

JOURNAL

Autumn 2020 | Working in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture



A roadmap for a sustainable food chain

Together with our partners in the food chain we want to build a more resilient future and we have committed to a Sustainability Roadmap that will deliver.



The new “business as usual”

An update from AIC Chief Executive Robert Sheasby

AIC’s Roadmap for a sustainable food chain

Finding the way together.

Fertiliser regulations after 2020

What will the regulatory situation be in the event of no deal.



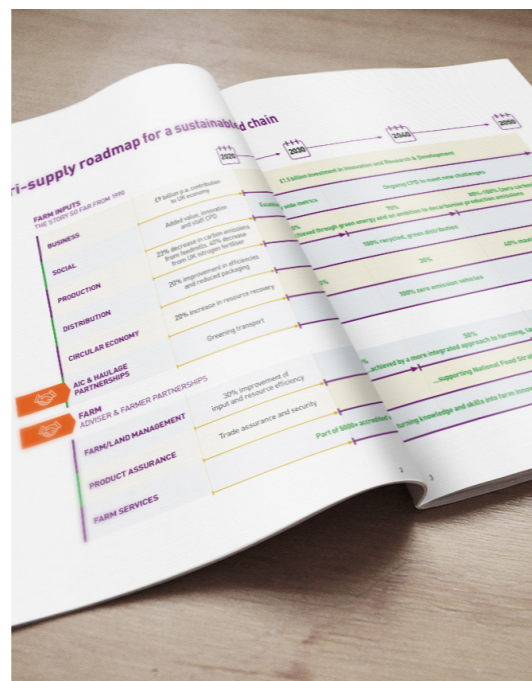
An update from AIC Chief Executive Robert Sheasby

As the impact from Covid-19 becomes the new “business as usual”, along with the weather effects over the last year, we have all had to endure hardships. We must control what we can and ensure we are as robust as possible. In light of this, AIC is focused on the issues – both immediately pressing and in the long-term – that will shape the UK agrisupply industry in the future.

31st December 2020 will mark the end of the transition period for the UK leaving the EU. At the time of writing, there is no trade deal confirmed with the EU. It has become clear that we must prepare for the worst and hope for the best. We have launched a new webpage as a single reference point for information, accessible at: www.agindustries.org.uk/issues-and-topics/search-by-campaign/sustainability.html

Ongoing trade negotiations with the EU and Rest of the World (RoW) now see AIC attending multiple Trade Advisory Groups to Government. We will continue to represent your voice before Government, sending timely updates to keep you informed.

The AIC sustainability roadmap is a defining moment for AIC. As an industry, we are taking collective ownership of an issue that will affect us all over the next 30 years. Please take the time to read through the roadmap. Engaging with your MPs and educating them on why this matters will be critical for shaping successful future policies for the United Kingdom.



Robert Sheasby,
Chief Executive, AIC

Agribusiness goes digital

Agribusiness 2021 will be taking place virtually in light of Covid-19. This year's event is titled “Creating resilient and sustainable agri-food supply chains”, featuring some of the leading speakers in this area from Government, industry and academia. Confirmed speakers include:

- Minette Batters – President of the NFU
- Rt Hon Lord Deban – Chairman of the Committee Climate Change
- Nicholas Saphir – New Chairman of AHDB

The event will be chaired by Caz Graham, presenter of BBC Countryfile.

Topics will include the EU Exit, Environment and Trade Bills, and sustainability. We look forward to sharing expert industry advice and insight at this important time. Further information and booking can be found at www.agribusiness.org.uk



Further information:
John Kelley, Chief Operating Officer, AIC
Managing Director, AIC Services
john.kelley@agindustries.org.uk

New appointment

Edward Barker has been appointed as Head of Policy & External Affairs for AIC. Ed joins AIC from the National Pig Association, bringing with him a wealth of experience and knowledge. Originally from a family farming background in Suffolk, his former roles have included working for the CLA as an Agricultural Adviser and as a Parliamentary Researcher in Westminster.

Ed will work closely with the AIC Policy team to ensure a robust and comprehensive delivery of policy in support of our Members.

I know that Ed is looking forward to meeting many of you once the Covid-19 restrictions have eased.



