



TASCC

TRADE ASSURANCE SCHEME
FOR COMBINABLE CROPS

SCHEME MANUAL



Photo: Yara

EFFECTIVE FROM
JULY 1ST 2010

TASCC operates under EN45011/
ISO Guide 65 Accreditation



Scheme Manual

Trade Assurance Scheme for Combinable Crops

TASCC at a glance

From farm gate



TASCC Haulage Code



TASCC Merchant Code



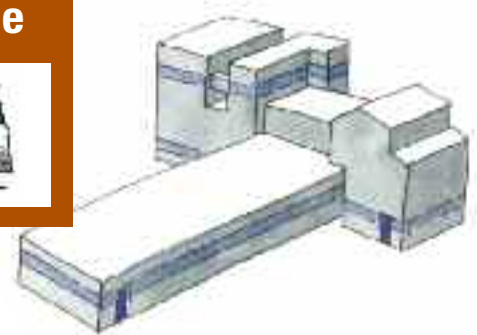
TASCC Testing Code



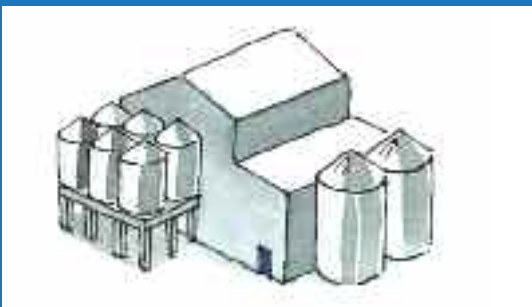
TASCC Haulage Code



End User



TASCC Storage Code



Trade Assurance Scheme for Combinable Crops Scheme Manual

Contents	Page
1 Introduction _____	5
2 TASCC participation _____	6
3 Interpretation _____	6
4 Scheme rules _____	8
5 Passport stickers _____	8
6 Verification _____	9
7 Scope of TASCC _____	10
8 Certificate suspension and withdrawal _____	12
9 Complaints _____	12
10 Appeals _____	13

This document supersedes any information on TASCC published in earlier AIC Member Briefings and other documents.

An update will be published for February 1st 2012.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The Trade Assurance Scheme for Combinable Crops (TASCC) is a voluntary scheme developed by the Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC) in response to:
- 1.1.1** The farm crop assurance schemes developed in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
 - 1.1.2** Growing demand from farmers and end-users for assurance that raw material supplies have been treated responsibly during their post-farm gate transport and storage.
 - 1.1.3** Moves in both the UK and EU to regulate food safety more closely.
-
- 1.2** TASCC aims to protect and build upon the integrity of farm assurance between the farm gate and delivery to the first processor. It provides a credible independent verification that the trade is meeting its legal obligations under food and feed legislation and associated codes of practice. Both farmers and end users have been fully consulted during the development of the TASCC protocols.
-
- 1.3** TASCC is owned and managed by AIC, which developed and implemented the scheme. It is totally separate from UK farm assurance schemes.
-
- 1.4** TASCC requires an independent verification that the participant fully complies with current versions of the following codes of practice, as applicable to a company's operations:
- *AIC TASCC Code of Practice for Road Haulage of Combinable Crops and Animal Feeds*
 - *AIC TASCC Code of Practice for the Storage of Combinable Crops and Animal Feeds*
 - *AIC TASCC Code of Practice for Testing Facilities of Combinable Crops*
 - *AIC TASCC Code of Practice for the Merchanting of Combinable Crops*
-
- 1.5** TASCC approval demonstrates that a company meets the standards required of raw material suppliers to those feed compounders belonging to the AIC Universal Feed Assurance Scheme (UFAS) – an independent verification of the AIC Code of Practice for the Manufacture of Safe Compound Animal Feedingstuffs.
-
- 1.6** By applying for certification to TASCC, the applicant agrees that, if accepted, they will comply with the requirements of relevant TASCC codes of practice and the TASCC Scheme Manual.
-
- 1.7** Where, in order to determine whether there has been any breach of the TASCC rules, it is necessary to request an immediate assessment, the cost of such an assessment (additional to the routine annual assessment) and also any further assessment(s) to check if any non-conformances identified by the verifier have been rectified or otherwise have been carried out, shall be at the sole cost of the applicant or participant – in accordance with the provisions of section 4 (Scheme Rules) and section 8 (Certificate suspension and withdrawal).
-
- 1.8** The Applicant or Participant will have no claim against any officers, members or employees of AIC in the event of expulsion, suspension or a lesser punishment and/or the publication thereof as appropriate, nor have any claim against any of the above for any damages and/or compensation or costs for any financial loss occasioned thereby.

