

The newsletter of the Trade Assurance Scheme for Combinable Crops

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Chairman's welcome



Welcome to the latest edition of *TASCCforce*.

We are continually reviewing and amending the TASCC protocols in response to practical market experience. Your

AIC working group,

which I have the privilege to chair, is always looking to improve the schemes by adopting better practice, reasonable customer contractual demands and legal requirements. TASCC is recognised by members and customers as the UK industry leader in its

field, recently gaining equivalent status alongside other EU standards. Your committee represents all sectors and skills in the post-farmgate combinable crops trading sectors and we are always keen to receive member feedback on any ideas you have to improve TASCC further. After all, this is our industry scheme and its success totally depends on the input and loyalty of its members.

I hope you enjoy reading this latest edition of *TASCCforce*, please pass it on to any other members of your team who might be interested. Alternatively contact Garry Rudd to add other people to the mailing list.

Richard Whitlock, Chairman

Store management

TASCC auditors will now be checking how moisture and temperature data is collected in stores. They will be asking the Storekeeper to physically show them the procedure. To that end, the TASCC Working Group has suggested some information from the recent HGCA Grain storage guide for cereals and oilseeds to help them.

There is a special two page feature in this edition of *TASCCforce* but further information can be found in the HGCA's Grain storage guide (3rd Edition) (www.hgca.com/grainstorage)



EARLYBIRD RATES AVAILABLE

AGRI BUSINESS 2013

STAYING AHEAD OF THE CURVE

With increasing volatility, the agricultural supply industry needs to focus on staying ahead of the curve. And that is the focus of this well-established event tailored to the industry's needs. Politics, economics, consumer attitudes and so much more will be covered by keynote speakers including:

- Caroline Spelman MP, Defra
- James Neville, Chairman, Dairy 2020
- Joanne Denney-Finch, IGD
- Clive Black, Shore Capital Brokers
- Ian Pigott, Founder, Open Farm Sunday

Plus presentations by the AIC team

14 November 2012 Book now at www.agindustries.org.uk





Sweeping out safely on site

A round table discussion between nabim, MAGB, NFU, RHA and AIC to discuss the issue of sweeping out on site was held recently. This is becoming more difficult as intakes' health and safety procedures deem it necessary to clean off site, while hauliers sweeping out in a layby is both dangerous and illegal.

The group was set up to discuss procedural changes to ensure that a trailer has been cleaned safely before going to its next destination.

The increasing problem of overweight vehicles was another topic discussed, as this can give intakes a problem as to whether or not to tip the load.

Further information will be issued shortly.

Slow going on Renewable Energy Directive

It now seems likely that both the Red Tractor and SQC will be approved before harvest.

The TASCC scheme is further back in the process and we still await Commission feedback and requests for amendments etc. Therefore, TASCC will not gain approval before harvest 2012.

One other UK-based scheme, submitted by Ensus, has entered the final comitology process. This is expected to be approved by harvest 2012.

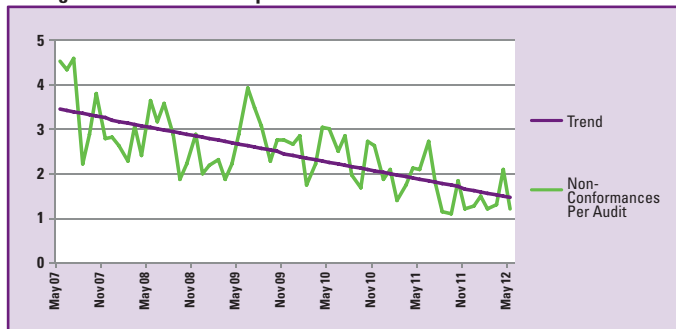
The UK has previously sought to have the above UK farm schemes accepted by ISCC

as delivering the on-farm audit requirements of the German scheme. This has not proved possible before the schemes completing their EU approval (ie before harvest 2012) and is unlikely to be automatic even beyond that point. Mutual recognition of voluntary schemes is proving difficult across the whole EU.