Edward Barker,
Head of Policy and External Affairs

AIC's Roadmap for a sustainable food chain – finding the way together

Our first Roadmap for a sustainable food chain is now in circulation. The Roadmap represents our vision based on our current industry insights, dialogue with key stakeholders, and an ambition for tomorrow. We hope our Members, government contacts and stakeholders find it useful. The Roadmap is not set in stone; we expect it to evolve as we engage with Members and partners over the years to deliver our end goals.

More than anything, this is a collaborative approach. We want to deliver actions over words. We look forward to working with Members to help Government understand how the direction of policy dovetails into our plans.

A primary objective for this Roadmap has been to deal with every aspect of sustainability. This includes everything from business and social responsibilities to impacts associated with the production and use of farm inputs, alongside the assurance needed to produce food and all other goods from land and natural resources.

We have been guided by commitments from the government and devolved administrations to reach UK wide net zero carbon by 2050, the 25 Year Environment Plan and the Industrial Strategy. However, we have also not been restricted by these, knowing the part we can play in influencing seven of the United Nations Sustainability goals.

We will present our plans in the context of the next 30 years, whilst acknowledging the progress made in the previous 30 years.

These are some of our commitments:

- £1.5 billion of farm innovation and R&D over the next 30 years
- Planning for the diversity of seeds and variety performance required in the coming decades, including plant breeding for traits that perform in changing climates and for new bioproducts
- Pathways to decarbonise fertiliser production emission footprints, with a goal to drive Nitrogen Use Efficiency with a focus on soil health and overall nutrient balance on farms
- A move towards green energy to run animal feed mills, assuming a fair tax relief system
- Ongoing action on integrated pest management supported by new technology
- Providing the tools and systems to source and trade sustainably through our trade assurance schemes
- As a community of 5,000 accredited crop agronomists and feed advisers, we will collectively expand our skillset to support farmers in making the most intelligent farm and land management decisions

We welcome input as we seek to play our part in creating a sustainable and resilient food chain. Please email roadmaps@agindustries.org.uk



Further information:
Jane Salter, Head of Environmental Policy



French decree on mutagenesis

Following the ECJ ruling that most new plant breeding techniques are GM, the French government have decreed that herbicide-tolerant Clearfield OSR is GM and production of it must cease in France.

The decree is being challenged on scientific grounds and because it distorts trade and undermines a harmonized area of EU law. The decree is specific to France and does not affect UK usage. However, the situation is of concern for the UK. Clearfield is a valued option for UK growers, and the status of oil and rape meal to France is unclear. Seed production is moving out of France, but industry concern is on the effect this has for breeder confidence in developing new traits and the future challenges that may result. In July, the UK government undertook to publicly consult this year on new breeding techniques, with a view to potentially reviewing UK GM legislation in the future.

Mycotoxins consultation

The European Commission is holding a stakeholder consultation on lowering the deoxynivalenol (DON) limits and setting maximum T2-HT2 limits in food.

AIC has, for many years, been collecting UK mycotoxin results through harvest and submitting them to the European Commission via our partner organisation COCERAL. This field evidence means unrealistic levels should not be set. Data sharing should arguably continue after the end of 2020, due to our similar cropping and weather conditions to several Member States, but is especially important that the message is conveyed this year, as levels could be higher due to rain around flowering.

Current DON limits are 1250ppm in unprocessed wheat and 1750 in unprocessed oats, with discussions on reducing these to 1000ppm. For T2-HT2 a Commission official has said limits are "not inevitable", due to varying factors. As it is particularly key for oats, data is being presented to avoid problematic limits.



IPM updates and review

A great deal of work is underway to define IPM, including the barriers and drivers to uptake, measurement practices, and impact. IPM can impact, for example, farm biodiversity, input use and productivity.

The Voluntary Initiative for Pesticides, which has continually promoted IPM, now intends to drive enhanced IPM uptake and is revising the IPM plan accordingly. AHDB is also launching a five-year IPM programme in 2021.

AIC members are continually advising farmers and growers on IPM, supported by trial data. As an example, guidance has been provided on effective alternative non-chemical approaches for controlling herbicide-resistant blackgrass.

Members are also developing and using new technology to drive IPM implementation on farm, in order to pinpoint factors that are preventing the crop achieving full potential.

It is clear that there is no single solution for increasing IPM uptake. A holistic approach that considers all techniques available and other circumstances is the ideal approach.