2. TASCC participation

- 2.1** TASCC is open to any company involved in the trading or testing of combinable crops and transport or storage of combinable crops and animal feeds, subject to paying the registration fee and complying with the scheme rules.
-
- 2.2** A register of participants is on AIC's website at: www.agindustries.org.uk
-
- 2.3** **Electronic Communication**
The participant must provide the certification body with an up to date electronic means of communication. This is preferably an email address. Where this is not possible a fax number or mobile number should be provided.
-

3. Interpretation

3.1 Abbreviations

AIC	Agricultural Industries Confederation
BS	British Standard
BSI	British Standards Institution
CLAS	Campden Laboratory Accreditation Scheme
Defra	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
FEMAS	AIC Feed Materials Assurance Scheme
FOSFA	Federation of Oils, Seeds and Fats Association
FTWG	Flour Testing Working Group
GTP	Good Trading Practice
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
HGCA	Home-Grown Cereals Authority
IBD	Institute of Brewing and Distilling
ISO	International Standards Organisation
ISTA	International Seed Testing Association – Association Internationale d'Essais de Semences
MAGB	Maltsters Association of Great Britain
nabim	National Association of British and Irish Millers
SCOPA	Seed Crushers and Oil Processors Association
TASCC	AIC Trade Assurance Scheme for Combinable Crops
UFAS	AIC Universal Feed Assurance Scheme
UKAS	United Kingdom Accreditation Service

3. Interpretation continued

- 3.2** Recognised source-assured combinable crops schemes:
- Red Tractor Farm Assurance Crops
 - Scottish Quality Cereals Scheme
 - Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assured Scheme
 - Irish Grain Assurance Scheme
 - Genesis Cereals Assurance Scheme
 - Global Gap (UK grain only)
 - A proven equivalent UK combinable crop assurance scheme recognised as such by AIC
-
- 3.3** Recognised assurance schemes for merchant suppliers:
- 3.3.1** for food/feed use:
- TASCC Code of Practice for Merchanting of Combinable Crops or
 - UFAS Merchants Code of Practice or
 - COCERAL GTP, GTAS, QS or
- 3.3.2** for Storage only:
- TASCC
 - UFAS
 - FEMAS
 - COCERAL
 - GTAS
 - LIFFE
-
- 3.4** Recognised testing facilities schemes:
- UKAS
 - CLAS
 - TASCC Testing Facilities
 - ISO17025
 - UFAS
-
- 3.5** Recognised haulage schemes:
- GTAS (Transport by Road)
 - PDV (GMP B 4.1 Animal Feed Road Transport)
-

