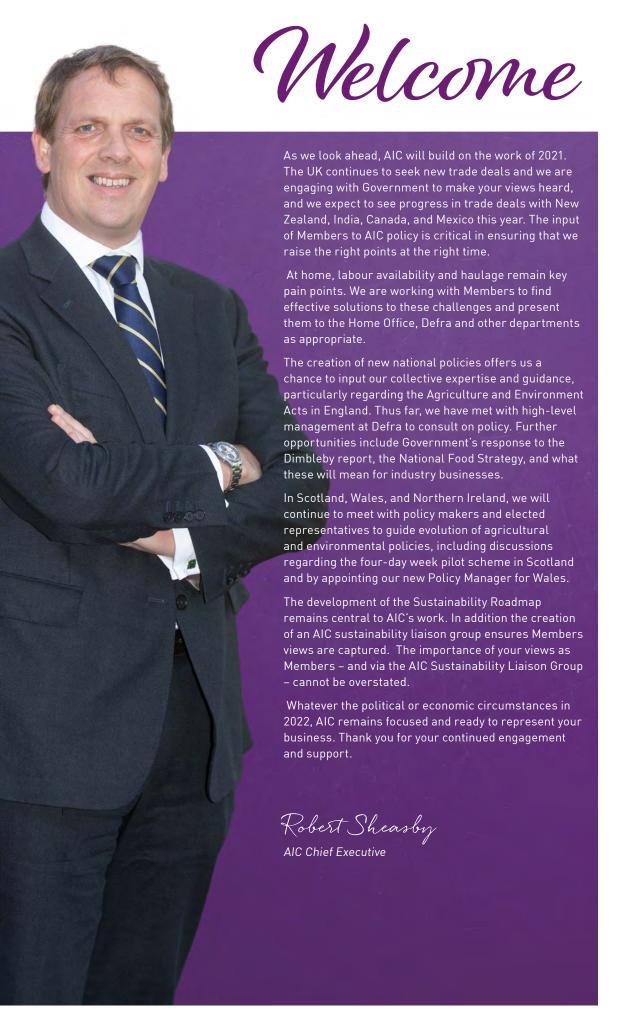
# ADDINGVALUE

## FOR AIC MEMBERS

2022 I Working in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture





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## **Policy**

## Keeping trade moving

The signing of the Trade and Co-operation Agreement (TCA) left bodies like AIC to deal with its fallout and interpret the new trading situation for our Members. AIC rose to that challenge and acted swiftly to lobby collectively on behalf of entire sectors in certain areas (seed equivalence for example) and on an individual basis (such as molasses).

All Members who trade – both for imports and exports – have faced ongoing challenges because of these changes. Thankfully, AIC has been successful in resolving concerns where they arise and expedited those concerns to the relevant parties.

We have continued to lobby MPs and Peers across all parties to outline the problems faced by Members. We have also enabled direct access between Members and Government trade teams, allowing your voice to be heard and enabling those

Progress is ongoing. AIC stands ready to represent all Members and ensure trade remains as frictionless as possible.



## Mitigating the impact of Covid-19

AIC has been speaking regularly to Government about the worker shortages caused by Covid-19, which have affected the entire supply chain. As a result of our lobbying, AIC Members have been included on exemption lists for double-jabbed workers during the "pingdemic" last summer, allowing them to fulfil their jobs.

AIC, along with other organisations, commissioned a labour survey on the problems facing the food supply chain due to these worker shortages. The report has formed a basis for lobbying and galvanised the whole industry in calls to back a 12-month recovery visa.



## **Policy**

## Legislative agenda

AIC lobbied strongly to influence the Environment and Agriculture bills (now Acts) as they progressed through Parliament.

On the Agriculture Act, AIC called for the removal of damaging clauses that would have prevented Plant Protection Products being applied across many farms; these proposed amendments were then successfully voted down.

AIC was also instrumental in lobbying to explain the practical issues raised by the due diligence on forest risk commodities in the Environment Bill (now Act). While we are still reviewing the provisions, the consultation has made it clear that proportionality and reasonableness principles have been built in, as we requested.

AIC also worked with the National Food Strategy (NFS) team in Defra to ensure realistic and productive outcomes for the agrisupply industry, during which we met with Henry Dimbleby, the NFS team, and senior civil servants. The eventual NFS recommendation proved to be pragmatic and balanced, which should provide welcome relief for many Members businesses.