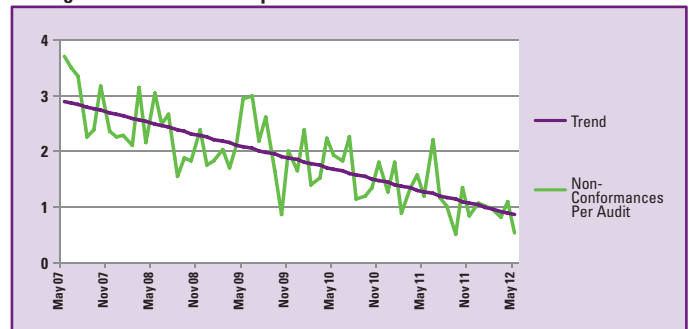
At present, therefore anyone renewing their ISCC audit will still be required to have 3% of farm suppliers audited. Associated with this will be the continuing requirement to obtain farmer declarations where these have expired (12 months from date of previous declaration).

TASCC Non conformances statistics

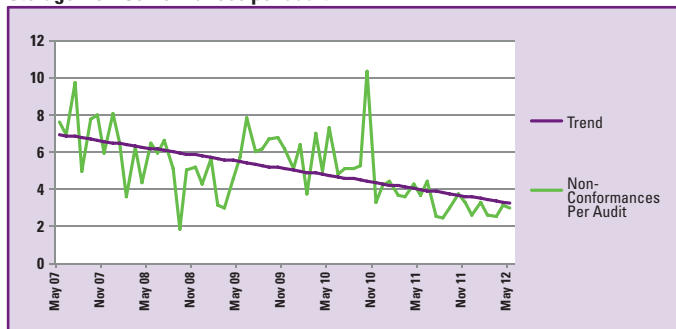
Average Non-Conformances per audit



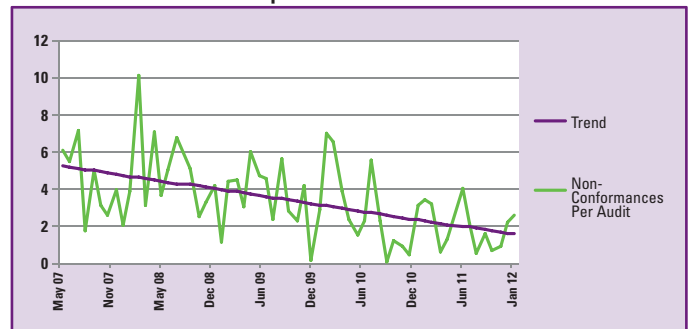
Haulage Non-Conformances per audit



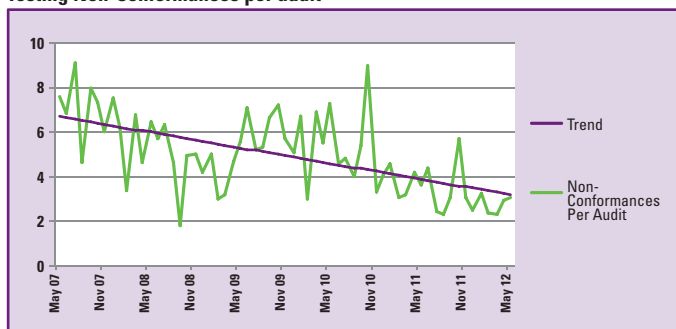
Storage Non-Conformances per audit



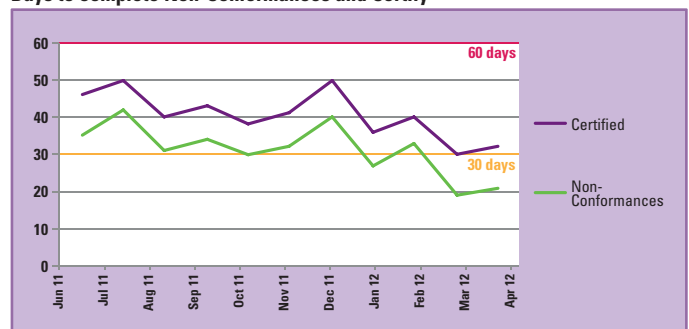
Merchant Non-Conformances per audit



Testing Non-Conformances per audit



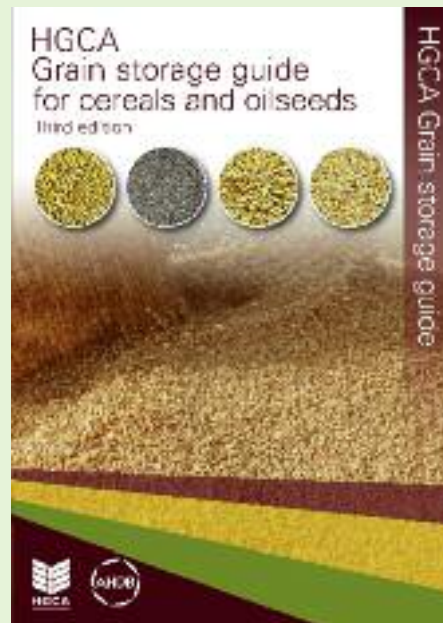
Days to complete Non-Conformances and Certify



