



**SCOTTISH**  
**QUALITY CROPS**



# SQC Scheme Standards

**Farm Assurance Scheme Standards  
(including Crops for Liquid Biofuels)  
by Scottish Quality Crops Limited (SQC)**

October 2024

These Standards must be read with reference to the SQC HACCP Plan and SQC Membership Rules.

[www.sqcrops.co.uk](http://www.sqcrops.co.uk)



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# Welcome to the Farm Assurance Scheme Standards by Scottish Quality Crops

This Manual sets out the Standards of Scottish Quality Crops Ltd (SQC) Assurance Scheme and should be read in conjunction with the SQC HACCP plan (Critical Control Points are indicated) and the SQC Membership Rules (which contains a list of definitions as used within this Standards document). The SQC Membership Rules sets out the conditions of participation in SQC and provides information on the structure of the company and how it operates. It is also intended as a guide for prospective new applicants and as a source of reference for existing growers.

We now issue our documents as digital pdf's as this allows you to easily search them and access the additional guidance via the contained links.

## **This Manual contains Standards for all crops.**

The SQC Standards are designed to increase consumer and trade confidence in both home and export markets by:

- Responding proactively to consumer concerns about crop production
- Improving food safety and meeting the requirements of the Food Safety Act (1990)
- Addressing the environmental responsibilities of crop production

SQC ensures that members' farms operate production systems which encompass high standards of crop management and, particularly, that fertiliser, plant protection products, husbandry, storage and overall farm standards have all been subject to an independent assessment procedure.

## **What the Assessor will check on your farm**

The assessment will cover the entire production system, including all relevant aspects of the Scheme Standards for crop production, storage and haulage.

The starting stage of the assessment will depend on the work underway when the Assessor arrives, and the sequence from then on depends on what is most practical and convenient.

The Assessor will maintain in strict confidence any information gathered during the assessment. If a non-compliance is found, the Assessor will explain this at the time. The [SQC Farm Record Book](#) which is available on the SQC website ([www.sqcrops.co.uk](http://www.sqcrops.co.uk)) gives guidance on what records are required to be maintained to prove compliance with the Scheme Standards (use of this book is optional).

## **Use of fertilisers and manures**

The Assessor will check storage and records including timings, rates and application details.

### **Use of Plant Protection Products**

The Assessor will check the plant protection product store, records, plant protection product selection, rates and application details.

### **Production, harvesting of crops and biodiversity land**

The Assessor will check that every field has a suitable record of the crop management, including variety, sowing date and all other inputs.

The Assessor will check land eligibility for compliance with the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) (EU) 2018/2001 and will require information on the area in the current business which was in an arable rotation (including temporary grass i.e. grass in a crop rotation of not more than five years, or wetlands) at the 01 January 2008 (this will be verified by reference to acceptable documentation as proof of land use e.g. Field Data Sheets as part of Single Farm Payment applications made in 2008, and/or maps or datasets setting out areas of high biodiversity value, farm records etc). The Assessor will check that any evidence of verification of wetland status reflects seasonal changes within a year.

If this total area has increased since 01 January 2008 then it must be established that this area is not from high biodiversity, high carbon stock land.

### **Storage and haulage**

The Assessor will check that crop storage facilities and handling equipment are suitable and that appropriate hygiene measures are carried out. Routine monitoring must be carried out, recorded and, where applicable, appropriate follow-up action must be taken for pre-harvest hygiene, glass protection, vermin/animal control and grain temperatures. The Assessor will also check that vehicles used for transportation on and off farm have had appropriate hygiene measures carried out, where applicable. All grain bulks must be labelled and records must be available for all loads despatched from farm.

### **Staff assessment**

During the assessment, the knowledge and skills of the individual(s) involved in spreading fertiliser, applying plant protection products and operating the combine harvester will be assessed at initial assessment and again be assessed in subsequent years, especially if there is a change of personnel. The assessment is the opportunity to demonstrate competence in crop husbandry. The grower, farm staff, or both, may be candidates for assessment.

For the assessment, the grower must make available the sprayer, fertiliser distributor and combine harvester for use in the staff assessment part of the report.

### **Assessment of machinery skills**

**Fertiliser spreader:** The Assessor must be satisfied that staff can demonstrate how to set up, calibrate and clean the fertiliser spreader and are competent to apply the selected fertiliser rate evenly and with

minimal environmental impact outside the crop. They may ask about headland kits and about the working practices adopted to avoid fertiliser being spread into watercourses or areas of conservation value.

**Farm sprayer:** The Assessor will check sprayer operators hold a Certificate of Competence and have demonstrated CPD training by completing a BASIS Sprayer Operator Course in the current scheme year or proof of membership to NRoSO.

Sprayer operators must be able to demonstrate the following:

- How to calculate and measure out the amount of crop protection product to be placed in the tank for a stated application dose.
- How to set the sprayer for a stated rate of water per hectare and check that the nozzles deliver a spray of the required quality and uniform quantity.

**Combine harvester:** The Assessor will check that combine drivers can identify the symptoms of a badly adjusted combine and describe or demonstrate how to alter the settings to deal with them.

### **Assessment of management skills**

The Assessor will choose items from the following list, taking into account who is normally responsible for the decision or action:

- Demonstrate how to adjust nitrogen rates for previous cropping and other conditions, using fertiliser recommended advisory notes (SRUC Technical Note 731/ Nutrient Management Guide RB209).
- Those storing produce in long term stores must be able to identify ergot and storage pests from a photograph or sample.
- Be able to recognise from photographs or samples: crop growth stages, common pests, weeds and diseases and also common nutrient deficiency symptoms.
- Growers must be able to describe the correct stage for desiccation or swathing of relevant crops.

