



TECHNICAL UPDATE

JANUARY 2025



Technical updates from FIA

As we enter a New Year the whole FIA team wish all SQC members the very best for 2025. A cold arctic blast accompanied the new year, and we are conscious of the challenges this creates but hope that 2025 brings a more suitable weather pattern to the benefit of all.

Passports for 2025

As a reminder, SQC moved to a product certification model in October 2023 which replaced the previous harvest year model. This means members maintain their certification approval subject to the following: renewing their membership and having an assessment which meets certification requirements within the scheme year. The scheme year continues to run from 01 October to 30 September. Please note if you chose not to renew your SQC membership or are unable to meet the Scheme standards, any grain you currently have in store cannot be sold as SQC assured.

Passports will again be issued to all members prior to Harvest 2025. FIA is currently working with SQC to review the method of passport distribution. More details on how this process will function, along with detailed member guidance, will be issued as soon as possible.

Keeping assessment delivery on track

As mentioned, the new product certification model allows for the delivery of assessments to be spread over twelve months, thus providing the opportunity to have your SQC assessment at a different time of the year whilst continuing to align with other schemes to afford the opportunity for joint assessments where feasible. This means that your FIA assessor will make contact to arrange your next SQC assessment very soon. We would welcome your support to allow assessments to be conducted during the winter months and ask that if an assessment is booked, it is not cancelled within 48 hours of the appointment. This process helps the assessors and certification team to better manage their workload across the year and minimise the risk of members not receiving their assessment within the Scheme year, which would delay release of grain passports.

Please also keep a look out for forthcoming SQC features including 'A Day in the life of an assessor' which will be issued soon, providing members with an insight into how the booking and assessment process is managed and conducted.

(Continued)

SQC Integrity Check Program

The new spot check program has been operational since 01 October 2024 with around 38 integrity checks being conducted to date. Some of these are simple desktop checks where the certification team contact the member directly to obtain compliance evidence required, thereby minimising the disruption to members whilst robustly maintaining the integrity of the SQC Scheme.

Further details of SQC's Integrity Check Program are available on the SQC website or by clicking this link - https://www.sqcrops.co.uk/uploaded/sqc_245143_1728553915.pdf

Current Scheme Year Most Common Non compliances

The FIA team is always keen to support members in limiting the potential for non-compliances. The top five non-compliances from the current scheme year are listed below:

Non-compliance details		% of all non-compliance raised in Scheme year
2.17	Annual sprayer test not completed	18
2.2	Integrated pest management plan not up to date	12
2.20	Spray contractor sprayer details	5.9
3.3	Mass balance record	5
3.7	Biodiversity action plan	4.8

There have been some changes to the top five but the annual sprayer test still remains the most common. We urge you to get this booked if it is due again soon. Please also remember that a non-compliance is not a failure of the business but a small area of risk that has been identified in relation to the SQC Scheme standards and is usually easily rectified.

HELP IS ON HAND

As always, if you require any assistance in relation to the SQC Scheme, please don't hesitate to contact the FIA Team.

