

# MINUTES

<b>Meeting of</b>	Combinable Crop Committee
<b>Held at</b>	GAFTA, Lincoln Fields
<b>Date and time</b>	27 January 2025 13.00 – 16.00
<b>In attendance</b>	<b>Name and Company</b> Tom Wood, Robin Appel (Chair) Mark Worrell, Openfield Angela Gibson, Viterra Chris McCallum, Cefetra Sarah Hynes, Simpsons Ben Schadla-Hall, Dewing Grain Westly Garner, Frontier Robin Barron, EOSF Jonathan Lane, ADM Rose Riby, AIC (secretariat) Ed Barker, AIC Robert Sheasby, AIC Sarah Mann, GAFTA
<b>Apologies</b>	Will Ringrose, ADM (Pulses Rep.)

Summary of Actions	
<b>1.</b>	

<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome, Introductions, and Announcements</b> Sarah Hynes and Westley Garner were welcomed to the committee as representatives for MSP and Frontier.</p> <p><b>Apologies for Absence</b></p> <p><b>Health and Safety &amp; Competition Law Compliance</b> TW reminded everybody of competition law and GDPR, as attached to the bottom of the agenda, and asked everyone not to stray into this area, if anybody finds this does happen to raise their hand to notify RS or TW immediately.</p> <p>TW highlighted that competition law training will be offered to all members on committees.</p> <p>RS reminded everyone that health and safety was considered a precompetitive issue.</p>
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	<b>Conflicts of Interest</b> – none raised
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting</b> There were no issues, and these were noted as correct.
<b>3.</b>	<b>Matters arising – N/A</b> <b>Correspondence</b>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Combinable crop priorities</b></p> <p>These were shared ahead of the meeting; TW acknowledge the challenges ahead in the sector and the importance of being able to work towards and resolve issues.</p> <p>(These are deemed a guide not a prescription)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AIC are committed to ensuring strong representation in the digital passport for an efficient approach to managing food and feed safety data transfer across the supply chain.</li> <li>2. Ensure food security stays a priority and addressing the challenges faced by combinable crop members due to the decreasing land available for crops, ensuring that the government effectively balances the threats to the environment, energy, and food production.</li> <li>3. Collaborating closely with pulse members to ensure that the interests and concerns are effectively addressed, fostering a unified approach to our shared goals</li> </ul> <p><b>*Action</b> – TW to contact Will Ringrose (Pulse rep.)</p> <p><b>Organogram of committee members and priorities</b></p> <p>TW asked if it would be a benefit to create an organogram of what committees each person sits on for awareness. Concern raised if this information was shared. Importance of communicating and working across sectors raised.</p> <p>The committee discussed the structure of its makeup and protocol for minutes of meetings (once signed off) which are published on the AIC website.</p> <p><b>*Action</b> – publication of minutes to be highlighted again to members, to encourage engagement.</p> <p><b>*Action</b> – RR to create a stakeholder map for CC only</p>
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Contaminant proposal paper</b></p> <p>Following a proposal by MW at a previous committee meeting in relation to MRLs, contaminants, issues in the industry and data, a paper was proposed of what a possible contaminant working group could look like for AIC. It is also recognised the UK doesn't have instant access to EFSA data and FSA is lacking data. The AHDB do run a contaminants project which is due to be renewed later in 2025 but questioned if it fit for purpose mainly due to its timeliness.</p> <p>Points of discussion:</p> <p>GAFTA UK trade committee disbanded a year ago.</p> <p>Links to FSA (and other stakeholders) for ongoing dialogue important.</p>