4. Scheme rules

- 4.1** This TASCC code of practice is effective from July 1st 2010.
-
- 4.2** In order to become a certified participant, applicants shall:
- 4.2.1** Apply for certification by completing a registration form and returning it to the scheme certification body. The applicant must confirm that they agree to comply with the scheme manual, the relevant TASCC codes of practice and the certification body's scheme regulations.
 - 4.2.2** Liaise with the scheme certification body over the quotation.
 - 4.2.3** Pay the annual registration fee and audit fee.
 - 4.2.4** Arrange to have an audit visit from a verifier trained and approved by the certification body.
-
- 4.3 UPDATED** When the applicant has been audited, and corrected any non-compliances that may have been identified, the certification body will issue a certificate of conformity and add the successful applicant to the participants list on the web site. Participants must check certificate for accuracy and must inform the Certification Body immediately if any discrepancies are found.
-
- 4.4** The initial certificate of conformity will be valid from the date on which the applicant demonstrated compliance with the codes of practice and expire 60 days after the anniversary of the date of the initial audit. Subsequent certificates will be valid for 12 months from expiry date of the previous certificate.
-
- 4.5** Participants that wish to continue in the scheme must complete the renewal form which will be sent by the scheme certification body prior to 1st July each year. The renewal form must be returned along with the appropriate registration fee to the scheme certification body by the date shown.
-
- 4.6** Participants will be contacted prior to the anniversary of their audit to arrange a surveillance visit which must take place at least 60 days prior to the expiry of the certificate to allow non-conformances to be rectified.
-
- 4.7** Participants shall comply with the scheme requirements at all times as defined in this scheme manual and the codes of practice.
-
- 4.8** Participants shall advise the scheme certification body of any changes to the business, typically but not limited to:
- 4.8.1** Company ownership
 - 4.8.2** Scope of operations
 - 4.8.3** Key management
 - 4.8.4** Change of contact details
 - 4.8.5** Participants must notify the Certification Body of any new store or reintroduced stores before they use them. The Certification Body reserves the right to inspect the stores before use although the participant will be clearly instructed on the next step at the time.
-
- 4.9** Participants and applicants shall advise the scheme certification body in the event that they are the subject of legal action that relates to TASCC activities.

5. Passport stickers

- 5.1** Grain passport stickers shall be available to participants that hold a current and valid certificate of conformity for use where grain from assured farms is bulked in a TASCC-approved central store.

5. Passport stickers continued

- 5.2 UPDATED** The sticker shall enable farm and trade assurance to be easily identified at the end user intake. Stickers shall relate to the participant's certificate year and shall carry the participant's individual TASCC reference and certificate expiry date.

N.B. TASCC participants should be aware of Red Tractor Farm Assurance Crops 'temporary holding', 'production only' or 'P' stickers. Where only temporary holding facilities are available for storage of grain on farms, or where grain is moved directly from the combine, such members will be classed as 'Production Only' and membership numbers will be prefixed with the letter 'P'. The stickers can only be used by farmers up to 30th September, or four weeks after harvest, whichever is later. Goods with combinable crops passports (grain passports) which arrive on site after these dates may be classed as non-assured. AIC advises participants to check contracts against the issuer of the 'P' stickers to identify non storage members and schedule collections from these farms as a priority. SFQC in Scotland do not operate a "P" sticker system.

- 5.3** Stickers must only be used for UK assured grain grown under approved schemes in section 3.2.

- 5.4** If evidence is found that there has been misuse of TASCC, or any other assurance sticker, then appropriate action will be taken by the certification body and this action may result in suspension.

- 5.5** New participants to the TASCC scheme will receive 500 stickers free of charge on completion and return of action points and payment after the initial audit. These stickers are only valid for the TASCC scheme year and do not relate to the harvest (crop) year. The participant must make contact with AIC so that the stickers can be ordered and dispatched. Existing participants will have to purchase new stickers relating to the dates on their certificate. To order the stickers, participants must contact Nick Palik at AIC on 01733 385250 or email nick.palik@agindustries.org.uk

6. Verification

- 6.1 UPDATED** The verifier will conduct an audit of a participant's compliance with the codes of practice on an annual basis. The verifier shall be given access to all relevant information needed to confirm compliance with the scheme and the right to inspect a random sample of third parties subcontracted to perform work covered by the codes of practice, at the participant's cost.

After demonstrating satisfactory compliance with the TASCC Haulage Code of Practice participants will be able to opt for either a standard assessment or a collection/delivery site assessment and submission of requested information.

