



## SQC Assured Digestate Scheme for Farm Based Anaerobic Digesters

**SQC advises that the "SQC Assured Digestate Scheme" is now up and running. This Environmentally friendly, Sustainable scheme is designed to assist Scottish Cereal producers, Distillers and Maltsters.**

"Agricultural grown" only inputs are embraced within this scheme with the aim of assisting the good farming practice of incorporating this green digestate into the soil as a soil improver.

### Background

The industry is aware there is a developing Digestate picture with significant food by-product going into Anaerobic digestors to create energy, these operations are all PAS 110 accredited, the digestate from many of these industrial operations is targeted at Agricultural land as a "fertiliser". Currently most distillers and maltsters exclude Digestate as a crop input due to the multiple feedstocks and the possibility of any risk.

Alongside these industrial operations are the on-farm AD operations, only utilising crop grown on the farm, up until now this digestate has been classified in a similar category to industrial digestate.

The introduction of the SQC Scheme changes this and potentially allows Distillers and Maltsters to embrace this SQC Scheme where many will allow this material to be utilised to produce cereal crops for malting and distilling.

### SQC Digestate Assurance

The SQC Digestate Scheme will audit potential Scheme members and if approved will continue to audit twice annually. Approved operations will be issued with an "Approved SQC Digestate Passport Number" which can be supplied with all Digestate that is distributed to agriculture and subsequently audited within the "SQC Farm Standard" Operation. The SQC Scheme will also embrace Distillers and Maltsters with their own Anaerobic Digestate facilities, Distillers and Maltsters are invited to join the SQC Assured Digestate Scheme.

The SQC Farm Standards will continue to embrace PAS110 Material, however this application must be agreed with the crop purchaser prior to application as previously.

A copy of the SQC Digestate Standards can be obtained from Lloyds Register, the SQC appointed Certification Body.



## Other headlines from SQC

### Electronic Passports are back on the Agenda

During 2017 the AHDB electronic passport project for combinable crops was shelved, clearly AHDB had put significant work and expenditure into this project, however the industry could not agree on a data platform.

The Industry Stakeholders have now requested that this project be reconsidered. A cross industry working party including SQC and NFUS are investigating options.

### SQC Farm Standards gain Silver Award

SQC are pleased to inform scheme members that the 2019 SQC Farm Standards have been awarded "SAI Global Platform Silver Status". This upgrading to Silver is due to the Standards embracing key areas such as IPM and Biodiversity. Many Food manufacturers and Distillers are also delighted with this upgrading.

### 2020 SQC Farm Standards Review

The SQC Farm Standards have been reviewed and there are have been no amendments have been recommended for 2020 other than the introduction of The SQC Approved Digestate Scheme.

### Sprayer Operator Courses

Please get your place booked at a suitable date and Location, Ringlink has once again been appointed as the SQC Course provider.

The course deals with key current issues, water conditioning, sprayer maintenance, technology and top tips etc.

### Changes on the SQC Board

Roger Baird of WN Lindsay (AIC delegate to SQC) has recently stood down from the SQC board due to other business pressures. Roger has sat on the SQC board for many years giving significant input and advice.

John Calder of Cefetra has been appointed by Stakeholder AIC to the SQC board.

Following many years of absence SQC Stakeholder Scottish Millers have proposed Struan Cessford of Carr's Milling as their representative, this appointment is now confirmed.

### The SQC Board

Andrew Moir Chairman NFUS

John Hutcheson Vice Chairman SAOS

Ian Sands NFUS

Euan Walker Munro NFUS

Fiona Burnett SRUC

Robin Barron AIC

John Calder AIC

Peter Nelson Scotch Whisky Association

Julian South MAGB

Struan Cessford Scottish Millers

Alistair Ewan Executive Director

## Combinable Crop Market Report

Robin Barron East of Scotland Farmers



### Grain markets enter 2020 with a number of factors at play:

- Plentiful UK & sufficient global stocks from the 2019 harvest
- Reduced wheat areas in key regions for the 2020 harvest, including the UK, EU & US
- Currency movements, particularly in light of any Brexit developments
- Progress towards a US-China trade deal
- Tension in the middle east
- Global weather and crop prospects for 2020

In the UK, new crop wheat prices are moving towards import parity and hold a £10/t premium over old crop. This means that there is an incentive to carry old crop through to next season rather than find export homes for a circa 2mt surplus between now and June. In Scotland, temporary closure of a major grain distillery has led to reduced short-term demand and contracts being rolled forward.

Imported maize is less of a factor this year for animal feed and so there is more demand for feed barley, albeit from a big 2019 crop. Feed barley is trading at a circa £20/t discount to wheat but this varies from region to region.