Store Management Special

TASCC auditors will now be checking how moisture and temperature data is collected in stores. They will require Storekeepers to physically show them the procedure. To that end, the TASCC Working Group has suggested some information from the recent HGCA Storage Guide to help them.

The information on these pages has been kindly reproduced with the permission of the HGCA from the Grain storage guide (3rd Edition) (www.hgca.com/grainstorage)

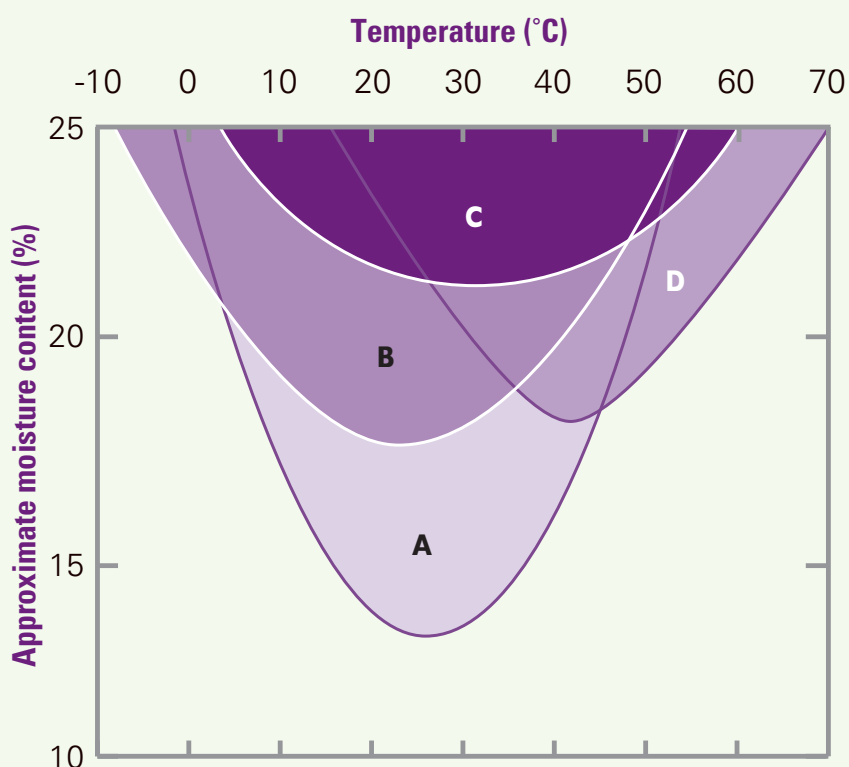


The principal causes of spoilage in stored grain are fungi, insects and mites. The fungi and insects that are found in the field are different to those that cause problems in the storage environment. Recent research has shown some stored product insects and mites are able to carry fungal spores, including those of *Penicillium verrucosum*, which can produce ochratoxin A.

Fungi and mycotoxins

Storage fungi can grow on cereals from about 14.5% moisture content (mc) (7.5-8% mc in oilseed rape) upwards and can cause heating and loss of germinative capacity.

Different types of fungi thrive at different moisture contents and temperatures in stored grain



The main fungus with the potential to cause problems in stored grain in the UK is *Penicillium verrucosum*. Under appropriate conditions (18% mc and above) this fungus can produce the mycotoxin, ochratoxin A (OTA). EU regulations set permissible levels for OTA at 5 parts per billion (ppb) for cereals at intake. Where grain is stored above 18% mc, these levels can be exceeded in two weeks if the temperature is sufficiently high.