### **At the end of the assessment**

The Assessor will carry out a closing meeting and supply the member with a Findings Report. If applicable, they will record any non-compliances found and will detail the type of evidence required to achieve the SQC Standard and the timeframe in which evidence must be provided. The grower will then be asked to sign an undertaking of intention to carry out the action required and provide evidence that the necessary action has been taken to FIA.

### **Sourcing and traceability of crops**

Growers will be supplied with SQC Passports. The SQC Passport is unique to each grower, showing the name, address and membership number of the grower. Purchasers will use these SQC Passports as evidence that produce is of assured status.

It is a condition that the SQC Passport is signed by the SQC grower or another authorised signatory to protect the credibility and integrity of the scheme. Applicants are reminded that only the grower or other authorised person must sign the SQC Passport.

Both the grower and haulier (if applicable) must sign the “Inspection of Vehicle” statement on the SQC Passport. Where a haulier is used, the grower must be satisfied that the three previous loads carried are detailed with cleaning process recorded.

Procedure in the event of accidental spillage of a contaminant onto ground with sown/growing crop or onto stored crop to be assured: if such a contamination does take place, either by the grower or a third party, all details must be recorded and the grower must inform the FIA office in writing.

In order for the SQC Passports to reflect compliance with the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) (EU)2018/2001 land use criteria, a declaration on the SQC Passport must also be signed. Growers must keep a record of the date, tonnage and purchaser of loads being delivered for biofuel.

### **European Union database Renewable Energy Directive (RED) (EU)2018/2001**

This is a database held by the European Commission enabling compliant growers the ability to supply combinable crop into Biofuels. SQC plan to retain recognition as an accredited body.

The Renewable Energy Directive (RED) (EU)2018/2001 specifies that relevant economic operators shall enter data onto the European Union database as soon as this comes into operation. In summary, this will be the information entered onto the SQC passport for those crops/feedstocks entering the biofuel supply chain plus the information shown on the Certification Body member checker which includes sustainability criteria.

Grain merchants and grain groups will assist with identifying SQC crops in the markets.

Grain groups and co-operatives whose entire participation is accredited to SQC standards are permitted to use the SQC logo. Such stores must be accredited by a recognised AIC merchant scheme for crops.

### **How to contact us:**

SQC Registered Office (contact for SQC Board and Management)

c/o James Hair & Co, 59 Bonnygate, Cupar, Fife, KY15 4BY

Email: [Teresa.dougall@scottishqualitycrops.co.uk](mailto:Teresa.dougall@scottishqualitycrops.co.uk)

Certification Body (contact for anything related to Scheme standards, membership, scheme documentation, passports etc)

Food Integrity Assurance Ltd (FIA), The Rural Centre, West Mains, Ingliston,  
Newbridge, EH28 8NZ

Telephone No: 0131 609 0558 / E-mail: [info@foodassurance.co.uk](mailto:info@foodassurance.co.uk)

Website: <https://www.sqcrops.co.uk/> or <https://foodintegrityassurance.co.uk/>

# The SQC Standards

## Section 1.0

### Standards for the use of Fertilisers, Manures, Water & Fuel (HACCP 4)

Ref	Standard	Requirements
1.1	Growers must have access to the relevant PEPFAA Code of Good Practice Do's & Don'ts Guide.	See <a href="#">The PEPFAA plan</a> for further guidance.
1.2	Soil must be regularly tested for pH, P & K.	SQC accepts that 'regular' testing is at least once every five years.
1.3	Records must be kept and made available for fertiliser applications.	<p><b>Records must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of application</li> <li>• Type of fertiliser</li> <li>• Amount used on each field.</li> </ul>
1.4	All application rates of nitrogen, phosphate and potash must be matched to the crop requirement.	<p><b>Growers must also consider the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soil status</li> <li>• Previous cropping and yield</li> <li>• Application of organic manures</li> <li>• Natural losses.</li> </ul> <p>See Technical Note (<a href="#">TN731</a>): Nitrogen Recommendations for Cereals, Oilseed Rape and Potatoes and Nutrient Management Guide (<a href="#">RB209</a>)</p>
1.5 <b>Revised</b>	Growers must comply with NVZ requirements, where applicable.	<p><b>The following NVZ guidelines are set:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nitrogen fertiliser must not be applied to crops during closed periods.</li> <li>• There are limited exceptions during the closed period for oilseed rape and early drilled cereals but any applications made must adhere to Scottish Government NVZ rules.</li> <li>• Applications must not exceed crop requirements so an N max calculation must be completed for each crop type before any nitrogen is applied.</li> <li>• No applications should be made where there is a risk of run off or poor utilisation e.g. where land is waterlogged, flooded, frozen or snow covered.</li> <li>• Before making any application, consider climatic conditions (e.g. rainfall), soil type and slope and no applications should be made to slopes of over 12 degrees if there is a</li> </ul>



