 1

#### Supporting Members on CBAM

The UK Government will introduce a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) from 1 January 2027, to address the risk of carbon leakage.

While this is deemed a distributional issue, AIC has supported Members by helping to clarify what this may mean for the industry.

AIC has also carried out economic modelling to determine how varying future carbon prices and allowances could impact on the cost of fertiliser. At current free allowance values, the estimated additional cost on imported non-compliant urea would be £9.90 a tonne of fertiliser.

### Key achievement 2

#### Ammonium Nitrate Fertiliser – Emergency Preparedness

Safety measures on sites containing ammonium nitrate will depend on the nature of the activities that are taking place. In all cases, the law requires plans to be drawn up to protect people in the event of a fire/explosion.

AIC has created a “Safety Radius Calculator” that determines the safety radius for premises according to the amount of material stored on site, and maps this, indicating premises likely to be at risk. The tool allows businesses falling under this requirement to demonstrate the assessment of risk and complete their emergency planning.

### Key achievement 3

#### Improving nutritional advice to grassland farmers

AIC continues to influence and advocate for the enhancement and restructuring of RB209 and FACTS training and advice.

This means emphasising the importance of good nutrient management practices on UK grassland, given it constitutes 35% of fertiliser consumption in the UK, thereby contributing to more sustainable and efficient agricultural practices. AHDB has since confirmed this will be an RB209 priority for 2025.



## Priorities for 2025

1

Supporting our industry with the introduction and development of potential new regulations notably for Fertilising products, REACH, Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM).

2

Demonstrating leadership on Cleaner Water by supporting RB209’s revision and embedding better grassland

3

nutrient management agronomy in SFI, ELMS, and FACTS.

Managing impacts of cleaner air measures and ensuring the sector’s interests are properly represented within government on convergence for emissions standards and the implementation of the voluntary agreement on urea.



Further information:  
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## Seed

### 2025 Outlook

The past year has seen prominent successes for our sector, chiefly reassuring government and industry on the availability of spring seed from our Members and the Precision Breeding (Genetic Technology) Act becoming law.

We must ensure that the implementation of the Act's secondary legislation is fit for purpose and lives up to its potential. AIC's involvement in the cross-industry working group led by the Food Standards Agency is a positive step in this regard.

AIC will enhance government understanding of the certified seed industry's vital role, ensuring that Member interests are protected when it comes to trading relations and practicalities.

We must nurture the next generation to innovate the industry and shape the future.



**Toby Reich,**  
Sector Chair,  
Seed

#### Key achievement 1

##### Reassurance on spring seed supply

Following concern among MPs regarding spring seed availability in January, AIC drew on Member support to offer reassurance to Ministers and the media that the sector was able to meet the exceptional demand.

Responding to suggestions that legislation to enable temporary trading of farm-to-farm seed should be considered, AIC made clear that amending the law is not necessary and that such a move would have damaging long-term consequences for farmers and the certified seed sector.



#### Key achievement 2

##### Next steps for Precision Breeding legislation

AIC welcomes the Government's announcement of the next steps for realising the potential benefits of gene editing technologies in England. In September, the **Minister for Food Security and Rural Affairs Daniel Zeichner MP** confirmed that secondary legislation required to implement the Precision Breeding Act for plants was expected to be laid in Parliament soon.

Supporting legislation is required to unlock the benefits of the **Precision Breeding Act**, which became law in March 2023.

AIC will continue to work with the Government as it develops this secondary legislation ensuring it is pragmatic and successful.

#### Key achievement

##### Successful spring oat seed derogation supports supply

Following Member requests, AIC applied to Defra along with the Welsh and Scottish Governments for a derogation to allow seed businesses to supply seed with a lower germination rate in order to meet demand and contractual obligations.

Germination rates were reported to be lower due to a dry, cold spring and intermittent weather patterns, leading to a late harvest. The derogation announced in January allowed for the marketing of 4,260 tonnes of certified category spring oat seed of popular varieties at a reduced germination level of 75%.

### Priorities for 2025

- 1 To build strong relations with stakeholders and Government to create mutually beneficial outcomes.
- 2 To support Members with resources to ensure stakeholders have full understanding of the certified seed industry.
- 3 To facilitate robust understanding and harmony of seed regulations in future-proofing the industry.



Further information:  
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## ► Membership & Communications

### 2025 Outlook

In early 2025, AIC will contact Members with regards to the data it holds, including personnel for each Member business. This will allow AIC to better cater to the needs of individuals within Member companies.



**Tracy Smith,**  
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## Key Achievements from the past year

### Best-ever attended AIC Conference

Once again, AIC's Dinner & Conference 2024 was sold out with a full array of delegates from AIC Members, stakeholders, next generation members, students and non-members. AIC's Dinner after dinner speaker was Rt Hon Robert Goodwill who gave some valuable anecdotes from his distinguished political career.