- A** – *Aspergillus* species which may damage germination and cause slow heating.
- B** – *Penicillium* species, including those that produce mycotoxins.
- C** – Advanced decay/field fungi, eg *Fusarium* species and heating organisms, eg *Absidia* species which may be pathogenic causing, for instance, farmers' lung.
- D** – Thermophilic fungi, which thrive at very high temperatures, such as those that occur in compost bins.

Examples of Physical, Biological and Chemical hazards

Type of hazard	Description	Examples
Biological	Pathogenic micro-organisms that may cause infection or food poisoning in consumers. Contamination of grain may be from people, equipment, store fabric or environment (eg pests, previous uses, including housing of livestock, adjacent operations).	<i>E. coli</i> , <i>Salmonella</i>
Chemical	Residues of chemical substances that may render the product unacceptable or illegal where statutory maximum residue levels (MRLs) have been exceeded.	Residues of pesticides [†] , mineral oils, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), cleaning agents
	Residues of mycotoxins formed as a result of growth of fungal moulds in stored grain.	Ochratoxin A (OTA) [†]
Physical	Foreign bodies that may contaminate grain. These may cause harm to the consumer or make the grain unacceptable to the customer.	Glass, metal (eg nuts and bolts), stones, brick and concrete, wood, animal contaminants (eg rodent or bird faeces), shotgun cartridges, lead, clay pigeons
	Foreign materials (allergens) that may contaminate grain from products stored previously or nearby and cause an allergic reaction in susceptible consumers.	Soybeans, nuts, peanuts
	Storage pests that may contaminate grain and increase in store and make the grain unacceptable to the customer.	Insects and mites

[†] Exceeding Statutory Maximum Residue Levels (MRL)/Permissible Levels

Moisture

Moisture management is vital to prevent spoilage by fungi and mites.

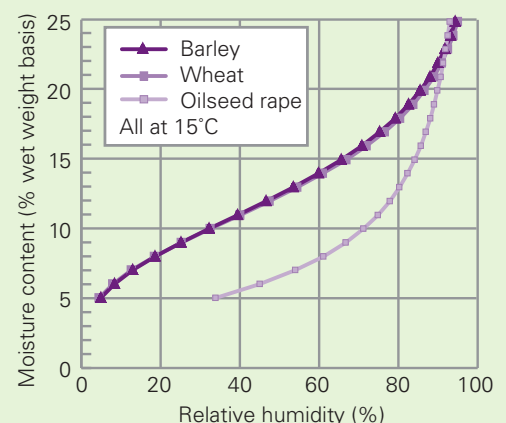
The safe time to achieve the recommended moisture content will depend on the grain temperature: a combination of high moisture content and high temperature results in a greater risk of fungal development and mycotoxin formation. The grain surface absorbs moisture in winter. Even when bulk mc is low, increases in surface mc can lead to very high mite populations.

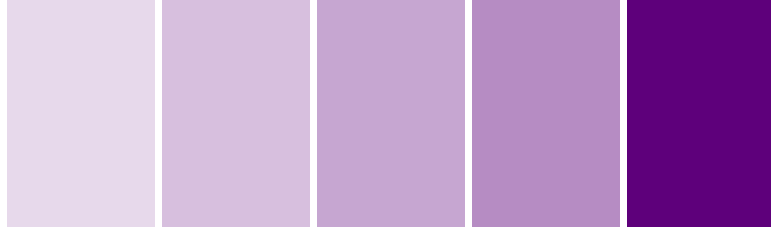
For a given moisture content, grain is safer to store at a lower temperature. This is because the grain exchanges water with the surrounding air and, in enclosed spaces, this continues until a balance (the equilibrium relative humidity, erh) is reached. As the temperature decreases, so does the erh.

Mould growth and mite reproduction stop below 65% erh.

Moisture content	Wheat temperature			At 5°C, wheat at 14.5% mc has an erh of 56%. The same grain stored at 25°C at the same mc has an erh of 66%.
	5°C	15°C	25°C	
16.5% mc	68% erh	74% erh	76% erh	
15.5% mc	62% erh	69% erh	71% erh	
14.5% mc	56% erh	64% erh	66% erh	
13.5% mc	49% erh	58% erh	60% erh	

Cereals and oilseeds have different relationships between moisture content and equilibrium relative humidity, hence the recommendations for the target moisture content are different.





New TASCC working group members

Alan King – Technical Manager, Camgrain

Camgrain, a farmer co-operative established in 1983, has grown from small beginnings to operating four sites across central England with over 400,000 tonnes of grain storage for harvest 2012.