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		<p>risk of run off.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The total amount of nitrogen that can be spread on any holding from livestock manure (including directly from the animals themselves) must not exceed 170 kg N /ha.</li> <li>• The total amount of nitrogen that can be spread <b>on any individual field</b> from all other sources of organic manure (other than compost) must not exceed 250 kg N/ha.</li> <li>• The total amount of nitrogen from compost (which must comply with PAS100) that can be spread on <b>any individual field</b> in a 24 month period must not exceed 500 kg N /ha, including nitrogen from all other sources of organic manure.</li> <li>• All nitrogen fertilisers should be applied accurately.</li> <li>• All applications of nitrogen fertiliser must be recorded (see summary of record keeping requirements <a href="#">here</a>).</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> SQC Assured growers in England must adhere to Defra NVZ Rules and Guidance at this <a href="#">link</a></p> <p>Restrictions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No more than 170kg per hectare of nitrogen in livestock manure (including manure deposited directly by livestock and spreading) per holding in each calendar year.</li> <li>• No more than 250kg of total nitrogen from all organic manures spread in any 12 month period on any single hectare of land. This limit (the field limit) doesn't include livestock manures deposited by grazing animals.</li> <li>• Defra guidance on closed periods must be followed.</li> <li>• Defra guidance aimed at limiting run off must be followed so consideration given to factors such as soil type, climate and slope.</li> <li>• All applications of nitrogen on each crop in each field must be planned and recorded as a fertilisation plan which must be kept as part of your farm records.</li> </ul>
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Ref	Standard	Requirements
1.6 <b>Revised</b>	Growers must only apply fertiliser (including FYM and slurries) to crops in suitable conditions.	<p>All fertilisers must be applied in suitable conditions. This applies to all organic and artificial fertilisers.</p> <p><b>Unsuitable conditions are:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ground which is frozen solid</li> <li>• Ground which is snow covered</li> <li>• Ground which is waterlogged.</li> </ul>
1.7 HACCP 4	Growers using biosolids must keep detailed records. Untreated biosolids must not be spread onto SQC ground.	<p><b>Records must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Batch records of origin</li> <li>• Delivery records</li> <li>• Application records.</li> </ul> <p><b>SQC Growers must ensure that the end customer or merchant will accept crops that have received such treatments. Applications must be in line with NVZ regulations.</b></p> <p>Growers must also adhere to the relevant codes of practice. For further guidance see <a href="#">The Sludge Regulations 1989</a></p>
1.8 HACCP 4	<p>The use of compost on SQC ground is permitted. However, if the original feedstocks are sourced outside of the SQC farm unit, the compost must be certified to PAS100.</p> <p>Detailed records must be kept.</p>	<p><b>Records must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Batch records of origin</li> <li>• Delivery records</li> <li>• Application records</li> </ul> <p><b>SQC Growers must ensure that the end customer or merchant will accept crops that have received such treatments.</b></p> <p>Growers must note that home produced compost that is not PAS100 must not include feedstock from outside the farm.</p> <p><b>Applications must be in line with NVZ regulations.</b></p>
1.9 <b>Revised</b> HACCP 4	Digestate must either be PAS110 certified or home-produced using feedstock exclusively from the member farm. If feed stock is sourced	<p><b>Records for both PAS110 Digestate and home-produced digestate must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Batch records of origin</li> <li>• Delivery records</li> <li>• Application records</li> </ul>

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	<p>from out with the farm, it should be entirely 'green' as per Appendix 1. Detailed records must be kept.</p>	<p><b>Advisory note – Growers must note that home-produced digestate that is not PAS110 must not include feedstock from outside the farm.</b></p> <p><b>It is accepted that the digester may not be on the member farm but may be offsite e.g. at an industrial estate or on a separate parcel of land owned by the member.</b></p> <p><b>SQC Growers must ensure that the end customer or merchant will accept crops that have received such treatments. Applications must be in line with NVZ requirements.</b></p> <p><b>Advisory note for producers:</b> The SQC AD Scheme is not currently operational and is under active review with the aim of optimising the sustainable use of digestate and other bulky organic manures in Scottish crops and best aligning this with market acceptability.</p> <p><b>For producer information only:</b> Appendix 1 shows the acceptable list of green feedstocks previously included in the SQC AD Scheme.</p>
<p>1.10 HACCP 4</p>	<p>Other crop enhancement products are permitted for use on SQC assured acreage, however an appropriate SEPA/EA permit must be in place. Detailed records must be kept.</p>	<p><b>Records must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Batch records of origin</li> <li>• Delivery records</li> <li>• Application records</li> </ul>
<p>1.11</p>	<p>Fertiliser spreaders must be maintained and calibrated. Records must be kept.</p>	<p><b>Records must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance and routine checks on the spreader</li> <li>• Annual calibration</li> </ul> <p>If slug pellets are used through the spreader, the spreader must be tested and calibrated for each product.</p>
<p>1.12</p>	<p>Storage of granular/prilled fertiliser must be suitable.</p>	<p><b>Storage must be:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On a hard surface where spillages can be easily swept up</li> <li>• Not near drains or burns where run off could occur.</li> </ul> <p>For further guidance see <a href="#">PEPFAA</a> code</p>

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Ref	Standard	Requirements
1.13	Storage of liquid fertiliser must be suitable.	<p><b>Storage must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be secured against tampering</li> <li>• The grower must have in place a system for contamination, preferably through a bunded system.</li> </ul> <p>For further guidance see <a href="#">PEPFAA</a> code</p>
1.14	Domestic water supplies must be protected from fertiliser through protection zones.	<p><b>A minimum exclusion area of 50 meters</b> must be adhered to from the edge of the fertiliser spread to the start of the domestic water supply.</p> <p>Where 50 meters appears excessive for inorganic fertiliser, evidence is needed to support a lesser protection zone.</p>
1.15	Field boundaries must be protected from fertiliser, FYM, slurry, lime and other crop nutrient or soil improver applications.	<p><b>For example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining safe distances from headlands</li> <li>• Maintaining safe distances from open water sources</li> <li>• Headland kits must be used where available.</li> </ul>
1.16	Growers must use a registered FACTs Advisors.	If an advisor, consultant or trade rep advises on fertiliser on the grower's farm, it is the <b>grower's</b> responsibility to ensure the advisor is a member of the current FACTs professional register.
1.17	Where water is used to irrigate crops, a plan must be in place to support the water usage and an appropriate abstraction licence.	<p><b>A detailed water management plan must be made available. This must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irrigation water usage records</li> <li>• Maintenance plans to reduce usage</li> <li>• Water audit</li> <li>• Details of abstraction licence</li> <li>• Where irrigation is used water quality testing records kept.</li> </ul> <p>For further guidance see <a href="#">Water Abstraction Licence - Gov.UK</a>.</p>

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Ref	Standard	Requirements
1.18 <b>Revised</b>	All potential pollutants are stored in accordance with legislation.	<p><b>This includes but is not limited to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fuel</li><li>• Oils</li></ul> <p>Fixed fuel tanks greater than 1250 litres must be bunded.</p> <p>Oils must be stored in bunded building or containers.</p> <p>For further guidance see <a href="#">PEPFAA</a> code.</p>

# The SQC Standards

## Section 2.0

### Standards for Plant Protection Products (PPP) (HACCP 5, 8 and 11)

The word pest applies to any insect, pathogen, weed species or other organism which might reduce the yield or quality of the crop.

