

JOURNAL

Autumn 2022 | Working in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture

Politics and policies

Even in turbulence, there is opportunity

Digital Grain Passports

Are they the future?

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An update from AIC Chief Executive Robert Sheasby

Autumn will likely be remembered for spiralling energy costs and their economic impact, along with a new Prime Minister and re-shuffled Cabinet. Preceded by a hot, dry summer that brought many challenges, combined with the consequences of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine still being felt across the world and an imminent recession being predicted, times are undoubtedly unstable. However, even in turbulence, there is opportunity.

AIC is working to engage elected UK representatives at this pivotal time. Policy development continues and, with such uncertainty for businesses, AIC is holding fast to its pillars of Competitiveness, Productivity and Environment to ensure that your voice is heard by decision-makers. From energy, grain passports and assurance, to phytosanitary and MRLs, our work grows. This autumn, together, we will seek change that benefits agribusiness.



Jo Churchill MP, Julian Sturdy MP, Chris Guest, Robert Sheasby, Chris Clayton, Paul Bristow MP, Matthew Dalton.

AIC host Parliamentary dinner

On Tuesday 6th September the AIC Board held a dinner in the House of Commons with a cross party group of MPs relevant to the agricultural sector. Hosted by Julian Sturdy MP (York Outer), the dinner provided an opportunity for AIC Board Members to reflect on current challenges in the agri-supply sector and have an open discussion on the year ahead. MPs took away key messages from the Board on ways to address current challenges, most notably in productivity, R&D, trade policy and incentivising inward investment. The dinner provided a platform for individual Board Members to engage with their MPs and for the AIC to maintain an ongoing dialogue with them and their staff.

Goodbye Jane

Head of Environment, Jane Salter, leaves AIC after 28 years. Jane joined the Fertiliser Manufacturers Association and saw interest in Environment and Sustainability grow during her AIC career, guiding members through many complex areas. We wish Jane all the best for the future. We are currently recruiting a successor and look forward to introducing them soon.



Robert Sheasby,
AIC Chief Executive

Policy Update

Having started in the Commons in May, the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill (England) is now progressing through the Houses of Parliament.

In June, Ed Barker, Head of Policy and External Affairs at AIC, gave verbal evidence to the MP panel that makes up the Bill's Committee, providing insight on how the Bill's provisions could possibly benefit UK agriculture, whilst at the same time outlining the challenges to be resolved.

Practical trade issues with the EU and Northern Ireland still require consideration, as do potential implications for the UK internal market. However, AIC welcomes the overriding aim of the Bill and supports the Government's view that in order to reach net zero targets we must look towards the role of innovation and science.

The Bill will now progress through the Lords, and AIC hopes Royal Assent will be given towards the end of the year.



Edward Barker,
Head of Policy and External Affairs

Environment policy work delivering for sustainability

The responsible use of packaging, particularly that containing plastics, is an important area in ensuring that a business is sustainable. The Government's 25-Year Environment Plan highlights packaging materials and recycling in its goals for Minimising Waste and Using Resources from Nature More Sustainably and Efficiently, as does AIC's Roadmap for a Sustainable Food Chain, with Member businesses making a commitment to work on new packaging solutions and AIC calling for Government support to ensure that all packaging can be recycled.

The Government has started to regulate in this area with the Plastic Packaging Tax that came into force in April this year. If manufacturing or importing more than 10 tonnes of plastic

packaging into the UK per annum, members are required to have registered with HM Revenue & Customs and made their first returns by now. Members can use HMRC's online portal at [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) to do so.

With the implementation of the Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging, another area of policy development has arisen. The outcome of 2021's public consultation was to continue with the existing Packaging Waste Recycling Note (PRN) System, but only for the time being. The decision, for the meantime, is to place greater reporting requirements on businesses for packaging which they handle or supply. Further developments in this area are anticipated in the coming months and AIC will keep you updated.