## **Priorities for 2022**

- 1 Ensure that media, politicians, and key stakeholders (NFU et al) are fully informed and briefed over emerging challenges relating to global labour and product shortages, and their effect on on-farm inputs.
- 2 Build on the success of our lobbying work to bring more Members face to face with civil servants across different policy teams, as well as with MPs and Peers.
- 3 Continue to keep Members informed and engaged with us on policy development though our new quarterly policy report and interactive tools such as Member webinars.
- 4 Expand and build the agricultural policy stakeholder network in all parts of the UK, including farming unions, retailers, and food trade associations.



Further information:
Ed Barker, Head of Policy and External Affairs
ed.barker@agindustries.org.uk

## **Policy - Environment**

## Influencing Environmental Land Management scheme development

The design of the Environmental Land Management scheme (ELM) accelerated in 2021, with Defra making four separate formal announcements on development progress. Whilst these received mixed opinion across the industry, AIC's work behind the scenes in the co-design process with Defra allowed us to positively influence the standards' drafting and direction of policy development.

In particular, we were successful in lobbying for changes around the reduction of fertiliser application in the initial draft of the Arable and Horticulture Standard and the Grassland Standard. The result is to replicate good industry practice around nutrient management planning.

Similar work in the development of other Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) standards has occurred throughout the year. Despite Defra's asset-based approach to standards, and an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) standard initially appearing 'too difficult', our persistence paid off and the IPM standard was confirmed in Defra's winter announcement. There is also the prospect of a standalone nutrient management standard.

As development in these areas begins, our engagement in the co-design process over the coming year continues to be vital.

In respect of the wider scheme development, we responded to Government's Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) committee's call for evidence on the development of Environmental Land Management and the Agricultural Transition. AIC added weight to industry-wide arguments around engagement, timeframes, scheme awareness, and value for money, as well as highlighting the benefits that Members can bring in terms of on-farm advice provision.

Our Test and Trial project, demonstrating the value of farm advice in delivering environmental benefits alongside productive farm businesses, will be completed by the end of March 2022. The format has allowed us to provide Defra with standalone



- Ongoing AIC representation on scheme development for agri-policy.
- Roll out of Government decision on ammonia emissions and fertilisers.
- Member and AIC action to deliver for more efficient nutrient management on farms.
- New guidance for risk-based approach interpretation of Farming Rules for Water (England).



## Delivering the AIC Sustainability Roadmap - Update

AIC's Roadmap for a Sustainable Food Chain has the goal of implementing a consistent approach across all sectors and reaching our joint ambitions by 2050. Members have risen to the challenge, making public statements about their own targets, initiatives, and direction of travel, that will help make the Roadmap's vision a reality.

Policymakers and companies up and down the food and drink supply chain are aligning their thinking and a common language in roundtable meetings is helping to reduce confusion while discussing the challenges ahead. Being aligned across the supply chain will help to ensure a level playing field and build confidence within businesses.

We are encouraging Members to establish or build on their own starting points, with AIC providing policy support, additional briefings, and services as needed. This can be done via the committees or by simply picking up the phone. Our sector heads always want to hear about any concerns or knowledge gaps.

Achieving true sustainability (socially, economically, and environmentally) requires a long-term commitment. Reporting percent changes in the areas relevant to Member's businesses, which are qualified and or quantified using standardised tools, data and systems that are reputable, with strong scientific foundation, and which are economically robust, will demonstrate the progress made.

## AIC and AIC Services Sustainability Liaison Group

The AIC and AIC Services Sustainability Liaison Group has formed to facilitate engagement between numerous sectors and interrelations between AIC and AIC Services. Key outputs from this group will include standardisation of evidence, common consensus on definitions, and metrics for assessing progress.

AIC stakeholders will play a key role in these discussions. Members can now feed in their questions and concerns for discussion in our open forum. Any proposals for cross services and further policy support will be considered by the Sector Committees, the AIC Policy Forum and AIC Services.

## Sustainability training

Sustainability training is being made available in the following ways:

- 1 For AIC company boards and senior managers
- 2 For operational managers
- 3 Sector by sector

All of these are founded on the same overarching principles and will cover sourcing, products, services, and on-farm advice. Early testing through our Feed Adviser Register (FAR) modules has resulted in positive feedback. We will roll out more training throughout 2022.





- Recognition of access to genetic potential in achieving many farm sustainability goals.
- 2 Advancing due diligence in feed material sourcing.
- 3 How to evaluate progress in Integrated Pest Management.
- How to target Farm Nutrient Balance and Nitrogen Use Efficiencies.

