



Red Tractor
Farm Assurance

Press Notice

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Clearer labelling starts on farm with Red Tractor

Assured Food Standards (AFS) has completed a major project to deliver a more joined up approach and clearer labelling to the Red Tractor farm assurance schemes. From April this year the scheme's 45,000 farmers and growers will implement these standards that are aligned across all farm sectors for the first time.

The review is designed to make sure there is more consistency across the standards in the Red Tractor 'family' and consistency behind the Red Tractor logo that all the sector schemes support.

As part of this new approach AFS has re-branded the current standards as 'Red Tractor Farm Assurance', to highlight the logo's direct link with product marketing under the Red Tractor banner. All farmers and growers in the scheme will receive new manuals to help them meet industry standards for their sector.

Chief Executive of Assured Food Standards David Clarke said: "Promotion of assured food to consumers using the Red Tractor logo is getting an ever-increasing profile and it is essential that all sector standards include the same core values.

"It is important for the future of the Red Tractor that we continue to evolve our farm standards and share our values right across the food chain. British food is world class. It is produced on farms that are well-managed, by highly professional, well-qualified and caring producers. Certification to the Red Tractor scheme standards allows farmers and growers to demonstrate to their customers that they meet nationally agreed levels of best practice, which are second to none.

David Clarke added; "Re-branding the schemes will link the farm logo with the consumer Red Tractor logo and help shoppers identify that the products they are buying are from a Red Tractor farm."

The Red Tractor logo is going from strength to strength with more than £10 billion worth of products currently carrying the quality assurance mark. New funding from the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board will help to deliver strong messages about the quality and standards of production across the food chain.

NFU President Peter Kendall said: "The alignment of farm standards along with the new funding from the AHDB will help to achieve clearer messages about the quality and standards of production by our committed farmers and growers".

“It is vital that our agricultural and horticultural products, which are produced to high, independently inspected standards, are distinguishable in the market place by the Red Tractor logo. This is even more pertinent after the publication of the Government’s Food Vision which is encouraging consumers to buy British and supports our calls for clearer labelling.”

All assured farmers will receive the new manuals together with newsletters by February 2010. These new standards will be effective for farm inspections from April 1 2010. Producers can see any updates that might affect them at the Red Tractor website (www.redtractor.org.uk/standards).

For further information please contact Debbie Cawood at Assured Food Standards on 020 7630 3320

Notes to Editors:

1. The Sector Schemes were developed separately in the 1990’s, which led to differences in terminology, layout and content. This review addresses and brings these differences into line but retains the technical details appropriate to every commodity sector.
2. Assured Food Standards (AFS) is the independent organisation set up by the food chain to manage, develop and promote the Red Tractor as a mark of safe, quality, affordable food that the public can trust.
3. The Union Flag in the logo is a guarantee that the food has come from British farms and has been processed and packed in the UK.
4. Red Tractor is the leading quality kitemark for British food and drink and covers a wider range of products than any other mark. It is currently available on a wide range of food and drink including meat, vegetables, fruit, salads, milk, cheese, sugar, beer and flour and is about ensuring everybody can afford safe and good quality food on a daily basis.
5. This harmonisation will affect the core Red Tractor farm standards across the six sectors (Beef & Lamb (ABM), Dairy (ADF), Fresh Produce (AP), Combinable Crops & Sugar Beet (ACCS), Pigs (ABP) and Poultry (ACP).
6. Products from farms ‘assured’ under a number of other schemes can also carry the Red Tractor logo. These include the red meat schemes in the devolved regions of the UK - Quality Meat Scotland, Farm Assured Welsh Livestock and Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assurance Scheme – and Genesis Quality Assurance.

7. Re-branding: The Red Tractor Farm Assurance Schemes

Scheme Names		New Scheme logos
<i>Old Scheme Name</i>	<i>New Scheme Name</i>	
ACP (Assured Chicken Production)	Red Tractor Farm Assurance – Poultry	
ACCS (Assured Combinable Crops Scheme)	Red Tractor Farm Assurance - Crops and Sugar Beet	
AP (Assured Produce)	Red Tractor Farm Assurance - Fresh Produce	
ABM (Assured British Meat)	Red Tractor Farm Assurance - Beef and Lamb	
ADF (Assured Dairy Farms)	Red Tractor Farm Assurance - Dairy	
ABP (Assured British Pigs)	Red Tractor Farm Assurance - Pigs	

8. Producers can get more info on sector websites or if necessary by calling the Certification Body that carries out their farm assurance inspections.

- ABM: www.abm.org.uk
- ACP: www.assuredchicken.org.uk
- ADF: www.assuredairyfarms.org.uk
- ABP: www.assuredpigs.co.uk
- ACCS: www.assuredcrops.co.uk
- AP: www.assuredproduce.co.uk

Additional information.

AFS is aware that the new standards will have a different look to previous versions including changes to the names of the scheme, the layout of the manuals and the terminology. But most of the actual requirements remain unchanged and are a reflection of recognised good farming practices and legislative requirements so producers should have no difficulties in achieving them. The manuals now include a comprehensive set of appendices providing information and guidance together with templates for any records that must be kept. These should prove a valuable resource to producers.

Inevitably there are some changes of detail in both the standards and operational procedures to keep them robust, up-to-date and in line with changing legislation. Every change is highlighted to producers in the manuals and in newsletters that will be circulated at the same time.

Examples of these changes include standards regarding the safe storage and use of pesticides on livestock farms which are introduced for the first time, whilst the standards on crops and produce farms have been better aligned. These changes are consistent with impending EU legislation in the so-called 'Thematic Strategy'. And in some sectors the time-period for correcting any non-conformances has been tightened.

Overall there are few major changes to the actual standards but, when producers receive the new scheme documents, they are strongly encouraged to take the time to check on the revisions that affect them and take steps to implement them if they are not already doing so.