As well as raising the value of new crop wheat, the wet autumn and lack of winter cropping in England will increase the area of spring crop sown in the next few months and affect seed availability (extra demand for spring seed, reduced production of wheat seed for sowing in 2020). Whilst some spring wheat will be sown (and indeed some winter wheat may still be sown if conditions allow), there will inevitably be an increase in spring barley and oat areas too.

Demand for Scottish malting barley for distilling is still firm and the additional English production will largely be of the wrong variety / specification / location. OSR values have been relatively firmer than other grains and oilseeds due to reduced UK & EU production.

As ever, the weather will determine whether prices move higher or lower from here. Early season markets usually carry some risk premium and so there is always the potential for lower prices if plentiful crops materialise. However, a serious production issue in Russia, the EU (where wheat sowings are already reduced in France, Germany & the UK) or the US (lowest wheat area for a century forecast for 2020) will lead to higher prices regardless of any other factors at play. Increasingly, the fortunes of the 2020 crop will determine the value of the remaining 2019 crop too.



# Scottish Government Combinable Crop Figures, 2019 First Estimate

Scottish Government Combinable Crop Figures, 2019 First Estimate

Year	Total Cereals			Spring Barley			Winter Barley			Wheat			Oats			Oil Seed Rape		
	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)	Area (Hectare)	Yield (t/ha)	Production (Tonnes)
2010	425,496	6.71	2,857,814	242,364	5.82	1,410,270	48,010	7.2	345,615	111,436	8.55	953,239	23,000	6.31	145,117	36,002	3.4	123,334
2011	446,181	6.6	2,948,871	262,948	5.83	1,532,979	45,477	7.34	333,623	115,412	8.29	956,985	21,715	5.61	121,826	38,388	3.9	149,627
2012	456,902	5.48	2,507,016	289,222	5	1,446,950	42,816	6.46	276,511	100,637	6.69	673,288	23,672	4.57	108,249	36,611	2.9	106,420
2013	458,219	6.19	2,836,836	296,444	5.78	1,713,548	42,694	6.57	280,511	86,840	7.52	652,933	31,728	5.89	187,021	33,653	3.3	111,652
2014	462,123	6.97	3,221,284	274,377	6.07	1,664,905	52,507	7.82	410,765	109,023	9.07	989,347	25,050	6.1	152,924	37,073	4	147,570
2015	443,564	6.99	3,100,624	255,878	5.94	1,520,756	51,808	7.84	406,169	109,562	9.3	1,019,182	25,615	5.92	151,569	35,797	4.1	148,491
2016	428,348	6.43	2,752,412	238,899	5.43	1,296,481	48,031	6.84	328,766	109,594	8.45	925,992	31,210	6.44	200,936	30,731	3.3	101,862
2017	433,460	6.6	2,859,045	243,838	5.88	1,432,815	47,509	7.41	352,108	109,489	8.12	889,308	32,625	5.66	184,813	34,187	4.2	144,038
2018	419,897	5.98	2,512,412	250,476	5.54	1,387,503	37,542	7.14	268,124	99,778	6.82	680,955	32,101	5.48	175,829	32,736	3.9	126,330
2019	430,292	7.54	3,246,540	242,090	6.73	1,628,420	48,802	8.41	410,228	107,480	9.27	996,575	31,920	6.62	211,316	31,808	4.1	130,132

## The benefits of utilising a FACTS Advisor

Iain Anderson, Agrii (FACTS and BASIS Qualified Agronomist)



**Good nutrient management is an important aspect of maintaining a profitable output, contributing both to the efficiency of the farming business and to reducing environmental impact. Although a voluntary scheme, FACTS membership is how the industry recognises the importance and benefit of qualified advice to optimise crop nutrition and protect the environment.**

At Agrii, we certainly see the most consistent high yields coming from farms that have a good Nutrient Management Plan in place. A FACTS qualified advisor can go through the many variables influencing crop nutrition to make the best economic use of nutrients. Soil type and regular analysis for pH, P, K and Mg will be the starting point for such discussions.

A review of cropping and use of organic manures is very important to ensure nutrient balances are accurately calculated. With our variable weather patterns of recent years, it is also worth reviewing fertiliser types to ensure good availability of the nutrients and accuracy of application. We are certainly seeing

an increase in liquid fertiliser applications through the Agrii fleet, with Growers looking to improve accuracy and efficiency.

Of course, technological advances have also meant that we are increasingly creating management zones to map in-field soil variability, and then using digital systems (such as RHIZA) to manage these zones. However, the basics of nutrient management are still at the heart of these systems, so a review of your Nutrient Management Plan with a FACTS qualified advisor is a good health check, no matter how far down the Precision Farming route you may be.