Plant Protection Product refers to any chemical or organism which is used to control a pest. This includes seed dressings, granules, soil drenches, powders, dusts, biological control agents or fumigants intended for use with stored products. It also includes plant growth regulators, but not trace elements or adjuvants (wettors and mixers), even when applied from sprayers.

As of June 2022, users of pesticides must be registered:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/professional-plant-protection-products-ppps-register-as-a-user>

Ref	Standard	Requirements
2.1	Growers must have access to the relevant Code of Practice for using Plant Protection Products.	For further guidance see <a href="#">Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products in Scotland</a>
2.2	Growers must complete, and demonstrate, an annual review of an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan.	<p><b>The IPM plan must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be available for all staff, advisors and contractors</li> <li>• Demonstrate the use of PPPs is justified</li> <li>• Demonstrate improved protection of the environment.</li> </ul> <p>For further guidance see the <a href="#">Integrated Pest Management Plan</a></p>
2.3	Plant Protection Products must be stored in a dedicated store.	<p><b>The store must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be secured and the key kept in another location</li> <li>• Be bunded</li> <li>• Display appropriate signage on the outside of the store</li> <li>• Emergency spillage facilities must be available within the store.</li> </ul> <p>For further guidance see <a href="#">Guidance on storing pesticides for farmers and other professional users</a> .</p>

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Ref	Standard	Requirements
2.4	Plant Protection Product containers must be fit for purpose.	<p><b>Containers must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be fit for purpose</li> <li>• Clearly labelled *</li> <li>• In sound condition.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Where a product has been decanted into a replacement container, the new container must show the original labelling information (which can be printed from manufacturers websites).</p>
2.5	An up to date Plant Protection Product stock inventory must be kept.	Two copies of the stock inventory must be kept. One must be in the chemical store and one must be kept within the farm office, or somewhere that could be easily located in the event of a fire within the store.
2.6	All Plant Protection Products must be currently approved by CRD for use on the target crop.	<p>Growers must ensure that all products used are on label and CRD approved. If a product being used is an Extension of Authorisation for Minor Use (EAMU), a copy of the relevant notice of approval must be kept and documented.</p> <p>All Plant Protection Products must, at all times, be used in accordance with product labels or EAMU. Key points include e.g. Harvest intervals are observed and recorded; maximum permitted dose rates are not exceeded; check product labels before use.</p> <p>For further guidance see <a href="#">Pesticides Register of UK Authorised Products</a></p>
2.7	Expired or withdrawn Plant Protection Products must be kept segregated from approved stock pending disposal by an approved waste disposal contractor.	Growers must ensure that all withdrawn PPPs are not kept on farm past their withdrawal date or expiry date.

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Ref	Standard	Requirements
<p>2.8 HACCP 5</p>	<p>Growers must keep accurate records and up to date spraying records which must be retained for a minimum of five years.</p>	<p><b>Spraying records must be kept for growing and stored crops.</b>  <b>The records must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of application</li> <li>• Time of spraying</li> <li>• Crop growth stage</li> <li>• Wind speed and direction</li> <li>• Pest being controlled</li> <li>• Label name of product</li> <li>• Dose used</li> <li>• Water application rate</li> <li>• Spray quality</li> <li>• Sprayer operator</li> <li>• LERAPS</li> <li>• Buffer zones.</li> </ul> <p>Care must be taken to avoid applying products during unfavourable conditions that would encourage drift onto conservation or sensitive areas, i.e. Hedgerows, private homes and public places.</p>
<p>2.9 HACCP 5</p>	<p>Contract sprayers must provide the SQC grower with the spray records within seven days of application.</p>	<p><b>Spraying records must be kept for growing and stored crops.</b>  <b>The record must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of application</li> <li>• Time of spraying</li> <li>• Crop growth stage</li> <li>• Wind speed and direction</li> <li>• Pest being controlled</li> <li>• Label name of product</li> <li>• Dose used</li> <li>• Water application rate</li> <li>• Spray quality</li> <li>• Sprayer operator</li> <li>• LERAPS</li> <li>• Buffer zones.</li> </ul> <p>Care must be taken to avoid applying products during unfavourable conditions that would encourage drift onto conservation or sensitive areas, i.e. Hedgerows, private homes and public places.</p>



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Ref	Standard	Requirements
2.10  HACCP 5 & 11	Growers must follow all statutory label requirements.	<p><b>For example:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Never exceed the maximum dose at any one application</li> <li>• Compliance with maximum total doses in repeated applications</li> <li>• Compliance with all other statutory label requirements.</li> </ul>
2.11	Application of insecticides to oilseed rape must be during appropriate times of the day. Growers must avoid bright weather and mid-day applications to protect and minimise any potential harmful effect on bees.	<p><b>Applications must be during:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early morning</li> <li>• Late evening</li> <li>• Dull days.</li> </ul>
2.12	Waste materials must be disposed of via a registered waste carrier. Waste disposal notes/receipts must be retained.	<p><b>Waste materials include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metal</li> <li>• Plastics (including PPP containers)</li> <li>• Fertiliser tote bags</li> <li>• Glass</li> <li>• Paper.</li> </ul> <p>Excess spray washing must be disposed of either by spraying an under dosed area of the field or via a registered waste carrier. The Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection in Scotland must be followed and can be viewed <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
2.13	Growers must use a registered BASIS advisor.	If an advisor, consultant or trade rep advises on the grower's farm, it is the <b>grower's</b> responsibility to ensure the advisor is a member of the current BASIS professional register.