#### **Scotland**



In the most recent phase of the pandemic, AIC Scotland worked with Scottish Government officials to ensure critical worker exemptions included those

within the agri-supply industry. This helped to minimise staff absence due to self-isolation requirements, which in turn served to alleviate pressure on supply chains.

#### Pesticide Stakeholder Group

AIC lobbied for the formation of the Pesticide Stakeholder Group, which has created a forum to highlight concerns over pesticide withdrawals directly to Government. There are currently 12 active substances within the arable sector at high risk of withdrawal with a potential value reduction in the tens of millions of pounds.

#### Seed labelling

We worked with SASA to ensure the implementation of OECD seed labelling rules were workable and ensured a level playing field with businesses in other parts of Great Britain. Following AIC lobbying, operators can now print their own labels and speed up the process for exporting seed to the EU and NI.

#### **Priorities**

- Working closely with Scottish Government to ensure common frameworks are finalised and solutions found to minimise regulatory divergence.
- Working with rural stakeholders to develop the case for ensuring gene editing plant breeding techniques can be used in Scotland.
- Continuing to monitor the impacts of Covid-19 and helping to minimise disruption wherever possible.



#### Wales



The AIC Policy Manager role in Wales was created in 2021 to drive greater visibility and establish stronger networks between the Welsh Government,

key stakeholders, and AIC Members. In that short time, we have helped to improve engagement and set the pace for beneficial changes to come.

Working with the Welsh Government, we have lobbied to secure exemptions for critical workers in the agri-supply industry, to minimise staff absences due to self-isolation requirements and associated impacts on supply chains. Latterly, we have been actively supporting Members with calls to extend the driver extension period into the early part of 2022.



#### Priorities for 2022

- Working closely with the Welsh Government to ensure common frameworks are finalised and solutions found to minimise or manage any divergence.
- Input into the second phase consultation of the Welsh Sustainable Farming Scheme to be published in the Summer in the Agriculture
- Act as an active and trusted member of the EU Agri-Food Supply Chain Stakeholders Group meeting chaired by Welsh Government.

Further information: Michael Muncey, AIC Wales, Policy Manager michael.muncey@agindustries.org.uk



#### **Animal Feed**

#### 2022 Outlook

In 2022, AIC will maintain its focus on ensuring that supply chain pressures are managed by the feed industry to ensure the continued supply of high quality and safe animal feed to UK livestock farmers. AIC will also continue to support the feed industry in championing initiatives such as GFLI and Product Environmental Footprint (PEF), and the updated version of the FEFAC Soya Sourcing Guidelines.

The first CPD topic of the year for FAR will reflect this attention on sustainability within the sector. AIC is also developing a training module on game feeds and correct use of medicated feed.

It is anticipated that 2022 will bring some important policy and regulation changes affecting the feed industry, including due diligence proposals, gene editing, implementation of medicated feed and organic farming regulations, and potential changes to regulations around animal byproducts and processed animal proteins.

AIC will continue its engagement with Government and represent Members' interests in the development of policy or changes to legislation in these areas.



Nick Major, Sector Chair. Animal Feed

## Transitioning from zinc oxide

AIC, together with the National Pig Association, Pig Veterinary Society, and Pig Health and Welfare AMU sub-group, held meetings with the Veterinary Medicines Directorate to discuss a practical solution to support the transition away from zinc oxide in piglet diets.

VMD has agreed to allow the use of zinc oxide through to the end of shelf-life for product placed on the market prior to 25th June 2022. This important success for the industry allows a further two-year period for pig producers, vets, and the feed industry to complete the transition to other management measures.

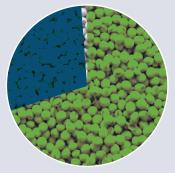


## Soy import data

In 2021, several reports on deforestation and other voices called for the removal of soya and palm oil from animal feed, and for it to be replaced by 'novel' protein sources.

AIC collated and published soy import data on behalf of the industry for the UK Roundtable on Responsible Soya. The data showed that over 70% of soya imported into the UK is responsibly grown and, of the remaining 30%, only 2.5% carries a risk of deforestation. The data will help to balance the debate on soya and shift the focus from removal to responsible production.