Hazel Doonan,
Head of Sector Crop Protection

Fertiliser regulations after 2020

What will the regulatory situation be in the event of no deal at the end of the transition period in December 2020?

Defra has confirmed:

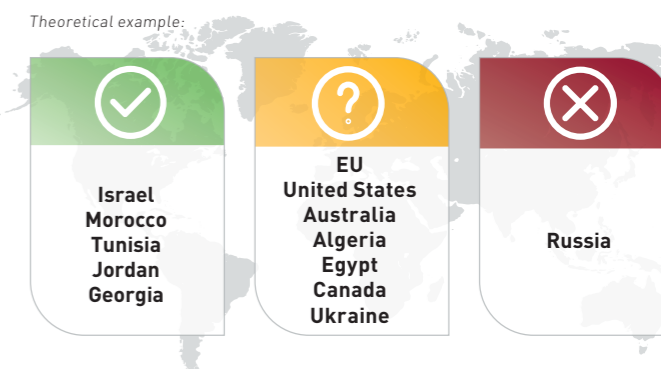
- GB 1991 regulations will continue to apply in Great Britain, along with the corresponding 1992 regulation in N. Ireland
- Regulation (EC) 2003/2003 will be retained as a 'mirror' regulation by converting existing EC regulations into UK law
- The 'new' retained Regulation (EC) 2003/2003 will allow products to be marketed in the UK under a 'UK fertiliser' label, following compositional rules and schedules outlined in the retained version of Regulation (EC) 2003/2003. Changes made at EU level to Regulation (EC) 2003/2003 will not apply to Great Britain after 2020
- Government will allow products labeled as "EC fertilisers" to be sold and marketed for a period of 2 years from EU exit day, but this will be extended to 2 years following the end of 2020, subject to legislation
- In relation to EU 2019/1009 'the Fertilising Products Regulation' (FPR), certain articles will have applied in UK law by the end of the Transition Period. AIC are in detailed discussions with Defra regarding legislation and will provide updates as this programme proceeds



Trade agreements after the EU

The Government has announced the UK's new Most Favoured Nation (MFN) tariff regime, the UK Global Tariff (UKGT). This will replace the EU's Common External Tariff on 1 January 2021 at the end of the Transition Period for all WTO transactions. (See Members' briefings FR 020-13 & 15).

This will therefore apply to all countries that have no direct trade deal with UK – it is important to note that current EU deals won't transfer automatically.





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Agribusiness 2021
11 November 2020

"Creating resilient and sustainable agri-food supply chains"

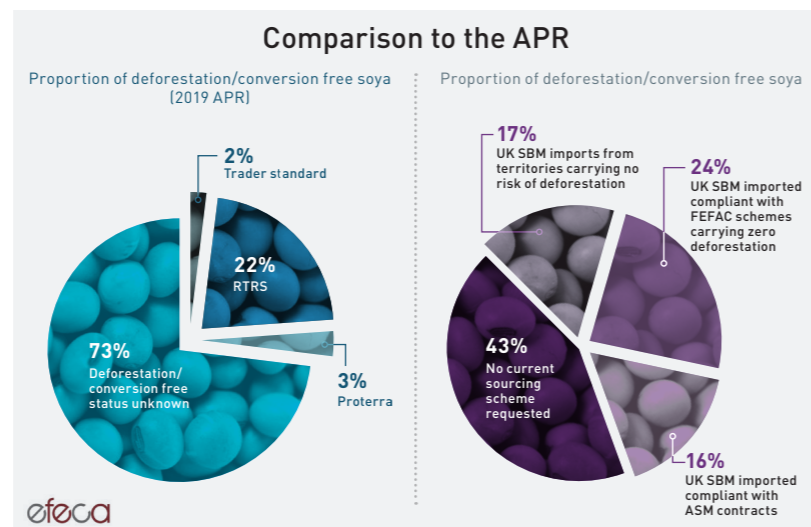
UK soya imports demonstrate significant progress on responsible sourcing and deforestation risk

AIC has collated data following an investigation into the UK's supply of soya and associated deforestation risk.