Having dealt with TASCC matters across the stores, laboratories and haulage for Camgrain for the past 6 years, I felt that I could make a contribution to developing the codes of practice and in raising TASCC's the profile within the industry. Discussions with AIC led to me being invited to join the TASCC Working Group in 2011.

Several years' experience of hosting TASCC and British Retail Consortium audits, formal qualifications in HACCP, together with being a member of the UK NIR Grain Network steering committee (dealing with ring check data and quality control) does, I hope, mean I have provided valuable input. Being a qualified Transport Manager and experienced HGV driver has also helped with practical understanding!

See www.camgrain.co.uk for further information.



Ben Schadla-Hall – Operations Director, Wellgrain

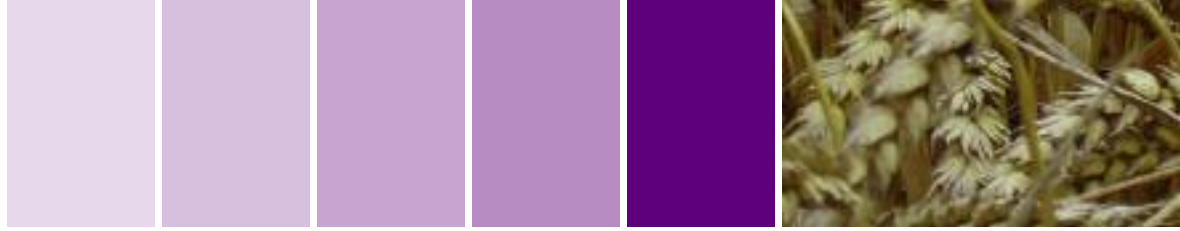
Established in 2003, Wellgrain is one of the fastest growing privately-owned UK agricultural merchants. With a range of dedicated stores in the Midlands and Eastern England plus a dedicated haulage fleet has allowed Wellgrain to continue to grow and provide an excellent service to the farmers it trades with.

TASCC has proved to be a fundamental building block to the business providing Wellgrain with credibility and confidence in its operations. Membership of AIC has allowed Wellgrain to understand up coming policy changes and represent an alternative viewpoint.

Ben Schadla-Hall, Operations Director for Wellgrain Ltd, studied Agricultural Economics at the University of Reading and then went onto to study Development Economics specialising in agricultural and international trade systems gaining a Masters Degree from University College, London.

See www.wellgrain.co.uk for further information.





Seed treatment progress

Developed jointly by the European Seed Association (ESA) with major seed treatment product manufacturers, the European Seed Treatment Assurance Scheme (ESTA) is an assurance scheme developed to cover the process of applying seed treatment products.

Two information seminars, in Peterborough and Edinburgh, attracted over 70 people. It is expected that the new code, which will be able to be audited as a bolt-on to TASCC or



as a stand-alone audit, will be available in the late summer.



Red Tractor Crops Assurance – first delivery points



Red Tractor Farm Assurance

In the 2011 version of the Red Tractor Crops Assurance standard, there was the inclusion of a 'Recommendation' that growers obtain information on the first tipping point of loads leaving the farm.

At the time it was argued that this information was needed to satisfy one of the requirements of Red Tractor being an approved voluntary scheme under the Renewable Energy Directive. AIC has subsequently confirmed with DG Energy

that this is not the case – and advised Red Tractor accordingly.

Over recent weeks we have become aware of several instances where farmers are informed by their auditor that failure to obtain that information is being classed as a non-conformance. This is not correct and we have repeated requests to Red Tractor to ensure audit bodies and their auditors understand the correct interpretation of a 'Recommendation'.

We will be making efforts to have this recommendation removed from future versions of the assurance scheme.

Red Tractor has informed AIC that although this is a recommendation, it is not a standard. This means that although a grower technically receives a non-conformance, it has no effect on their certification; this should be pointed out by assessors.

Assurance alerts

AIC are now sending 'Assurance Alerts' to all registered assurance scheme participants. These are emails which give details of certification status changes. At most, there will be one a day sent around 4pm although there will be some days where an alert is not required.

If you wish to receive these alerts, then please send an email to Garry Rudd on garry.rudd@agindustries.org.uk asking to be added to the distribution list.



For further information contact:

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