SOYA IMPORTED INTO THE UK
70% RESPONSIBLY GROWN



OF THE REMAINING 30%, ONLY 2.5% CARRIES A RISK OF DEFORESTATION

## **Priorities for 2022**

- 1 Continue to ensure that Government and devolved assemblies are fully aware of the supply chain pressures affecting the feed industry.
- 2 Engage with Government and devolved assemblies and agencies on ensuring smooth flow of imported feed materials and additives.
- 3 Continue to engage with Government on removing non-tariff barriers for UK feed exports to EU.
- Launch UK GFLI subset database and tool to Members.





Further information:

James McCulloch, Head of Sector Animal Feed
james.mcculloch@agindustries.org.uk

## **Crop Marketing**

#### 2022 Outlook

2022 is likely to be characterised by supply chain challenges and inflation, but amongst this will be policy development, regulatory divergence, and of course opportunity.

Last year saw the TCA with Europe "bed in" and new trade agreements being struck. This will continue with 2022 seeing places like India, Israel and the Americas (probably not the USA) with new agreements being negotiated. We expect implementation of new policy and policy development across the United Kingdom this year which AIC will engage with to ensure the best possible transition the Common Agricultural Policy and EU framework to the new regulatory framework.

With Autumn 2021 weather being favourable for crop establishment we anticipate a larger harvest in 2022.



Mark Worrell, Head of Sector, Crop Marketing

## **RED2** compliance

The new recast Renewable Energy Directive (RED/Directive (EU) 2018/2001) came into force on 1 July 2021, with compliance monitored via assurance schemes of which the UFAS, TASCC, Red Tractor and SQC schemes all participate. The EU granted 'provisional' approval to all participating schemes over coming months, and the draft Implementing Act to get them fully approved is now published.

AIC made clear to Government the potential impact on the supply chain if a practical solution to meeting the new Directive was not reached in time. At the last minute, Defra and Natural England confirmed that status quo would be able to continue, with grain that is compliant with RED1 automatically compliant with RED2, ensuring no interruption to the supply chain.





#### **Priorities for 2022**

- Work through the inevitable challenges that arise because of checks being placed on imported goods from the EU to GB.
- 2 Continue to work with stakeholders on the UK's ability to export barley to China.

Further information: Ed Barker, Head of Policy and External Affairs ed.barker@agindustries.org.uk

## **Crop Protection & Agronomy**

#### 2022 Outlook

The development of the independent GB regime for Plant Protection Products (PPPs) continues. AIC Members have highlighted to Defra and the Chemicals Regulation Division (CRD) that the impact of additional costs for active substance approvals within the GB market could make it commercially unviable for EU-based PPP manufacturers to support some products. It is vital that the GB regulator works efficiently and contains the costs of the GB regulatory regime to ensure UK farmers and growers can farm sustainably and profitably in the future.



Chris Clayton, Sector Chair, Crop Protection & Agronomy

## **Integrated Pest Management**

Increasing Integrated Pest Management (IPM) uptake is a key goal within the revised National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides (NAP), which reflects Government policy. AIC is clear that Government's vision of IPM must consider the economics and trade-offs for land managers when implementing measures if uptake is to increase.

How IPM is defined will impact all land managers in the UK. Therefore, it is crucial that the definition of IPM within the NAP considers the economic, practicality, sustainability, and integration of these measures if Government's ambition is to be realised.

The draft NAP uses a hierarchal approach to IPM, suggesting that chemical pesticides should only be used when alternatives are ineffective or unavailable. We believe this to be overly restrictive and impractical.

AIC supports a more rounded approach, which may include a combination of measures where appropriate. Our response stressed that it crucial that the definition of IPM is fit for purpose if the NAP is to be a credible document and IPM delivered on farm.

Because the most appropriate IPM measures vary so widely, AIC has developed two infographics: one for the arable sector and one for the horticulture sector. These have been shared with regulators and policy makers to demonstrate the range of measures which IPM encompasses throughout the cropping year.

The publication of the NAP has been delayed until spring 2022. AIC will continue to highlight the positive contribution AIC Members make to helping farmers deliver IPM on farm.



#### **Priorities for 2022**

- 1 Lobbying for a GB plant protection product regime which is efficient and not a barrier to UK food production.
- 2 Helping policy makers understand the extent of IPM advice delivered by AIC Members to farmers and growers across all sectors.
- 3 Promoting AIC Members' extensive trials and on-farm demonstrations which promote IPM and help growers to farm in a more sustainable way.