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Ref	Standard	Requirements
<p>2.14</p> <p><b>Revised</b></p> <p>HACCP 5</p>	<p>At the time of spraying, all sprayer operators must hold an NPTC Certificate of Competence (CoC).</p>	<p><b>This CoC must be relevant to the sprayer/applicator and are as follows:</b></p> <p><b>PA1:</b> Principles of Safe Handling and Application of Pesticides</p> <p><b>PA2:</b> Safe Application of Pesticides Using Self Propelled, Mounted, Trailed Horizontal Boom Sprayers</p> <p><b>PA3:</b> Safe Application of Pesticides Using Variable Geometry Boom or Broadcast Sprayers</p> <p><b>PA4:</b> Safe Application of Pelleted or Granular Pesticides Using Mounted or Trailed Applicators</p> <p><b>PA5:</b> Safe Application of Pesticides Using Boat Mounted Equipment</p> <p><b>PA6:</b> Safe Application of Pesticides using Pedestrian Handheld Equipment</p> <p><b>PA7:</b> Safe Application of Pesticides from the Air</p> <p><b>PA8:</b> Safe Mixing and Transferring of Pesticides</p> <p><b>PA9:</b> Safe Application of Pesticide Mists, Fogs and Smokes</p> <p><b>PA10:</b> Safe Dipping of Plant Material in Pesticides</p> <p><b>PA11:</b> Safe Treatment of Seeds with Pesticides</p> <p><b>PA12:</b> Safe Application of Pesticides to Plant Material During a Continuous Flow Process</p> <p><b>PA13:</b> Safe Sub Surface Application of Liquid Pesticides</p> <p><b>PA-SC:</b> Safe Application of Pesticides Using Specialist Equipment</p> <p><b>PA-RPM:</b> Responsible Pesticide Management</p>

## The SQC Standards

Ref	Standard	Requirements
<p>2.15 <b>Revised</b></p> <p>HACCP 5</p>	<p>All sprayer operators must undergo Continual Professional Development (CPD) during the current scheme year.</p>	<p>Operators have <b>two</b> options regarding maintaining their CPD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete a BASIS approved Sprayer Operator Course annually i.e. within the current scheme year</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become a NRoSO member and maintain an annual record of 10 CPD points.</li> </ul> <p><b>Please note: attendance on any other sprayer operator course i.e. not a BASIS course, will NOT cover the operator without NRoSO membership.</b></p> <p>Sprayer operators who have passed their NPTC exam during the current Scheme year will be granted a year's grace for CPD.</p> <p>Sprayer operators attending a BASIS approved Sprayer Operator Course which takes place AFTER the scheme assessment must notify the Certification Body, FIA, on completion of the course.</p>
<p>2.16</p> <p>HACCP 5</p>	<p>Standards 2.14 and 2.15 also apply to sprayer contractors and it is the SQC <b>grower's</b> responsibility to have this information available at the time of the assessment.</p>	<p>Sprayer contractors must hold the relevant NPTC and CPD in line with SQC Standards 2.14 and 2.15.</p>
<p>2.17 <b>Revised</b></p> <p>HACCP 5</p>	<p>All trailed, mounted and self propelled sprayers with a boom of over 3 metres, air blast sprayers and aerial sprayers, including those used by contractors, must be tested under the National Sprayer Testing Scheme (NSTS) in line with their requirements.</p>	<p>These sprayers must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tested under NSTS annually</li> <li>• If new, application equipment must be tested before use</li> <li>• Issued with a NSTS certificate if imported with a mutually recognised foreign test certificate</li> </ul>

## The SQC Standards

Ref	Standard	Requirements
2.18 <b>Revised</b>  HACCP 5	Pesticide application equipment, including that used by contractors, with a boom less than 3 metres, slug pellet applicators and granular applicators must be tested in accordance with NSTS requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boom sprayers less than 3 metres must be NSTS tested before 5 years old and retested every 6 years</li> <li>• An annual SQC Sprayer Self-Assessment form must be completed for sprayers with booms less than 3 metres which have not been NSTS tested</li> <li>• The SQC Sprayer Self-Assessment form must detail a record of maintenance checks and replacement parts</li> <li>• Slug pellet and granular applicators must be NSTS tested before 5 years old and retested every 6 years</li> </ul>
2.19 <b>Revised</b>	All PPP applicators, including any contractor applicators, must be calibrated and a record kept.	<p><b>Calibrations must be carried out:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the beginning of each season (Autumn and Spring)</li> <li>• After changing nozzles</li> <li>• After replacing any part of the delivery system</li> <li>• Regularly during the season</li> <li>• This includes knapsacks, handheld and pedestrian sprayers.</li> <li>• Applicators used for granular PPP's and slug pellet applicators must be calibrated at every change of product.</li> </ul>
2.20	Pesticides must be used in a manner that reduces the risk to water, birds and small mammals. Growers must have a record with a farm map, clearly highlighting areas of high pollution risk.	<p><b>Applications must not be made during:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy rain</li> <li>• When field drains are flowing</li> <li>• When excessively windy</li> <li>• Periods/conditions identified on labels as unsuitable.</li> </ul>

# The SQC Standards

## Section 3.0

### Standards for the Production, Harvesting of Crops and Biodiversity Land (HACCP 1 and 6)

All crops produced on the unit must conform to the SQC Scheme's Standards. The intention is that all crops produced on a grower's farm must qualify for the Scheme, but occasions may arise (e.g. possible contamination) when this is not possible.