Andrew Pearson,
Policy Manager

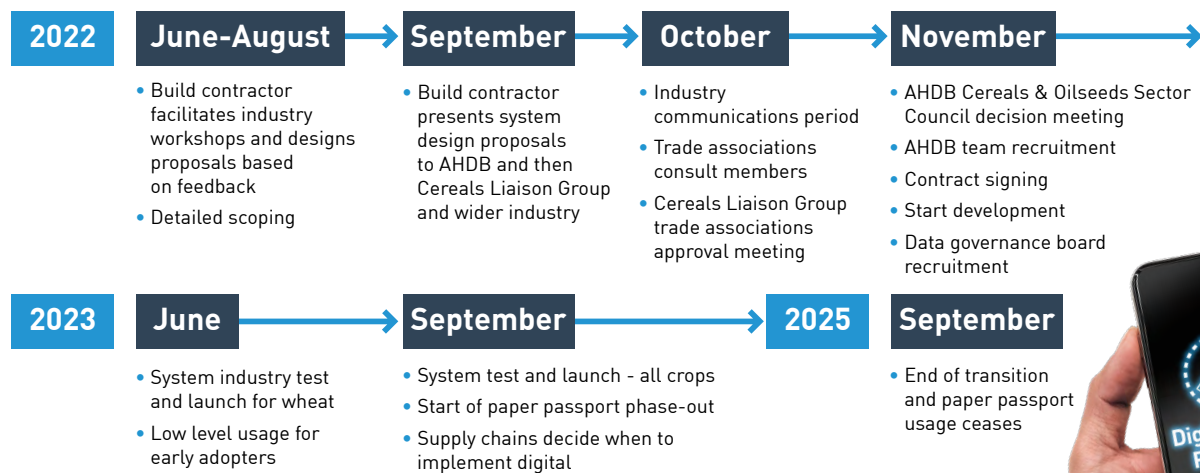
Where next for digital grain passports?

In October, a decision will be made on moving from paper grain passports to a digital system. The AHDB Cereals & Oilseeds council has committed to the three-year development, implementation and funding of the system if industry decides to go ahead.

The elimination of paper passports would enable a two-way data flow between growers, merchants and processors, electronic data exchange between businesses, and load progress status visibility. It would reduce paperwork and manual processing and intake delays associated with illegible/incomplete passports, and enhance traceability and assurance through real-time load checks.

Industry is considering the proposals ahead of the meeting. If accepted, the timeframe for the implementation of a Digital Grain Passport is as follows:

Project timeline



AHDB will host webinars in October on how the Digital Grain Passport works. Dates to follow.

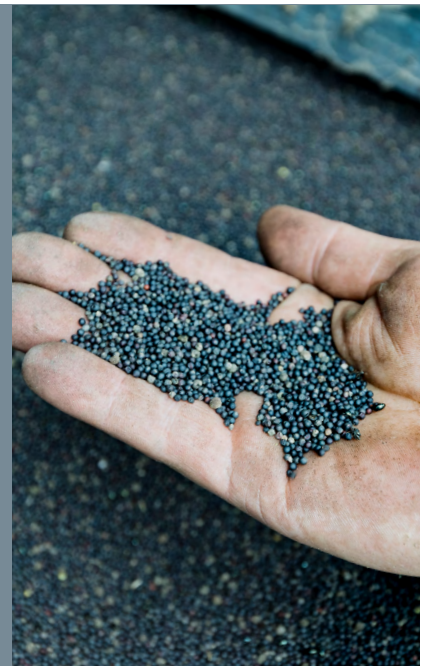
For updates check ahdb.org.uk/events. For more information visit ahdb.org.uk/digital-grain-passport.

Seed Sector Update

Summer 2022 saw UK seed certification label updates due to changes in the seed marketing regulations, as current labels don't meet EU exit and Northern Ireland Protocol requirements. Requests were made by suppliers and the seed trade to reduce the labels required by allowing a single format blue label for both certified seed and first generation certified.

Plant passporting regulations require certain seeds to have a combined Plant Passport and official certification label. Changes to label stocks are needed to provide processor packers greater flexibility. There is now no requirement in the UK's Seed Marketing Regulations that information other than a sequential number be pre-printed on certification labels.

AIC met DEFRA's plant variety and seeds team to discuss the draft of provisional protocols for derogations of lower germination standard seed's temporary marketing. The protocol ensures that a derogation would only be granted where a GB wide shortage of the seed takes place.