The new option for hauliers is achieved by a combination of collection/delivery site assessment and submission of requested information. This will benefit the haulier by not having to take vehicles/drivers out of work to conduct the TASCC assessment. This option is by invitation and at the discretion of the certification body.

Participants who choose this option will go to a programme of two years of collection/ delivery site assessment/ submission of requested information and one year's standard assessment.

- 6.2** At the end of each audit, the verifier will provide a written report and identify non-compliances, if any. Once a participant has rectified areas of non-compliance to the satisfaction of the verifier and within time limits specified in paragraphs 6.2.2 and 6.2.3, the certification body will issue a TASCC certificate of compliance.

- 6.2.1** Any major food safety non-conformance shall result in immediate suspension of the TASCC participant. See also 9.1.
- 6.2.2** Participants shall advise the certification body of proposed corrective actions within 30 days of the audit.
- 6.2.3** Participants shall ensure that all corrective action is fully implemented and complete within 60 days of the audit.

6. Verification continued

- 6.3** Participants who have no vehicles, storage facilities or testing facilities of their own, shall be required to provide the verifier with evidence during their audit that all subcontractors for these services comply with the scheme protocols.
- 6.4** Verifiers shall avoid carrying out audits during the harvest period, except with the agreement of the company concerned.
- 6.5** AIC shall reveal the identity and TASCC status behind a TASCC reference accompanying a load at a purchaser's request.
- 6.6** Complaints and appeals shall be directed to the certification body and will be handled in the manner covered by sections 10 and 11.
- 6.7 NEW** As from February 2012, the Certifying Body must ensure that the same auditor will not audit the same company beyond a consecutive 3 year period. An auditor should have a break of at least 1 scheme year.

7. Scope of TASCC

7.1 General

- 7.1.1** Applicants must identify the scope of their activities on the scheme application form. Subsequent amendments to the scope of the participant's business must be communicated to the scheme certification body in accordance with 4.8.
- 7.1.2** Applicants can choose the codes of practice they wish to have covered by the scope of their TASCC certification. Applicants cannot, however, omit codes of practice that are integral to activities that are included within the scope of certification.

Where a business entity operates on more than one site, then each site must be audited before it can be certificated. In cases where multiple sites are audited as part of a surveillance assessment programme then a sample of sites may be audited each year provided that all sites are audited by the end of the third full year of certification.

Auditing a sample of sites is permitted where a company operates from more than one site and operates a common quality system at each site.

7.2 Code of Practice for Merchanting of Bulk Combinable Crops

- 7.2.1** Merchants trading combinable crops in bulk must achieve certification to the Merchants Code of Practice. Where merchants also undertake storage, haulage and testing facilities, then these activities must be included in the scope of certification.
- NEW 7.2.2** For the importing or exporting of combinable crops and feed materials, the AIC International Trading and Shipping module can be used. The module can be downloaded via the AIC website or TASCC CD.

7.3 Code of Practice for Road Haulage of Combinable Crops and Animal Feeds

- NEW 7.3.1** TASCC hauliers must only employ non-certified wholly contracted hauliers. All other hauliers employed by the TASCC haulier must be TASCC certified or equivalent.

7. Scope of TASCC continued

7.4 Code of Practice for the Storage of Combinable Crops and Animal Feeds

- 7.4.1** Participants must comply with the Code of Practice for the Storage of Combinable Crops and Animal Feed Materials in all stores, either owned or directly leased for commercial purposes, which are used for the storage of combinable crops. Leased stores are those where the intake and management of the store are under the direct control and management of a TASCC participant. Only stores named on the certificate are assured.
- 7.4.2** TASCC does not cover stores subject to separate systems of inspection and/or standards, such as:
- 7.4.2.1 Stores under contract to the Rural Payments Agency.
- 7.4.3** Stores are also required to comply with the Testing Facility Code of Practice at any temporary or permanent site where they carry out analysis of grain, pulse, and oilseeds on which contractual decisions are based. If testing is carried out for in-house, or store monitoring purposes, the stores do not need approval to the Testing Facility Code.