In that event, arrangements for the segregation of such produce (excepting for Standards 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) must be agreed with the Assessor and SQC must be informed. The grower must make satisfactory arrangements for segregation and separate marketing; on no account may the grower use SQC Passports for such unassured bulk.

Detailed information on high biodiversity land can be found [here](#).

Ref	Standard	Requirements
3.1	Growers must provide information on the area in their business which was in an arable rotation (including temporary grass) at 01 January 2008.	<p>Growers must provide this information to produce biofuel crops compliant with the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) (EU)2018/2001. Growers must comply with the Articles 29 (3) to (7), the land-based sustainability criteria, of Directive EU 2018/2001.</p> <p>Crops (raw materials) must not be obtained from land with a high biodiversity value, namely land that had one of the following statuses on or after 01 January 2008.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A high biodiversity level or</li><li>• Land with a high carbon stock or</li><li>• Land that was peatland unless evidence is provided that the cultivation and harvesting of those crops does not involve drainage of previously drained soil.</li></ul> <p><b>If this evidence is not available for all of the land in their business at 01 January 2008, that land will be assumed as non-compliant to the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) (EU)2018/2001</b></p>

## The SQC Standards

Ref	Standard	Requirements
3.2	<p>Growers must provide information on the area which is in an arable rotation (including temporary grass) for the current scheme year.</p> <p>Documents for verification of previous land status must be retained for a minimum of 5 years, or longer where it is required by the relevant national authority.</p>	<p>It must be established that this area is not from high biodiversity land, high carbon stock land or peatland drained since January 2008.</p> <p>Assessors may review the documentation which may include official records showing field location and classification/use, maps, Single Farm Payment documentation etc. If this evidence is not available, it will be assumed as non-compliant to the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) (EU) 2018/2001.</p>
3.3 <b>Revised</b>	<p><b>All growers</b> must use a mass balance system and retain records for a minimum of five years, or longer where it is required by the relevant national authority.</p>	<p><b>Records must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A record of the actual or estimated weights of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) (EU) 2018/2001 compliant crop going into store</li> <li>• Records of loads taken out of store must be kept, with reference to weighbridge tickets</li> <li>• The amount of each type of crop for biofuel taken out of store must not, at any time, exceed the total amount of compliant crop of that type which was loaded into the store</li> <li>• The total mass balance must be for a twelve month period, aligned to the calendar year or the economic year used for bookkeeping purposes, and the balances within that period must be updated and recorded at the end of every three months. The time frame must be transparent, documented and consistent</li> <li>• If a grower has grain stores in more than one location, each site must have an individual record</li> <li>• If requested, all growers shall make available all mass balance data in advance of the planned assessment</li> </ul> <p>For further guidance see the <a href="#">Mass Balance Record</a></p>

## The SQC Standards

Ref	Standard	Requirements
<p>3.4 <b>Revised</b></p> <p>HACCP 1 &amp; 6 CCP 2</p>	<p>Growers are required to identify fields at risk from crop contaminants and take specific management action.</p>	<p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fields with ergot present in the previous scheme year should be recorded</li> <li>• Fields where ergot is identified in season should be harvested and stored separately to avoid contaminating larger bulks</li> <li>• Management plans may include actions such as controlling grass weed hosts</li> <li>• Crop contaminants such as HEAR oilseed rape</li> <li>• Crops that might contain allergens</li> <li>• Physical contaminants such as plastics from compost applications, or lead pellets from shooting.</li> </ul>
<p>3.5</p> <p>HACCP 1 CCP 1</p>	<p>All wheat growers must complete a Mycotoxin Risk Assessment</p>	<p>Complete the current AHDB risk assessment for managing mycotoxin risk in wheat.</p> <p>For further guidance see the <a href="#">Mycotoxins Risk assessment</a></p>
<p>3.6</p>	<p>Detailed fields records must be kept.</p>	<p><b>Records must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variety</li> <li>• Dates of sowing</li> <li>• Crop treatments</li> <li>• Harvest dates.</li> </ul> <p>Please note that harvest dates must observe harvest intervals from PPP's.</p> <p>Organically grown crops must also have a field record.</p>

## The SQC Standards

Ref	Standard	Requirements
3.7	SQC growers must have a Biodiversity Action Plan.	<p><b>The Biodiversity Action Plan must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A map of the location of areas or features important to biodiversity on and around the farm.</li> <li>• Details of how provision is made for wildlife habitats and food sources through hedges, field margins, extensive pasture, etc.</li> <li>• Measures to avoid degradation and deforestation of High Conservation Value (HCV) areas or other ecologically sensitive areas.</li> <li>• Assessment of possible disruption of biological corridors because of farm activities and, if required, must include the assessment mitigation measures.</li> </ul> <p>For further guidance see the <a href="#">Biodiversity Action Plan</a></p>



# The SQC Standards

## Section 4.0

### Standards for Storage (HACCP 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12)

Ref	Standard	Requirements
4.1 HACCP 8	Temporary/intake stores must be suitable.	<p><b>Suitable stores must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be rainproof with a roof</li> <li>• Have a clean floor with solid construction</li> <li>• All temporary stores must be emptied by 31 October.</li> </ul> <p>External storage is not permitted, other than in exceptional circumstances on a concrete pad prior to drying. Growers must inform SQC if they plan to do this.</p> <p><b>A derogation may be granted at the Certification Body's discretion where crops may need to be retained in a temporary store after 31 October. It is the grower's responsibility to seek this derogation.</b></p>
4.2 HACCP 11	Long term storage must be suitable.	<p><b>Suitable stores must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be fully waterproof</li> <li>• Have walls</li> <li>• Have floors of solid construction</li> <li>• Have properly fitted doors.</li> </ul>
4.3 HACCP 11	Oilseed rape must not be stored on a bituminous (tarmac) floor.	Bituminous materials must be avoided in oilseed storage areas, as they can impart toxic aromatic chemicals (PAHs) tainting the seed. Prevent oilseed rape encountering tarmac/bituminous painted surfaces.