Rose Riby,
Head of Sector Arable Marketing & Seeds

Policy makers visit AIC Members R&D

In June, senior Defra and HSE/CRD staff visited an AIC Members trial site to see the IPM and R&D work of sector Members. Policy makers saw first hand sector Members investment in trials to ensure their BASIS qualified agronomists are equipped with robust technical information so that they can advise their clients how to grow crops profitably and meet economic, environmental and sustainability goals.

Chris Clayton, Sector Chairman, and colleagues from Agrovista hosted the visit.

Further visits are planned through the cropping year to discuss agronomic decision-making processes.



AIC input to the development of the National Action Plan (NAP)

The aim of the NAP is to make the most of the opportunities post EU exit whilst considering food security and contributing to 2030 Environment Act targets for species abundance and biodiversity.

Following the 2020 consultation on the draft NAP for the Sustainable use of Plant Protection Products, Defra met stakeholders - including AIC - to develop the final plan. Webinars held in June and July further shaped their thinking.

Defra hopes to publish the NAP in autumn 2022.



Hazel Doonan,
Head of Sector Crop Protection & Agronomy

Defra calls for evidence on methane suppressing feeds

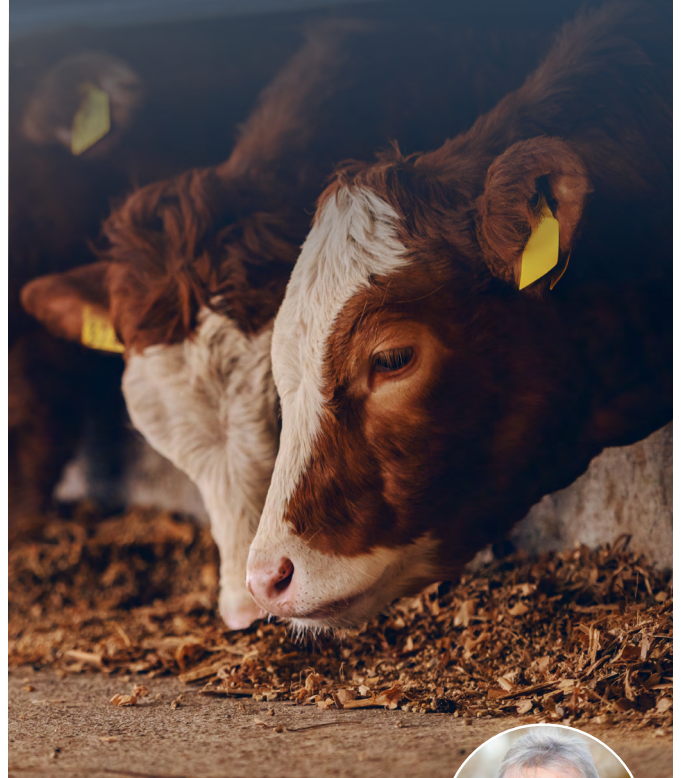
On August 23rd, in follow-up to the National Food Strategy, Defra launched its call for evidence on methane suppressing feed products. AIC discussed the consultations' scope with Defra prior to launch and were pleased recommendations to include all feed types were included.

The consultation will explore the potential for methane suppressing feed products and gather views from across the agri-food chain.

The consultation will consider farmers' awareness and perception of these feeds, and potential barriers to their introduction in both near- and long-term futures.

Defra is also seeking views on whether uptake could best be driven by Government interventions, industry or voluntary led solutions, and what these interventions might entail.

AIC will discuss the consultation in relevant committees and consider responses to the consultations' Governance and Policy and Verification sections. AIC encourages Members with an interest to submit their own responses. The consultation is open until November 15th.



James McCulloch,
Head of Sector Animal Feed

Defra agrees to AIC's request for DRT extension

AIC successfully lobbied the Government to allow Defra to draft a Statutory Instrument to amend Detonation Resistance Test legislation, so that EU labs can continue to be used in 2023, rather than HSL Buxton being the sole lab for ammonium nitrate for the UK market. AIC expects the legislation to be laid before Parliament by autumn.