The conference focused on "added value in the agri-food supply chain" and had a full programme to support this. Speakers included the Minister for Food Security and Rural Affairs Daniel Zeichner MP, NFU President Tom Bradshaw, and the author of the National Food Strategy Henry Dimbleby. This year's conference was hot off the heels of the new Labour Governments budget so this inevitably held some wait with the political debate, but the importance of food security, sustainability and productivity were the main themes.

AIC also launched the new AIC Sustainability Action Plan, which will support our Member companies in achieving their sustainability goals.

### New Online Renewal Declaration System

In December we launched our new Online Renewal system. This is the first year that this system is available for Members to use. If you would like to use this new system please access this area via AIC's website [www.agindustries.org.uk](http://www.agindustries.org.uk).

The system has been designed in the same format as the standard declaration form. Really simple to use, just complete your figures as you normally do and select submit, the figures are then sent directly to your AIC account. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me directly, on [tracy.smith@agindustries.org.uk](mailto:tracy.smith@agindustries.org.uk) or call on 07442 862360.

### Building awareness and understanding on key industry issues

The past year has seen AIC offer clarity and certainty on many hot topics for the industry, using web content such as blogs and Frequently Asked Questions pages to inform Members, stakeholders, government, and the public.

By publishing and routinely updating informative, factually accurate, and highly searchable resources online, AIC has successfully countered misconceptions and cleared up confusion within the industry on topics such as deforestation regulations for the UK and EU, imported crop standards, and ergot in cereals.

Meanwhile, regular blog posts from AIC policy leads have set out the trade association's position on food security, ways to improve trade with the EU, and sustainability.

This content is a proactive means of inserting AIC into relevant industry conversations, engaging with stakeholders, and making Members' voices heard on the issues which matter most. This communications work has also yielded strong coverage in key media outlets.



Further information:  
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# ► AIC Services

## Professional Services



### HACCP



## Assurance Schemes



## Bringing confidence to your sector

AIC Services offers a full array of professional services that support the agri-supply industry, which has never been more important in this time of change within UK agriculture. The organisation works hand in hand with AIC to ensure that both policy and professional services are fully aligned.

Following the conclusion of the joint scheme development review, industry roadshows were undertaken, which involved AIC's Services team presenting at seminars around the UK with trade assurance Participants. The engagement with these events was excellent and we have gained valuable insight into how the schemes can be even more aligned to industry requirements.

Coupled with this AIC has also been part of the industry assurance reviews that have been carried out this year. We were part of the AHDB Cereal assurance review and

also await the outcome of the industry commissioner's review. AIC are adamant that assurance should be fit for purpose and joined up across the supply chain to ensure feed and food safety for consumers.

Another significant project was the work that AIC Services has carried out on the new Sustainability Commodities Standard (SCS). This standard has had to evolve over the year as the requirements of the industry and stakeholders have changed and the requirement to meet European Union Deforestation Database (EUDR) was moved back until the end of 2025. The SCS should be launched Q1 of 2025 and we look forward to further industry engagement in this area.

We look forward to continually evolving our services in 2025 with the support of AIC Members, Participants and stakeholders.



**John Kelley,**  
 Chief Operating Officer, AIC  
 Managing Director, AIC Services  
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## Assurance scheme updates

### Rolling out FEMAS, TASCC, and UFAS revised Standards

AIC Services launched the revised Standards for feed and food safety schemes FEMAS, TASCC, and UFAS this year.

This followed a thorough process of more closely aligning the Standards to improve understanding, with an industry consultation held to gather vital feedback.

Along with the revised Standards for each scheme, “key changes” documents have been published. These are designed to support Participants as they prepare for their audits to these new Standards, which are effective from 1 October 2024.