## The SQC Standards

Ref	Standard	Requirements
<p>4.4</p> <p>HACCP 8, 11 &amp; 12</p>	<p>Growers must avoid all potential glass or hard plastic contamination and provide records of checks.</p>	<p><b>All glass fitments must be protected to prevent broken glass contaminating crops.</b></p> <p><b>A recording system must be in place and must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicle glass and mirrors</li> <li>• Grain store light fittings</li> <li>• Skylights</li> <li>• Any lightbulbs or lamps that may be near any crops at any time.</li> </ul> <p>If broken glass or hard plastic is found, this must be swept away, and any contaminated grain segregated. <b>This must also be recorded.</b></p>
<p>4.5</p> <p>HACCP 8</p>	<p>Pre-harvest hygiene must be undertaken and recorded.</p>	<p><b>The following must be pest and insect free:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All stores (including temporary)</li> <li>• Reception pits</li> <li>• Driers</li> <li>• Cleaners</li> <li>• Conveyors.</li> </ul> <p><b>This must be accurately recorded.</b></p> <p><b>Insect bait bags must be used to demonstrate effective management and they must be removed before grain is stored.</b></p> <p><b>All stores must be treated as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean store</li> <li>• Remove all sweepings</li> <li>• Disinfect where appropriate</li> <li>• Use insect bait bags for infestations</li> <li>• If evidence of infestation, use appropriate fumigant to control</li> <li>• Repeat if necessary to achieve control.</li> </ul>

## The SQC Standards

Ref	Standard	Requirements
4.6 HACCP 8	Livestock housing that is used as storage must be cleaned appropriately.	<p><b>All storage that has previously housed livestock must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have walls and floors cleaned, with the use of a pressure hose</li> <li>• All walls and floors must be disinfected with a food grade disinfectant.</li> </ul> <p><b>This must be accurately recorded.</b></p> <p><b>If insecticides are used, the following must be recorded:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date of application</li> <li>• Reason for treatment</li> <li>• Application rate</li> <li>• Dilution rate as applicable.</li> </ul>
4.7 HACCP 8, 9 & 10	Regular maintenance must be carried out on grain driers and records kept.	During drying, every effort must be made to avoid contaminating grain with fuel or the products of combustion.
4.8 HACCP 1, 7, 8 & 11	All crop handling equipment must be checked and cleaned pre-harvest and records kept.	<p>All handling equipment must be maintained before harvest to ensure there are no fuel or oil leaks. A record of this maintenance must be kept.</p> <p>All loading buckets, combines and tarpaulins used to cover grain during transit must be cleaned thoroughly and a record kept.</p>
4.9 HACCP 8	Moisture meters and temperature probes must be calibrated annually.	<p><b>Growers can either choose to calibrate their moisture meter by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using a standard sample</li> <li>• Using a dedicated moisture meter clinic.</li> </ul> <p><b>A record of this must be kept.</b></p>

## The SQC Standards

Ref	Standard	Requirements
<p>4.10</p> <p>HACCP 8, 9 &amp; 10</p>	<p>Temperatures of crops after drying must be checked and recorded regularly.</p>	<p>To avoid spoilage, temperatures must be reduced to at least 12°C by the end of December.</p> <p><b>Each grain bulk must:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be checked weekly until 12°C is reached</li> <li>• After this, temperatures must be recorded on a regular basis</li> <li>• Any rise (more than one degree) between inspections must be investigated.</li> </ul> <p><b>There must be detailed records kept.</b></p>
<p>4.11</p>	<p>Grain bulks must be identifiable.</p>	<p><b>Long term stored grain bulks must have records of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variety</li> <li>• Field(s) of origin</li> <li>• Harvest dates</li> <li>• Dates of temperature and general inspections</li> <li>• Details of any PPP applied or other remedial treatments.</li> </ul>

# The SQC Standards

## Section 5.0

### Pest Control Procedures (HACCP 8 and 11)

Ref	Standard	Requirements
5.1 HACCP 8 & 11 CCP 3	Rodent control measures must be in place.	<p><b>A detailed record must be kept of the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bait location plan/map</li> <li>• Number of bait stations</li> <li>• Date of bait station inspections</li> <li>• Level of activity observed</li> <li>• Bait type used with full label requirements</li> <li>• Signature of person in charge of the control procedures.</li> </ul> <p>Growers must note that bait stations do not need to contain rodenticides.</p> <p>After effective treatment, any rodenticides that have been used must be removed and disposed of according to the label requirements.</p>
5.2	In all stores, each bulk must be inspected for deceased and dying rodents.	<p>Each bulk must be checked on a weekly basis for signs of deceased and dying rodents. If any are found, these must be dispatched as quickly as possible and disposed of safely in line with label requirements of the product used.</p> <p><b>Records must be kept of this.</b></p>
5.3 <b>Revised</b>	A Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) environmental risk assessment must be carried out.	<p>CRRU environmental risk assessment forms must be completed for each site to demonstrate the need to use first and second generation anticoagulants.</p> <p>A CRRU form must be updated if there is a significant change of practice on the site, or a major infestation occurs. This must be retained on the site.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> From 2026 all users of second generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) will need a specialist training certificate to purchase SGARs. For 2024 and 2025 SGARs can still be purchased (if required) by SQC scheme members.</p> <p>For further guidance see the <a href="#">CRRU Environmental Risk Assessment Form</a></p>

## The SQC Standards

Ref	Standard	Requirements
5.4	Third party rodent control contractors must be fully qualified.	If a third party rodent control contractor is used, it is the <b>grower's</b> responsibility to have a copy of the technician's Certificate of Professional Competence.
5.5 HACCP 11	Long term storage must be protected against pests.	All grain bulks must be protected against ingress by birds or domestic animals (including cats). Bulks must be checked weekly for the presence of birds, and a record of these checks must be kept.