"This is a globally significant environmental issue," says James McCulloch, AIC's Animal Feed Sector Head. "AIC, alongside our European partners at FEFAC (European Feed Manufacturers Federation), has been at the forefront of supporting a number of responsible sourcing initiatives, including the FEFAC Soy Sourcing Guidelines and the UK Roundtable on Sustainable Soya."

By comparing this research with the Annual Progress report (APR) (2019), we can see that 57% of imported soya comes from sources carrying no deforestation risk. The remaining 43% has had no sourcing scheme requested, but research shows that the majority (37%) of this figure is low risk according to the FEFAC methodology. This leaves 6% that carries a risk of deforestation.

"This data from the UK importers, collated by AIC, demonstrates greater transparency in what can be an opaque environment," comments Jonathan Gorman, member of the UK Roundtable on Sustainable Soya and Technical Director at Efeca (Experts in Sustainable Forest & Agricultural Advice). "By working together in partnership with industry, government and key stakeholders, it provides us with the most effective approach to delivering 100% deforestation-free soya within 5 years."



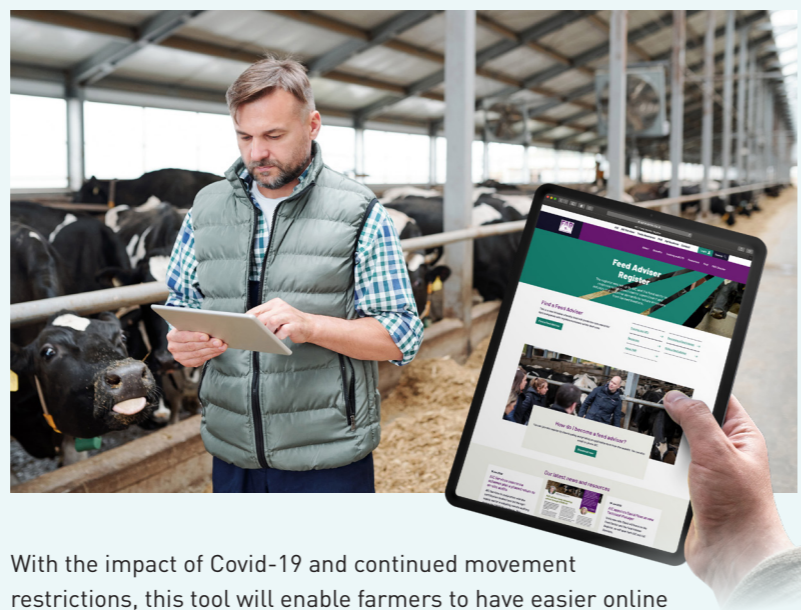
"Find a Feed Adviser" search tool is now live

The Feed Adviser Register (FAR) website launched the new "Find a Feed Adviser" on 8th June 2020. This online service is a new initiative by FAR which allows farmers to find their nearest feed companies that employ registered feed advisers. Uptake from feed advisers has been fantastic, with over 70% involved so far.

Search results do not display the details of individual feed advisers but show the name of the nearest feed company which employs registered feed advisers for the required species within your area. From there, further details can be obtained as required from the individual company.

This initiative is in response to farmers asking where to find feed advisers and also stakeholders who wanted to see more transparency within FAR.

The register can be accessed via the Feed Adviser Website:
www.feedadviserregister.org.uk/home/



With the impact of Covid-19 and continued movement restrictions, this tool will enable farmers to have easier online contact with their chosen feed adviser.

For registered advisers not already involved with this initiative who wish to add their details, contact Carolynn Palasiuk at carolynn.palasiuk@agindustries.org.uk to ensure your company is accessible within this search facility.

AIC Trade Assurances Schemes Hybrid audits begin

During the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic, AIC Services worked in conjunction with the scheme certification bodies to adopt a remote auditing process in order to maintain the integrity of the schemes and demonstrate ongoing compliance of participants.

Following the lifting of some lockdown restrictions by the UK governments, and in discussion with the industry and key stakeholders (including government officials and other scheme owners), the first steps back to on-site auditing have been taken. To minimise "face to face" time, participants will still be asked to upload documents to the online portal in advance, and the document review portion of the audit will be carried out via video conference. The new "hybrid element" will mean the auditor will, in most cases, also book an appointment to physically visit the site in order to audit production and storage activities. Participants are also encouraged to upload any corrective actions via the portal.