Further information: Hazel Doonan, Head of Sector Crop Protection hazel.doonan@agindustries.org.uk

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#### **Fertiliser**

#### 2022 Outlook

The short to medium-term outlook for fertiliser supply in 2022 is highly dependent on the gas pricing that impacted European and UK fertiliser production from late 2021. The ongoing effects in terms of production and availability remain uncertain and continue to affect farmer confidence. Gas and fertiliser availability is not just a UK issue but a pan-European one, exacerbated by high global demand for both resources.



Sam Bell, Sector Chair, Fertilisers

#### Solid urea restrictions

AIC had a number of concerns about Government's proposal for the restriction of solid urea in order to help meet UK targets for ammonia reduction. Naturally, this would have severe implications for fertiliser supply and choice for farmers.

Chief among our concerns were that a ban would set a precedent in allowing government to limit what the market was able to offer customers, as well as artificially restricting competition and potentially limiting alternatives in the event of supply disruptions.

AIC's sustainability ambitions for the sector are clear: improving efficiencies of nutrient use on-farm and achieving measurable changes in Nitrogen Use Efficiencies (NUE) in the longer-term are the key to ammonia reduction, rather than an all-or-nothing measure as proposed by Government.

AIC advocated to maintain urea on the market through a commitment to Nitrogen Use Efficiencies – right product, right conditions, right time, and right place – which includes the use of protected or inhibited urea-containing fertilisers when conditions give rise to higher risks of ammonia losses (later in the growing season). Naturally, this will be monitored through Red Tractor and other assurance schemes.

Government has seriously considered our industry proposals as part of a wider consortium commitment to reducing emissions from ureacontaining fertilisers by at least 11.2Kt of ammonia by 2024. Ministers have indicated that they see an advantage in this. We are optimistic that the pending and final announcement will be the correct one.





- 1 UK Fertiliser regulations.
- 2 New outcome-based interpretation of Farming Rules for water.
- Implementation of urea policy for England.
- Sustainability and understanding carbon measurement standards.

#### Seed

#### 2022 Outlook

The return of a more "normal" autumn sowing period means much of the fallout from the past two seasons – which were plagued by extreme weather, the EU exit and the pandemic – may be reset in the 2022 harvest.

However, large levels of uncertainty and frustration remain. AIC continues to support Members in pressing for clarification and consistency in seed movements both in and out of the country.

We are now awaiting the report of an AHDB consultation – for which AIC, in liaison with Members, has highlighted a number of challenges which we believe need addressing – and further developments in new varieties created by utilising gene editing. So far, the news has been positive. The key test will be the commercial viability of this technology and subsequent varieties.

As these and other developments are set to make a positive impact in the Seed sector, AIC will observe and engage at the highest levels, always making sure Member voices and concerns are heard at every step of the journey.



Chris Guest, Sector Chair. Seed

## **EU** seed exports

2021 has been a challenging year for seed sector Members as the impacts of the EU Exit are felt. AIC is working to remove all barriers that limit the ability for Member to export. So far, we have lobbied successfully for the granting of equivalence for UK certified seed of cereal, fodder, beet, vegetable, oil, and fibre plants by the EU, which means that seed could physically be exported to the EU from March 2021 onwards.



#### Plant health checks

Fees for plant health checks began on 1st June 2021 as part of Defra's commitment to 'full cost recovery', and included documentary, identity, and physical inspections on 'high-priority' plants imported from the EU, and documentary checks for regulated plants and plant products.

In May, AIC highlighted to Lords and MPs the significant pressure faced by the seed sector due to changes from EU Exit, naming the plant health check fees in particular. These concerns were articulated in a series of debates, and AIC evidence was cited in both Houses. AIC engagement during 2021 has resulted in a positive outcome for trial seed and higher fees will now no longer be charged.

#### **Priorities for 2022**

1 From July 2022, all seed will need a Phytosanitary Certificate and only 1% of these imports will need prenotification. AIC will be working to ensure that the outcome on notification works best for members in terms of costs and processes required.



ed.barker@agindustries.org.uk

## **Membership & Communications**

#### 2022 Outlook

Our priorities for the year ahead will focus on strengthening our communications and ensuring that Members have every opportunity to make their voice heard, and gain the most value from the array of services, resources, and useful tools available to them.

## **Agribusiness Conference**

AIC's Agribusiness conference was hosted online on 17th November 2021 using a new and improved digital platform which allowed delegate networking. Expert speakers addressed key questions around climate change and what the supply chain and agricultural businesses need to deliver a 'greener' economic recovery.

