 *News Release*

Date : 30 May 2022

Number : 03/22

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**Sprayer testing for SQC Members**

We would like to remind all SQC members that sprayer testing timescales are changing from 1August 2022. Currently minimum legal requirements are followed, which is testing sprayers with boom widths over 3 metres every three years, with the additional need of SQC members to carry out a self-assessment for the interim 2 years. From the new Scheme year 2022/23 members are required to have their main crop sprayer tested annually.

National Sprayer Testing Scheme (NSTS) data shows that of all sprayers presented for test, 54% have no faults. This means that the rest, 46%, have one or more faults that are required to be repaired before the machine can pass the test. The majority of these sprayers are tested annually but NSTS data shows that the number of sprayers needing some form of repair is much higher when testing is carried out less frequently.

Leaks and drips are the most common faults. Safe and accurate application of pesticides must be achieved from all sprayers and more regular testing helps ensure this, but will also save downtime for the operator with faults being rectified during the test.

An operator check sheet, available from the NSTS website, is similar to the self-assessment sheet currently in use and as best practice should be used at intervals during the season to keep the machine running in good condition. There is also space to record a calibration, already a requirement for SQC members.

NSTS have over 46 Test Centres in Scotland and the North of England, and more than 100 qualified machine Examiners to test sprayers. Your nearest or preferred company can be found by doing a postcode search via the link on the NSTS website.

SQC Chairman, Andrew Moir, said “We previously communicated this change to members – and it is also highlighted in your SQC Manual. But we are now taking the opportunity to remind members that implementation of this change comes into force on 01 August so please do ensure that you are aware of what is required”.

For more information, go to the NSTS website – [www.nsts.org.uk](http://www.nsts.org.uk) or contact them direct on 01733 207608.