



**SQC MANUAL / STANDARDS TO BE PUBLISHED 01 OCTOBER 2024
IDENTIFIED AMENDMENTS TO ALL STANDARDS – FROM OCTOBER 2023**

Summary of changes

- **New standards** – there are NO new standards for scheme year 01 October 2024 to 30 September 2025
- **Removal of standards** – Standard 2.20 from the Standards document dates October 2023 has been removed. This Standard is not included in the October 2024 edition as all mention of Sprayer Contractors has been added to Standards 2.17, 2.18 and 2.19
- **Substantive changes** – there are NO substantive changes for scheme year 01 October 2024 to 30 September 2025.

All other changes to the wording within the Standards document – edition October 2024 (changes highlighted in red)

Part 1 – Welcome

- Page 1 – Within the introductory paragraph we have included a reference to the Membership Rules and definition of terms used within both the Membership Rules and the Standards documents. This specifically relates to the addition of definitions for both ‘Contractor’ and ‘Grower’.
- Page 5 – Under ‘Farm Sprayer’
 - Wording from Oct 2023 Standards – “The Assessor will check sprayer operators hold a Certificate of Competence and have demonstrated CPD training by completing the SQC Sprayer Operator Course in the current scheme year or are a member of NRoSO.”
 - New wording in Oct 2024 Standards – “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

Part 2 – The SQC Standards

The Standards will be displayed as follows – **NOTE** - the 3rd column has been updated – changed from ‘Guidance’ to ‘**Requirements**’

Standard number / Ref to HACCP	Standard wording	Requirements
<i>It will also be noted in this column if this is a 'Revised' or 'New Standard'</i>		

All amendments to wording of the Standards are as listed below:

STANDARD NUMBER	REVISED / NEW	WORDING FROM OCTOBER 2023 MANUAL	NEW WORDING IN OCTOBER 2024 MANUAL (new wording highlighted in red)
1.5	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>The following NVZ guidelines are set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nitrogen fertiliser must not be applied to cereals/pulses during closed periods Applications must be limited to those which can be readily utilised and are appropriate for the crop They must not normally exceed 25kg/ha (20 units/acre) Where applications are more than 25kg/ha, they may be permitted when the fertiliser is applied in conjunction with sowing, or where there is a specific crop requirement For oilseed rape, applications must not exceed 30kg/ha (25 units/acre) Where higher rates are used, the assessor will ask for justification which can be from a 	<p>Requirements</p> <p>The following NVZ guidelines are set:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nitrogen fertiliser must not be applied to crops during closed periods. 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. Applications must not exceed crop requirements so an N max calculation must be completed for each crop type before any nitrogen is applied (See link here) 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. 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 risk of run off. 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 The total amount of nitrogen that can be spread on any individual field from all other sources of organic manure (other than compost) must not exceed 250 kg N/ha. The total amount of nitrogen from compost (which must comply with PAS100) that can be spread on any individual field in a 24 month period must not exceed 500 kg N /ha, including nitrogen from all other sources of organic manure. All nitrogen fertilisers should be applied accurately All applications of nitrogen fertiliser must be recorded (see summary of record keeping requirements here)

		<p>FACT's registered advisor.</p> <p>See NVZ note for further guidance.</p>	<p>https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2018/10/nitrate-vulnerable-zones-guidance-for-farmers/documents/2.-nvzs-guidance-summary-of-action-programme-rules/2.-nvzs-guidance-summary-of-action-programme-rules/govscot%3Adocument/NVZs%2Bguidance%2B-%2Bsummary%2Bof%2BAction%2BProgramme%2Brules.pdf</p> <p>Note: SQC Assured growers in England must adhere to Defra NVZ Rules and Guidance at this link https://www.gov.uk/guidance/using-nitrogen-fertilisers-in-nitrate-vulnerable-zones</p> <p>Restrictions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • 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. • DEFRA guidance on closed periods must be followed • DEFRA guidance aimed at limiting run off must be followed so consideration given to factors such as soil type, climate and slope • 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.
1.6	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>Unsuitable conditions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground which is frozen solid • Ground which is snow covered • Ground which is waterlogged. 	<p>Requirements</p> <p>All fertilisers must be applied in suitable conditions. This applies to all organic and artificial fertilisers.</p> <p>Unsuitable conditions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground which is frozen solid • Ground which is snow covered • Ground which is waterlogged.
1.9	Revised	<p>Standard</p> <p>Digestate must be PAS110 certified. Detailed records must be kept.</p>	<p>Standard</p>