AIC also secured leeway on bag labelling, to allow the sell-through of existing bags with EC labelling after January 2023. Defra accepted that the hiatus and subsequent demand destruction make for extenuating circumstances, and this will be an informal agreement, with Defra advising TSOs not to take action - providing the contents and tare are correctly labelled and it is only a matter of the EC mark - until the bags are used up.



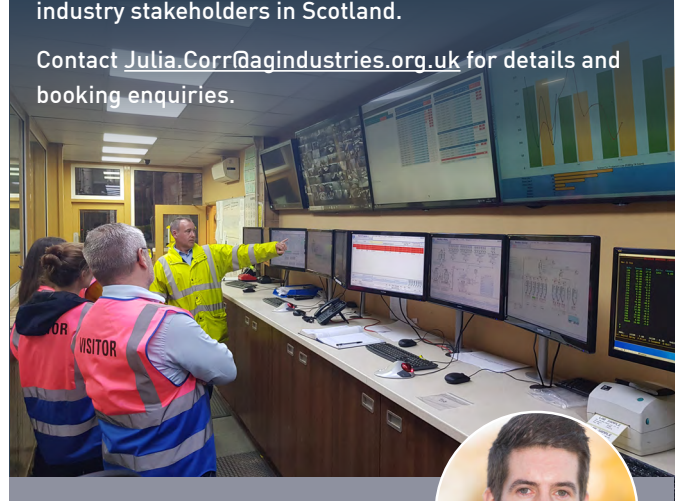
Jo Gilbertson,
Head of Sector Fertilisers

AIC Scotland

AIC Scotland recently met FSS Scotland officials hosted by William Davidson at Davidsons Animal Feeds. New Members from FSS were present and assurance, the UFAS scheme, and creating a strong partnership approach between FSS and AIC were discussed.

The next AIC Scotland meeting will be on November 24th, followed by the AIC Scotland dinner. The evening will bring together the agri-supply industry and key industry stakeholders in Scotland.

Contact Julia.Corr@agindustries.org.uk for details and booking enquiries.



Ian Muirhead,
Policy Manager, AIC Scotland

AIC Wales

AIC Wales held its first meeting in July, with representation from CCF, ForFarmers, Wynnstay, Origin Fertilisers and Carrs Agriculture. AIC's work, training and assurance schemes were explored, as well as policy direction, lobbying and stakeholder engagement.

At the next meeting on September 20th a Committee Meeting Forum Chair will be proposed, and key short- and medium-term objectives will be set and actioned. NFU Cymru and Farmers Union of Wales will join for the second half to provide views on the Sustainable Farming Scheme.



Michael Muncey,
Policy Manager, AIC Wales

AIC Agribusiness Conference

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Managing disruptive shocks in the agri-food supply chain



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Taking place at the Holiday Inn West in Peterborough on 16th November, this year's conference is centred around how the industry can manage disruptive shocks in the agri-food supply chain.

The return to an in-person format provides a vital opportunity to be face-to-face with others from the agri-business world.

The conference will be chaired by journalist and **BBC Radio 4's Farming Today presenter Anna Hill**, and it will feature speakers from business, science and political backgrounds, sparking thought and debate throughout the day.

Alongside politics, industry will be strongly represented by **Tom Bradshaw, Deputy President of the NFU** and **HSBC's Head of Agrifoods Allan Wilkinson**.



Save
the date
16 NOV 2022

Tickets are available at an Early Bird rate before 1st October, and delegates are invited to the Pre-conference Supper the night before at Orton Hall.

Book now at www.agribusiness.org.uk



John Kelley,
Managing Director, AIC Services

The Trade Assurance Consultant Register

The Trade Assurance Consultant Register (TACR) launched in Q3 was developed in response to requests from the agri-supply industry that advice given to scheme participants should come from registered advisers.



Consultants joining TACR must agree to abide by a professional standards code when delivering their services. Benefits for consultants include information relevant to their supported schemes, access to i-learning, use of the TACR logo, ID card, and promotion of their business to new clients. Membership and website information renew annually, with a fee for non-AIC members.

Participants will benefit from a single list of consultants and services provided for specific trade assurance schemes, direct contact links to consultants, and a professional service from advisers with current information, in whom they can have full confidence. There are no costs for scheme participants to use the Register.