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	<p>The trade implications of the policy is the main challenge (UKTC used to included shippers etc) Historically AIC represented the merchanting sector from a domestic viewpoint and inclusive of contaminants.</p> <p>The suggested paper therefore would give an understanding for a group of people to look at issues on an ongoing basis. ie. Mycotoxins, contaminants and what the impacts are.</p> <p>These issues should be looked at cross sector in AIC with addition of the import export market, being import and export implications of changes in policy and changes in legislation, currently this is discussed in the feed materials committee.</p> <p>Data was discussed and deemed a challenge; AIC submit Don and Zon data for harvesting monitoring (w/UKFM)</p> <p>The possible size of the data source and making it meaningful would have budget and resource implications, (especially around data analysis) with the possibility of changing AIC primary aims.</p> <p>The digital passport would be an obvious vehicle for delivering this, but out of scope.</p> <p>This project would solely be dependent on member business supplying data</p> <p>It was felt a trade (committee) wouldn't sit within the current AIC policy forum</p> <p>Coceral provide an EU tracker, AIC have asked if it can include GB. This would give us a data base looking at UK MRLS alongside EU, and reporting the changes/differences</p> <p><b>*Action</b> - EB to enquire if it is possible to share this (Coceral) information with all AIC members</p> <p>The AHDB contaminants project is a collaboration of industry and AHDB looking at contaminants in the UK crop.</p> <p>AIC and UKFM collate DON/ZON data during the harvest period to determine the mycotoxin risk for each year</p> <p><b>*Action</b> – RR to feed into tender process for AHDB contaminants project – asking for it to be more timely and as broad as possible with a representative sample count.</p> <p><b>*Action</b> - RR to investigate further regards ring testing from the UK grain testing network, and if it could result in a duplication of work</p> <p>Further discussion for the next CCC meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>what are we trying to achieve and how we achieve it</i></li> <li>• <i>Whats already available and how can we bring that together to utilise the information.</i></li> <li>• <i>Do we have data readily available to defend our position should there be an issue</i></li> <li>• <i>Should the AIC board look at the possibility of further collecting data</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Ergot tolerance - AIC contract</b></p> <p>It was proposed at the January contracts meeting to remove the specific reference to ergot from the AIC contract. It was asked of the committee how important this tolerance is or should it be broadened further and talk about all contaminants.</p>
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	<p>Concern raised that if the requirement isn't contained within the contract, it would be misleading to the sellers as deemed not to be an issue. If removed by AIC would be likely business would add to sellers' terms and conditions to ensure its captured.</p> <p>Understanding historically, it was to avoid confusion because of end receivers' terms, and it was a legacy it was in the contract. Questioned why one contaminant included and not the others – should it be referenced to legal limits as creates confusion.</p> <p>Should it be proposed that Dons and Zons were added to the contracts rather than removing ergot.</p> <p>Suggested ergot should stay on the AIC contract, questioned if it should be aligned to the EU MRL. The EU likely to also lead on ergot alkaloid limits. This would result in a big jump of limits, however. But unknown why the UK market is so strict.</p> <p><b>*Action</b> – RR to gain understanding (with Jo Gilbertson) of when ergot at 0.001% was introduced to the contract and why it was set as such a limit</p>
6.	<p><b>Updates</b></p> <p>The AIC policy report has been shared with all committees and members.</p> <p><b>Gene editing</b></p> <p>There was a concern the new government were looking to stall the implementation of this legislation. It has now been confirmed the secondary legislation will be implemented by the end of March. Alongside this there will be a consultation run with the FSA on guidance to businesses looking to place gene edited goods onto the market. AIC believes applications can be made six months on from this (Q4) the legislation is still England only, Scotland are believed to be moving very slowly. AIC with other stakeholders have written to Scottish ministers encouraging them to look at how it can benefit Scottish agriculture. The EU is moving with its own proposal although has been slowed by the recent polls. The working group led by Defra will continue giving an understanding towards internal markets, EB and AG are part of this group.</p> <p>JL asked if AIC should write to Scottish ministers highlighting again the potential impact and issue there could be between the two devolves if Scotland doesn't follow suit with legislation. AIC is currently asking for clarification on the internal marketing act, especially in relation to malting barley.</p> <p><b>*Action</b> – EB to follow up with MAGB and SWA to gain alignment/raise profile on issue</p> <p><b>UK oilseed group</b></p> <p>Since August 2024, AIC has been leading a group of supply chain stakeholders to support the UK's oilseeds sector and find ways to increase the area grown domestically in the face of current challenges. This has been done alongside a complementing group of industry representatives led by United Oilseeds. The UKOG are meeting with a group of green NGOs with the intention of getting buy in on the issue as there are a lot of cross benefits. A letter was written to the minister of which he has agreed to meet with the group and different parts of Defra that look the issues collectively. JL offered a visit to ministers and stakeholders to the crush to aid highlighting the trade issues.</p> <p><b>AIC sustainability action plan</b></p>