7.5 Code of Practice for Testing Facilities of Combinable Crops

- 7.5.1** Testing facilities are required to seek separate certification to the testing facilities code where they carry out analysis on which contractual decisions are based.
-
- 7.5.2** Where the test facility is operated as an in-house service in a store, the participant need only comply with the Storage Code and this will be assessed during the store's audit and covered by the store's certificate of conformity.
-
- 7.5.3** Testing facilities that hold formal accreditation (eg UKAS, CLAS or other recognised by AIC) shall be exempt from the need for TASCC certification provided that all analysis carried out under TASCC is covered by the scope of their formal accreditation.
-

8. Certificate suspension and withdrawal

- 8.1** The scheme certification body, in conjunction with AIC, may suspend or withdraw a participant's certificate of conformity when the participant has:
- 8.1.1** Non-conformances that are not resolved within the required time limits.
 - 8.1.2** Serious non-compliances that have, or are likely to have, an adverse effect on product safety or legality. Non-conformances against requirements printed in ***bold italics*** in each code will result in suspension.
 - 8.1.3** Failed to pay annual registration or audit fees.
-
- 8.2** Suspended participants must demonstrate to the certification body that the non-conformances have been resolved in order to have certification re-instated. A follow-up assessment by the scheme verifier to confirm this shall take place.
-
- 8.3** Participants that do not demonstrate to the scheme certification body that non-conformances have been resolved within 1 month of suspension will have their certificates of conformity withdrawn.
-
- 8.4** Participants that have their certification withdrawn would need to apply as new participants if they wish to regain certification. Withdrawn participants will remain on the register for 18 months.
-
- 8.5** The scheme certification body will automatically update the register on the AIC web site with details of a participant's changed certification status.
-
- 8.6** Suspended or withdrawn participants may not claim to be TASCC-approved, nor undertake contracts that specify TASCC registration without advising the client.
-
- 8.7 UPDATED** Where a TASCC participant has their certification suspended or withdrawn, the scheme certification body will be entitled to provide an explanation of the reasons for suspension or withdrawal, on request, to other persons or organisations who own or have a contract with the suspended or withdrawn participant at the time of the suspension or withdrawal.

9. Complaints

- 9.1** Complaints about either a TASCC participant or the scheme certification body should be directed to the scheme certification body where they will be acknowledged, reviewed and actions taken to resolve the cause of any problems.
-
- 9.2** The scheme certification body is accredited by the UK Accreditation Service (UKAS) and works to strict codes of conduct. If participants are not satisfied with the way in which the scheme certification body handles the complaint, they should refer the matter to AIC.

10. Appeals

10.1	A participant has the right of appeal against decisions made by the scheme certification body.
10.2	Appeals shall be made in writing to the scheme certification body within 14 days of being advised of a decision that is the subject of appeal.
10.3	The scheme certification body acknowledges appeals and an initial investigation is made by the certification body's scheme manager.
10.4	If the scheme manager does not support the decision against which the appeal is based then the scheme certification body will correct the erroneous decision.
10.5	If the scheme manager supports the decision on which the appeal is based then an independent panel, which will include an AIC representative, is convened to handle the appeal. The scheme certification body, AIC and the participant are entitled to attend the appeals panel and present information to the panel.
10.6	The independent appeals panel makes a ruling based on information supplied during the hearing.
10.7	The ruling of the appeals panel is binding and final on the scheme certification body and participant.
10.8	The appeals panel will be convened within 30 days of receipt of the appeal.

Notes

Notes



Agricultural Industries Confederation
Confederation House
East of England Showground
Peterborough
PE2 6XE

T 01733 385230

F 01733 385270

E enquiries@agindustries.org.uk

W www.agindustries.org.uk