TACR can be accessed at www.agindustries.org.uk/tacr. For enquiries write to – enquiries-tacr@agindustries.org.uk



Roberta Reeve,
Technical Manager

agindustries.org.uk

AIC Membership

AIC has been working hard to improve communications with all its Members by implementing a new membership CRM. To ensure AIC holds the most up to date information for your business, log into your profile page on the website and check your contact data is correct – www.agindustries.org.uk

To add new staff Members to your business profile and to allow colleagues access to the 'members only' section of the AIC website, or to receive our membership briefings and publications, write to membership manager, Tracy Smith - tracy.smith@agindustries.org.uk



Tracy Smith,
Membership Manager

Dates for the diary

Pre-Agribusiness Conference Dinner - 15th November, Orton Hall, Peterborough

Agribusiness Conference - 16th November, Holiday Inn West, Thorpe Wood, Peterborough

Fertiliser Dinner - 3rd November, Principal Hotel, York

AIC Scotland meeting and Dinner – November 24th, Westerwood Hotel, Cumbernauld

Seed Dinner - 1st December, Principal Hotel, York



New Game Feed training course from AIC

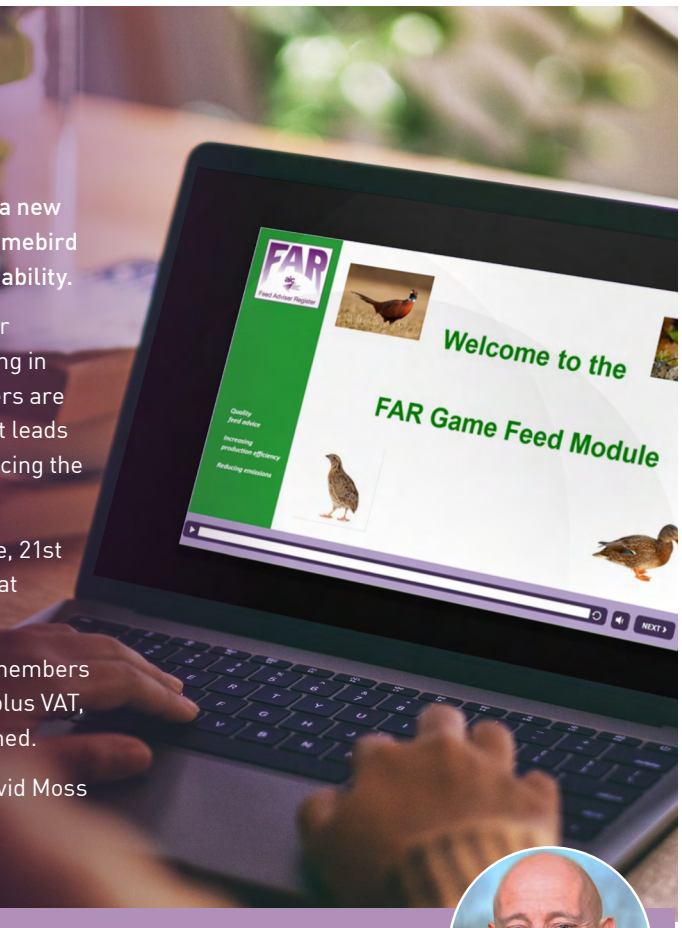
The Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC) has launched a new Feed Adviser Register (FAR) Game Feed Module to improve gamebird feeding, biosecurity, nutrition, health and welfare, and sustainability.

The new FAR Game Feed Module provides the game feed sector with much-needed entry level learning. With game meat growing in popularity with consumers, it's essential that game feed advisers are equipped with a basic understanding of how a well-planned diet leads to healthy gamebirds, whilst continuing to be conscious of reducing the environmental footprint of gamebird rearing and breeding.

This course is a significant step in driving forward a sustainable, 21st century game sector to support the flourishing demand for great British game meat.

The module is available free of charge to FAR Members. Non-members can join FAR as an Associate Member for an annual fee of £75 plus VAT, before taking the module. Future game feed modules are planned.

To find out more about the FAR Game Feed Module, contact David Moss — david.moss@agindustries.org.uk 07585 323943.



David Moss,
Technical Manager



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