The certification bodies have put detailed risk assessments in place to ensure that their working procedures reflect "Covid Secure" best practice to protect both auditors and participants. Participants are asked to keep the certification body informed in the run up to their audit about their own Covid-19 risk assessments and control measures. Ultimately, if either risk assessment cannot be satisfied, the remote auditing regime will still be available.

New code consultations

AIC are pleased to announce the draft consultation of FIAS (Fertiliser Industry Assurance Scheme) and TASCC (Trade Assurance Scheme for Combinable Crops) which launched on 23rd and 27th July respectively.

Both standards have been reviewed over the last 12 months by specific review groups and the FIAS and TASCC Working Groups, with the aim of clarifying, simplifying and re-emphasising the FIAS and TASCC principles.

FIAS

Key changes proposed include merging of previous separate documents into a single FIAS standard with colour coded sections; a change of numbering and format similar to that of the AIC TASCC scheme; clarification of requirements for derogation of contractors; rewording of product recall requirements; updates to legislation or guidance where applicable; and provision of links direct to relevant documents for online users.

TASCC

Key changes proposed include greater focus on Food and Feed; the splitting of clauses into manageable requirements for ease of compliance and auditing; clearly defined section Aims; and additional Guidance throughout the Codes of Practice.

The closing date for both schemes is 5pm on 9th September 2020. The revised schemes will be effective from 1st February 2021 and will be published in the autumn of 2020.



Membership announcements

Member Survey

AIC will be conducting a new survey of AIC Members during September 2020, its first in three years. Much has changed since 2017, including the EU Exit, a new Agricultural and Environment Bill, the goal of net zero agriculture, and Covid-19 to name just a few, as well as many internal changes at AIC. AIC wish to ensure that we are delivering added value for your business, as well as identifying key challenges and opportunities for the coming years. With your support, we can ensure that AIC adds value to your organisation and represents your interests in the agri-supply sectors.



Tracy Smith,
Membership Manager

Staff announcements



Gill Barrow

Technical Manager, AIC Services

Gill Barrow has taken on a broad range of responsibilities since starting three months ago, including the management of TASCC, Transport Working Group, ESTA and RED. Gill has a broad range of agri-food industry experience, which can be usefully applied to the agri-supply industry. So far, she has led the TASCC review and consultation in its final stages and looks forward to the completion of this new area.

Gill replaces Garry Rudd, who has moved on to become a Lecturer at Lincoln University. We wish him the best of luck in his new role.

Dates for your diary in 2020

7 October

AIC Board Meeting & AGM

11 November

Agribusiness 2021,
Virtual Event

26 November

AIC Scotland Meeting & AGM

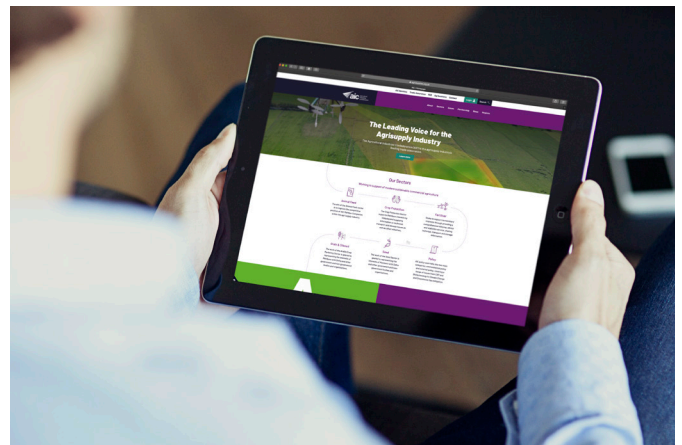


New AIC Membership Database

At AIC, we always try to improve the services we offer. We have been working hard over the past few months to bring you a new membership database that will enable us to engage with Members to a higher standard.

This database will build a Member profile of your business, allowing us to work closer with you through interactions with your business.

You will shortly be able to access your own database account. This will enable you to manage the information AIC sends to you, ensuring you are receiving the most value possible from your AIC subscription.



AIC unveils new website

Launched at the end of August, the re-design of the website aims to provide Members with a fresh, informative and easy to navigate platform delivering the latest industry updates.



Visit www.agindustries.org.uk



For further information on COVID-19 at: www.agindustries.org.uk/coronavirus/

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