			Digestate must either be PAS110 certified or home-produced using feed stock exclusively from the member farm. If feed stock is sourced from out with the farm it should be entirely 'green' as per Appendix one. Detailed records must be kept.
1.9	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>Records must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batch records of origin • Delivery records • Application records <p>SQC Growers must ensure that the end customer or merchant will accept crops that have received such treatments.</p> <p>Applications must be in line with NVZ requirements.</p> <p>Advisory note for producers: The SQC AD Scheme is not currently operational and is under review. As part of the review, a consultation will be undertaken with the sector 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>For producer information only: Appendix 1 shows the acceptable list of green feedstocks previously included in the SQC AD Scheme.</p>	<p>Requirements</p> <p>Records for both PAS110 Digestate and home-produced digestate must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Batch records of origin • Delivery records • Application records <p>SQC Growers must note that home produced digestate that is not PAS110 must not include feedstock from outside the farm.</p> <p>Advisory note – home-produced digestate that is not PAS110 must not include feedstock from outside the farm.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>SQC Growers must ensure that the end customer or merchant will accept crops that have received such treatments.</p> <p>Applications must be in line with NVZ requirements.</p> <p>Advisory note for producers: 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>For producer information only: Appendix 1 shows the acceptable list of green feedstocks previously included in the SQC AD Scheme.</p>
NEW 1.13	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>Storage must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be secured against tampering 	<p>Requirements</p> <p>Storage must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be secured against tampering • The grower must have in place a system for contamination, preferably

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grower must have in place a system for contamination, preferably through a banded system. 	<p>through a banded system. For further guidance see PEPFAA code</p>
NEW 1.18	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>This includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fuel Oils Liquid Fertiliser <p>For further guidance see Technical Note (TN731): Nitrogen Recommendations for Cereals, Oilseed Rape and Potatoes and Nutrient Management Guide (RB209) and PEPFAA code.</p>	<p>Requirements</p> <p>This includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fuel Oils <p>For further guidance see PEPFAA code.</p>
2.14	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>This CoC must be relevant to the sprayer/applicator and are as follows:</p> <p>PA1: Principles of Safe Handling and Application of Pesticides PA2: Safe Application of Pesticides Using Self Propelled, Mounted, Trailed Horizontal Boom Sprayers PA3: Safe Application of Pesticides Using Variable Geometry Boom or Broadcast Sprayers PA4: Safe Application of Pelleted or Granular Pesticides Using Mounted or Trailed Applicators PA5: Safe Application of Pesticides Using Boat Mounted Equipment</p>	<p>Requirements</p> <p>This CoC must be relevant to the sprayer/applicator and are as follows:</p> <p>PA1: Principles of Safe Handling and Application of Pesticides PA2: Safe Application of Pesticides Using Self Propelled, Mounted, Trailed Horizontal Boom Sprayers PA3: Safe Application of Pesticides Using Variable Geometry Boom or Broadcast Sprayers PA4: Safe Application of Pelleted or Granular Pesticides Using Mounted or Trailed Applicators PA5: Safe Application of Pesticides Using Boat Mounted Equipment PA6: Safe Application of Pesticides using Pedestrian Handheld Equipment PA7: Safe Application of Pesticides from the Air PA8: Safe Mixing and Transferring of Pesticides PA9: Safe Application of Pesticide Mists, Fogs and Smokes PA10: Safe Dipping of Plant Material in Pesticides PA11: Safe Treatment of Seeds with Pesticides PA12: Safe Application of Pesticides to Plant Material During a Continuous Flow Process</p>

		<p>PA6: Safe Application of Pesticides using Pedestrian Handheld Equipment</p> <p>PA7: Safe Application of Pesticides from the Air</p> <p>PA8: Safe Mixing and Transferring of Pesticides</p> <p>PA9: Safe Application of Pesticide Mists, Fogs and Smokes</p> <p>PA10: Safe Dipping of Plant Material in Pesticides</p> <p>PA11: Safe Treatment of Seeds with Pesticides</p>	<p>PA13: Safe Sub Surface Application of Liquid Pesticides</p> <p>PA-SC: Safe Application of Pesticides Using Specialist Equipment</p> <p>PA-RPM: Responsible Pesticide Management</p>
2.15	Revised	<p>Standard</p> <p>All sprayer operators must undergo Continual Professional Development (CPD) during the current year.</p>	<p>Standard</p> <p>All sprayer operators must undergo Continual Professional Development (CPD) during the current scheme year.</p>
2.15	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>Operators have two options regarding maintaining their CPD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an SQC Sprayer Operator Course annually • Become a NRoSO member and maintain an annual record of 10 CPD points. <p>Please note that attendance on any other sprayer operator course will NOT cover the operator without NRoSO membership.</p>	<p>Requirements</p> <p>Operators have two options regarding maintaining their CPD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a BASIS approved Sprayer Operator Course annually i.e. within the current scheme year OR • Become a NRoSO member and maintain an annual record of 10 CPD points. <p>Please note: attendance on any other sprayer operator course i.e. not a BASIS course, will NOT cover the operator without NRoSO membership.</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>Growers who have passed their NPTC exam during the current Scheme year will be granted a year's grace for CPD.</p> <p>Growers attending a SQC Sprayer Operator Course which takes place AFTER the scheme assessment will be 'non approved' until the course is complete. Once attendance has been confirmed through Ringlink, the grower will be approved. This will not affect selling ability for the previous harvest crop.</p>	
2.17	Revised	<p>Standard</p> <p>All pesticide application equipment must be tested under the National Sprayer Testing Scheme (NSTS) so that a valid test certificate is in place at the time of spray applications.</p>	<p>Standard</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>
2.17	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p>	<p>Requirements</p> <p>These sprayers must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tested under NSTS annually • If new, application equipment must be tested before use • Issued with a NSTS certificate if imported with a mutually recognised foreign test certificate
2.18	Revised	<p>Standard</p> <p>Where the sprayer has a boom of less than 3m and the grower is not undertaking annual NSTS</p>	<p>Standard</p> <p>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</p>