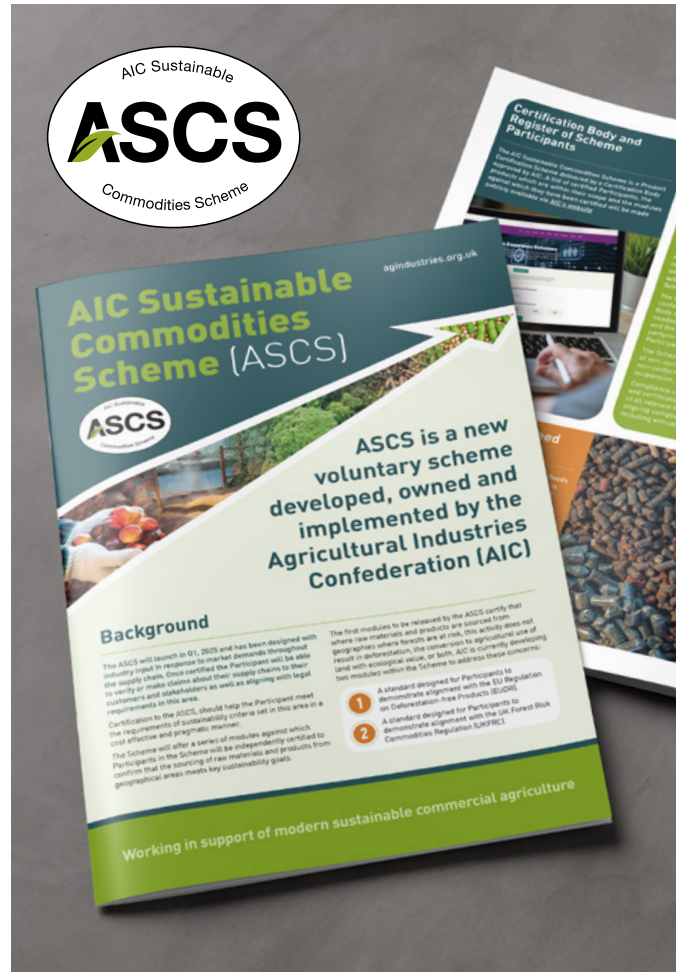
Over the summer, a series of in-person seminars were hosted throughout the UK and Ireland to help Participants to prepare. These events were a valuable opportunity for scheme Participants to hear about the latest updates on the schemes, as well as meet AIC’s team and representatives from the certification body Kiwa Agri Food.



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### AIC’s Sustainable Commodities Scheme development

In December, AIC launched a consultation of Members and the wider industry on a Sustainable Commodities Scheme (ASCS), ahead of the new Scheme’s planned launch in early 2025.

The new voluntary scheme has been developed to help Members fulfil their due diligence requirements for **EU Regulation on Deforestation-free Products (EUDR)**. It aims to provide feed and food supply chains with confidence that soya and palm commodities have not originated from deforested land.

The ASCS has been designed with industry input in response to market demands throughout the supply chain. Once certified, the Participant will be able to verify or make claims about their supply chains to their customers and stakeholders and align with legal requirements in this area.



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Technical Manager for AIC Services  
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## Continuing a robust assurance scheme

Over the past year, FIAS has continued to support Participants with the implementation of the Control of Explosives Precursors and Poisons Regulations in conjunction with stakeholders and Government departments.

In addition, the i-learning for the scheme has undergone a review and format update due for launch in the new year. The FIAS Working Group will start a review of the FIAS Standard in January 2025 working towards a new issue in late 2026.



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## User friendly updates to Sector Notes

The full suite of FEMAS Sector Notes were updated during 2024 to reflect the new 2024 FEMAS Standard, whilst also gaining a more logical and user-friendly layout. In addition to this, a completely new Sector Note covering the production of seaweed and maerl products was also launched.



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## FAR Improving Farm Nutrient Balance CPD

This year has seen valuable new CPD modules for FAR advisers launched to support ongoing training. The latest training encompasses why improving nutrient balance on-farm is important and a calculator to measure nutrient balance for livestock systems.

Part 1 is designed to help FAR advisers understand and explain to their customers why farm nutrient balance is important from a policy and practical perspective. Part 2 of the training focuses on how to calculate nutrient balance on-farm for different livestock production systems.

This includes a simplified farm nutrient balance calculation worksheet which is available for all advisers completing the training to use with their livestock customers to help make improvements on farm.



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## Working to resolve RED II assurance status

AIC continues to work with other voluntary schemes, industry, and the Government to resolve issues concerning accreditation of the scheme and recognition of the NUTS2 values. The implementation of the Union Database (UDB) is ongoing, and Participants are kept up to date with its requirements and mandatory use. It is essential recognition is in place to maintain access to the EU market as a valuable outlet for biofuel.

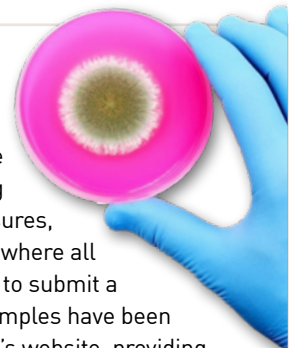


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## Dioxin & Mycotoxin sampling results

Following an enforced pause in the UFAS Dioxin & Mycotoxin sampling programme caused by Covid pressures, 2024 saw a "catch up" programme where all UFAS Compound sites were asked to submit a sample. The results from these samples have been summarised and published on AIC's website, providing valuable information to Participants.



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## ► This year's highlights



Working in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture



## A glimpse into some of AIC's highlights throughout 2025

AIC's team have had a successful and productive year of meeting, engaging and collaborating with Members, stakeholders, government officials and industry professionals.

## How **AIC** adds value



**LOBBYING** within the UK and Europe on behalf of the supply industry.



**TECHNICAL ADVICE FOR MEMBERS** on a sector-by-sector basis.



**PARTNERSHIP** with relevant organisations on common issues.



**RAISING** professional standards in trade assurance and advice.

*Working in support of modern,  
sustainable, commercial agriculture*