# NSTS Sprayer Testing Updates January 2020

Ian Foreman

**From November 2020 the requirements of the Sustainable Use Directive (SUD), and therefore within SQC rules, are amended relating to sprayer testing. Currently for sprayers with a boom width over 3 metres, a re-test is due every 5 years. But from November this changes to every 3 years.**

This means any sprayer tested after November 2017 will be due its re-test within 3 years. For example, if your sprayer was tested in January 2018, the next test is due by January 2021.

The changes have caused some confusion, but the decision tree below should help you decide when your sprayer needs testing again.

There has been no change in relation to new sprayers not needing the first test until they are 5 years old.

We always promote best practice and it is worth considering having your equipment tested more frequently than the minimum legal requirements. The safe and accurate application of pesticides is important in helping farmers retain the availability of as many products as possible. In addition, with the need to do a calibration as part of the SQC self-assessment, the NSTS test requirements will give you all the information needed to fulfil this. The potential costs associated with over-application, as well as crop damage or exceeding maximum dose rates all mean that it is important to check the sprayer on a regular basis.

You will be aware of the need for all types of pesticide application equipment to be tested but there have not been any changes to these, so machines such as slug pellet applicators only need to be tested every 6 years.

If you would like more information please contact Ian Forman, NSTS manager, on 07920 658972, or email [ianf@aea.uk](mailto:ianf@aea.uk)

# DECISION TREE

FOR SPRAYERS OVER 5 YEARS OLD, use this decision tree to help work out how often each piece of equipment needs to be tested:



## SPRAYER TYPE

TRAILED, MOUNTED, SELF PROPELLED

KNAPSACK  
PEDESTRIAN  
HANDHELD

## BOOM WIDTH

OVER 3 METRES

3 METRES AND UNDER  
AND OTHER APPLICATION  
EQUIPMENT\*

## TESTED AFTER 26/11/2017

YES

NO

YES

NO

## NEXT TEST DUE

WITHIN  
3 YEARS

WITHIN 5 YEARS  
OR BEFORE  
26/11/2020

WITHIN  
6 YEARS

## RE-TEST DUE

EVERY  
3 YEARS

EVERY  
3 YEARS

EVERY  
6 YEARS

INSPECTED  
ON A  
REGULAR  
BASIS BY A  
COMPETENT  
PERSON

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REPAIR  
ANY FAULTS  
FOUND

---

KEEP A  
RECORD

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USE THE  
NSTS  
CHECKLIST

\*Slug pellet and micro-granular applicators

\*Weed wipers

\*Seed treating equipment (incl. conveyor and roller table)

\*Boat mounted and sub-surface applicators

\*Fogging, misting and smoking equipment

\*Other equipment may fall into this category

For more information

E: [info@nsts.org.uk](mailto:info@nsts.org.uk) W: [www.nsts.org.uk](http://www.nsts.org.uk) T: 0845 644 8748





# Preparing for an Audit

Andrew Baird, SQC Certification Officer

**A farm Audit can be daunting for some farmers, so we have prepared a help sheet with some top tips to assist.**

## The Top 5 Non-Compliances

- 1. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan** is completed online via the Scot Gov website (Scotland) or NFU website (England). After completing it, please forward the confirmation you receive by email to SQC. Once you have completed the IPM Plan, the next year it just needs to be reviewed.
- 2. Biodiversity Action Plan** template can be found on the SQC website ([www.sqccrops.co.uk](http://www.sqccrops.co.uk)) or in the new SQC Farm Record Books. They also just need to be reviewed, if they have already been filled out.
- 3. CRRU Environmental Risk Assessment** must be carried out or reviewed annually if there have been no changes. If a contractor carries out your rodent control, it must be the contractor that fills out the Environmental Risk Assessment.
- 4. Pre-Harvest Hygiene** must be undertaken and included. Insect bait bags must be used to demonstrate effective management and they must be removed before grain is stored.
- 5. Soil** must be regularly tested for pH, P & K. SQC accept that regular testing is at least once every five years. If the soil hasn't been tested and you already have crop in the ground, all that is required is a written statement to say you will get it done when available.

## Preparing for audit

- 1. Read the standards** so that you comply to everything that the assessor is asking for and there is also an audit confirmation letter with checklist which reminds you what you need after the audit has been booked.
- 2. If you get a contractor to do your spraying**, make sure you receive records from them within 7 days of application.
- 3. If you need any templates**, they can be found on the SQC website ([www.sqccrops.co.uk](http://www.sqccrops.co.uk)).
- 4. Have all the records available** at time of audit so the audit doesn't take as long.