# The SQC Standards

## Section 6.0

### Transporting Standards (HACCP 7 and 12)

Ref	Standard	Requirements
6.1 <b>Revised</b>  HACCP 7	On farm transportation equipment must be clean and fit for use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is the <b>grower's</b> responsibility to ensure that all lorries and trailers are clean and dry prior to use</li> <li>If equipment is non-dedicated or has ever been used for transportation of organic material, it must be washed with a foodgrade disinfectant prior to use</li> <li>Cleaning records must be kept.</li> </ul>
6.2 <b>Revised</b>  HACCP 12	Off farm transportation equipment must be clean, fit for use and each load must be accompanied with a grain passport with Section 2 completed.	<p><b>It is the grower's responsibility to ensure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All lorries and trailers are clean and dry prior to loading</li> <li>All lorries and trailers are fit for purpose to carry crops</li> <li>Non-dedicated trailers have been washed with food grade disinfectant and proof of this has been seen and retained</li> <li>All lorries/trailers are covered during transit</li> <li>Individual merchant requirements are met</li> <li>Cleaning records of lorries/trailers and tarpaulins must be kept.</li> </ul>
6.3	Growers must keep detailed records of all loads dispatched. These records must be retained for five years.	<p><b>Records must show:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Date of dispatch</li> <li>Haulier and number plate of lorry/tractor</li> <li>Crop dispatched</li> <li>Amount dispatched</li> <li>Confirmation of biofuel use, if applicable.</li> </ul>

# The SQC Standards

## Section 7.0

### General Standards

Ref	Standard	Requirements
7.1	A detailed complaints register must be kept and maintained regularly	<p><b>Growers are required to maintain a complaints record for the marketing of their crops. This must include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official complaints (including grain rejections)</li> <li>• Complaint details</li> <li>• Corrective action.</li> </ul> <p>The complaints record must be kept up to date and reviewed annually.</p> <p>For further guidance see the <a href="#">Complaints Register template</a></p>
7.2	The farm appearance must be maintained to a high standard at all times.	<p>SQC maintains a good public perception and appearance is important to this.</p> <p>Growers must make every effort to minimise the amount of redundant machinery, weeds and overgrown areas around the farm steading.</p> <p>A high level of hygiene and tidiness must be maintained across the interior and exterior of the farm.</p>
7.3	A detailed emergency action plan must be available and visible on <b>ALL</b> SQC farms.	<p>Every SQC farm must have a detailed emergency action plan in place, with relevant locations and contact numbers recorded.</p> <p>This plan must be visible and a copy held within the farm office or relevant location. This plan must be visible in case of an emergency (e.g. fire) for when the persons responsible are not on site.</p> <p>For further guidance see the <a href="#">Emergency Action Plan template</a></p>



## The SQC Standards

Ref	Standard	Requirements
7.4	All staff or contractors are competent to carry out their roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contractors can provide certificates of competence if requested</li> <li>• For all employed staff, records of all relevant training should be kept and accessible if required.</li> </ul>
7.5	Where labour providers are used, growers are required to ensure they are Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) registered.	<p>It is the growers responsibility to ensure that records of Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) licence check is kept and up to date.</p> <p>For further guidance see <a href="#">GLAA licence</a></p>

### Advanced notification:

The SQC Standard Review Committee/Board will continue to consider the introduction of a Soil Management Plan (that aligns with customer requirements and emerging Government policies).

**SQC Scheme Standards – 01 October 2024**
**Appendix 1 – Guidance on Standard 1.9 (information only for producers)**

## Appendix

### Appendix 1: Approved feedstock

Cereals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wheat</li> <li>Barley</li> <li>Oats</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Triticale</li> <li>Rye</li> <li>Oilseed Rape</li> </ul>
Cereal By-products:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Straw</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chaff</li> </ul>
Root Crops:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beet (Fodder and Sugar)</li> <li>Carrots</li> <li>Parsnips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Potatoes</li> <li>Swedes</li> <li>Onions</li> </ul>
Green Vegetables:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All farm supplied green vegetable material (excluding material which originates from third party packhouses).</li> </ul>	

### Appendix 2: Approved distillery co-products

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pot ale syrup</li> <li>Draff (Distillers' grains)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distillery process washings</li> <li>Spent yeast</li> </ul>
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### Appendix 3: Approved brewery co-products

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brewers' grains</li> <li>Spent Yeast</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brewery process washings</li> <li>Hop waste</li> </ul>
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### Appendix 4: Approved waste products

(Classified as waste products by the Waste Framework Directive)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farmyard manure (cattle, pigs or horses) deemed a waste when used in a biogas plant.</li> <li>Farm livestock slurry (cattle/pig) deemed a waste when used in a biogas plant.</li> <li>Spoilt vegetables (excluding material which originates from third party packhouses) providing the causes of spoiling is known and not deemed a risk.</li> </ul>
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### Appendix 5: PATHOGENS based on Publicly Available Specification upper limits.

Parameter	Method of test	Upper Limit
Non-ABP Digestate E.coli	SCA MSS Part 3A or BS ISO 16649-2	1000 CFU / g fresh matter
Non-ABP digestate: Salmonella spp	Method as specified by appropriate ABP regulation, according to nation in which digested material is produced, or SCA MSS Part 4A	Absent in 25 g fresh matter