This was particularly timely; COP26 took place just a few days before the Agribusiness conference and saw 200 countries agree the Glasgow Climate Pact to accelerate action on climate over the next ten years.

Robert Sheasby, Chief Executive of AIC, outlined how Government needs to value the opportunities that new trade deals grant for agri-food businesses, and how working closer with the sector in developing legislation will help avert unnecessary shocks to trade. He proposed that a 25-year Agriculture Plan would complement the Government's 25-year Environment plan.

Farming Minister Victoria Prentis MP addressed audience questions and stressed her desire to help the agri-food industry embed sustainability through three pillars: 'food production, carbon capture, and biodiversity', and avoid so-called 'greenwashing'.

Other speakers took the virtual stage to discuss topics including innovative use of technology, the progress of ELM schemes, lowering carbon in imports, and the struggle for achieving sustainability within supermarket supply chains.

Once again, we saw excellent attendance that included many students and new entrants to the industry. Feedback has been excellent, and we look forward to the next conference in November 2022.



#### AIC launch online declarations

For 2023/2024, our declaration process will go online. This will help make the process easier and more streamlined for Members and AIC. More information will be sent to members closer to the time they are required.

## Membership engagement

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, AIC took the proactive approach of contacting members via Teams or Zoom to hold virtual membership visits in 2021. We continue to support our Members and will utilise these remote tools where it is appropriate to do so.

Further information: Tracy Smith, Membership Services Manager tracy.smith@agindustries.org.uk

#### **AIC Services**

## **Managing Covid-19 restrictions**

AIC Services was determined to maintain integrity of its auditing and certification processes despite the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions. To achieve this, new IT portals were used alongside alternative auditing methods of auditing to ensure the safety of both participants and auditors.

This approach worked well. Processes were relatively free of disruption, and we witnessed no significant food, feed, or fertiliser incidents during this time.

Our and the industries flexibility maintained our earned recognition from Government, and we are proud to have helped the industry work successfully during an otherwise disruptive and stressful time.



John Kelley, Chief Operating Officer

# FAR Qualification in Animal Nutrition and the Environment

The Feed Adviser Register (FAR) Qualification in Animal Nutrition and the Environment, created in partnership with BASIS and the Harper Adams University (HAU), has been accredited as a level 5 educational qualification. This will ensure that FAR training is robust and recognised as key adviser training for the industry.

This is also important for the recognition of professional advisers on farm – both now and in the future – from our stakeholders and Government.





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## **Assurance scheme updates**



Roberta Reeve Technical Manager for AIC Services roberta.reeve@agindustries.org.uk



We launched the new edition of the FIAS scheme standard - a single document, reformatted and updated by the FIAS Working group. Additional templates are provided to support participants. This will ensure the safe, secure, and traceable supply chain for the UK fertiliser sector.





Simon Williams
Technical Manager for AIC Services
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The updated FEMAS Calculator was launched in 2021, offering better functionality for users and an updated list of feed materials with revised risk ratings. This will ensure the safe continuity of feed materials both for the feed and food industry.

Benchmarking of the FEMAS
Responsible Sourcing Module has
been completed by AIC against
the FEFAC Soy Sourcing
Guidelines. This will enable our
standard to be recognised by the
supply chain both from a UK and
international perspective. This
will also support the sustainability
work that our members and
participants are carrying out in
sustainable procurement.



Gill Barrow
Technical Manager for AIC Services
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The new TASCC Scheme was implemented in April following review by industry experts.

Supporting forms, templates and appendices are provided to assist participants. This will ensure that TASCC participants are compliant with the latest legislative and industry requirements, thus ensuring a secure and safety agri-food supply chain.



- Onsite auditing for certification schemes has returned, though we have retained various learnings from our period of remote working. This will ensure feed and food safety as well as fertiliser security and secure the agri-food supply chain from field to fork.
- The FAR Qualification in Animal Nutrition and the Environment will launch in Q2 of 2022. The online core module training will be supported by additional in-person training to work through the knowledge gained and its practical application within each species. This will enable feed advisers to gain an independently accredited qualification which is recognised by industry and academic institutions.

## AIC adds value by



LOBBYING within the UK and Europe on behalf of the supply industry.



**TECHNICAL ADVICE FOR MEMBERS** on a sector by sector basis.



**PARTNERSHIP** with relevant organisations on common issues.



RAISING professional standards in trade assurance and advice.

Working in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture



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