		testing, the SQC Sprayer Self-Assessment form must be completed.	
2.18	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>The SQC Self-Assessment form must be completed and a detailed record of maintenance checks and any replacement parts must also be recorded.</p>	<p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boom sprayers less than 3 metres must be NSTS tested before 5 years old and retested every 6 years • An annual SQC Sprayer Self-Assessment form must be completed for sprayers with booms less than 3 metres which have not been NSTS tested • The SQC Sprayer Self-Assessment form must detail a record of maintenance checks and replacement parts • Slug pellet and granular applicators must be NSTS tested before 5 years old and retested every 6 years
2.19	Revised	<p>Standard</p> <p>Sprayer calibrations must be carried out and a record completed.</p>	<p>Standard</p> <p>All PPP applicators, including any contractor applicators, must be calibrated and a record kept.</p>
2.20	Removed	<p>Standard</p> <p>Standards 2.17, 2.18 and 2.19 also apply to Sprayer Contractors.</p>	<p>This Standard has been removed from the document as all mention of Sprayer Contractors added to Standards 2.17, 2.18 and 2.19</p>
2.21			<p>2.20 (Given that Standard 2.20 has been removed, Standard 2.21 now becomes Standard 2.20)</p>
3.3	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>Records must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A record of the actual or estimated weights of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) (EU) 2018/2001 compliant crop going into store • Records of loads taken out of store must be kept, with reference to weighbridge tickets 	<p>Requirements</p> <p>Records must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A record of the actual or estimated weights of the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) (EU) 2018/2001 compliant crop going into store • Records of loads taken out of store must be kept, with reference to weighbridge tickets • 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 • 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

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • 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 • If a grower has grain stores in more than one location, each site must have an individual record • Assessors will check the set up of the mass balance system during the initial assessment. If requested, all growers shall make available to assessors/CB all mass balance data in advance of the planned assessment • Assessors will check that any additional sites have their own mass balance records; details of input and outputs 	<p>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</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a grower has grain stores in more than one location, each site must have an individual record • If requested, all growers shall make available all mass balance data in advance of the planned assessment
3.4	Revised	<p>Standard</p> <p>Growers are required to identify fields at risk from ergot and take specific management action.</p>	<p>Standard</p> <p>Growers are required to identify fields at risk from crop contaminants and take specific management action.</p>

3.4	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fields with ergot present in the previous scheme year should be recorded • Fields where ergot is identified in season should be harvested and stored separately to avoid contaminating larger bulks. • Management plans may include actions such as controlling grass weed hosts. <p>Growers should consider and minimise the risk of other contaminants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical contaminants such as plastics from compost applications, or lead pellets from shooting • Crop contaminants such as HEAR oilseed rape or crops that might contain allergens 	<p>Requirements</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fields with ergot present in the previous scheme year should be recorded • Fields where ergot is identified in season should be harvested and stored separately to avoid contaminating larger bulks. • Management plans may include actions such as controlling grass weed hosts. • Crop contaminants such as HEAR oilseed rape • Crops that might contain allergens • Physical contaminants such as plastics from compost applications, or lead pellets from shooting
3.5	Revised	Standard	<p>Standard</p> <p>All wheat growers must complete a Mycotoxin Risk Assessment</p>

		Mycotoxin Risk Assessments must be completed by all growers who are growing wheat	
5.2	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <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>Records must be kept of this.</p>	<p>Requirements</p> <p>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>Records must be kept of this.</p>
5.3	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <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>Requirements</p> <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>Note: 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>
6.1	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>It is the grower's responsibility to ensure that all lorries and trailers are clean and dry prior to use.</p> <p>If equipment is non-dedicated or has ever been used for transportation of organic material,</p>	<p>Requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the grower's responsibility to ensure that all lorries and trailers are clean and dry prior to use. • 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. • Cleaning records must be kept

		it must be washed with a food grade disinfectant prior to use.	
6.2	Revised	<p>Producer Guidance</p> <p>It is the grower's responsibility to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All lorries and trailers are clean and dry prior to loading • All lorries and trailers are fit for purpose to carry crops • Non-dedicated trailers have been washed with food grade disinfectant and proof of this has been seen and retained • All lorries/trailers are covered during transit • Individual merchant requirements are met. <p>Records of this must be kept.</p>	<p>Requirements</p> <p>It is the grower's responsibility to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All lorries and trailers are clean and dry prior to loading • All lorries and trailers are fit for purpose to carry crops • Non-dedicated trailers have been washed with food grade disinfectant and proof of this has been seen and retained • All lorries/trailers are covered during transit • Individual merchant requirements are met. • Cleaning records of lorries/trailers and tarpaulins must be kept.