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	<p>Launched at conference, AIC are communicating this with both members and stakeholders.</p> <p><b>Food data transparency partnership</b></p> <p>This project is continuing under the new administration highlighting three priorities. 1. Increasing uptake of farm carbon calculators of which there will be a push seen from Gov. on the harmonisation of these to increase confidence. 2. Carbon removals and how we can produce a carbon budget on farm and recognising the role that farmers have in sequestering and storing carbon. 3. Data system design and governance. Minister Zeichner joined the last FDTP meeting and subsequently has written to all members of the eco WG which is the group specifically looking at scope 3 reporting.</p> <p>Highlighted how important DZ sees this project and he is wanting to increase the speed of which this is to be delivered, which could create challenges with such things as accurate data. Been a push from industry to think about this bottom up including more NFU representation.</p> <p><b>*Action all</b> – to feed back any thoughts to AG as representation of the committee. Suggested NUTS11 data would be a good place to start as a baseline.</p> <p>AHDB working very closely on this project and with the Defra team – AHDB also undertaking a baselining project working with 170 farms. The aim of this is to understand the carbon budget in a farm, including emissions and what is being stored to then look at the difference between the two to increase the recognition of what's stored. All farmers participating in this are to use agree-calc. calculator.</p> <p>Data custodian project renamed farm data exchange, a proposal by AHDB to try to resolve the issues around multiple asks for environmental data from farm through a platform. AG and VR meeting with AHDB to look at the C&amp;O supply chain and look at existing data sets/gaps and queries. AHDB also talking to Mondra and Hestia which do already provide emission factors for food products.</p> <p>AHDB internally having discussions regards a cereals and oilseeds roadmap this would be looking at the journey to net zero. Raised why started with animals as they need cereals and oilseeds for feed.</p>
7.	<p><b>EU/UK SPS veterinary agreement</b></p> <p>It is a current Gov priority to negotiate a SPS agreement with the EU. The aim is to improve the trade flow of goods to and from the EU from GB. Defra is currently collecting evidence on the issues related to this. AIC has been feeding in experience of issues.</p> <p><b>*Action</b> - EB asked that members feed into requests from AIC regards this.</p> <p>It was stated at the OFC by the minister, that working with industry they would shape a long-term plan, promising value to the UK food supply chain.</p> <p>It was highlighted how important it will be to include feed and food safety in this topic and show transparency and understanding as there isn't an easy means of transmitting this information for the public.</p>
8.	<p><b>Supply chain 'fairness'</b></p>

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	<p>AIC are aware that ministers and the EFRA select committee are talking about fairness in the supply chain. The dairy sector has seen legislation evolve on contractual requirements. It is currently unknown where the ambition is and whether this piece of work will include the cereal and oilseed sector or other supply sectors. It has been highlighted to the select committee that AIC works with contracts in the supply chain and has a committee specialising in contracts. AIC is developing an FAQ document to describe how the cereal sector works to share with civil servants should questions arise.</p>
9.	<p><b>Post budget review</b></p> <p>This was a matter discussed at the last AIC board. EB outlined what it looked like, with the reduction of BPS payment, APR, BPR, NI and tax. RS and EB have had a meeting with NFU regards the strategy of lobbying from the NFU, AICs aim is to remain broadly supportive of these issues where possible. Was concluded the APR primarily sits with the NFU, AIC do have members effected by BPR however, so that is a direct issue of AIC. AIC is working with CBI, FBUK, small business where resources are been pooled to survey members to share with Gov. on the impact this would cause.</p>
10.	<p><b>Digital Passport – combinable crops</b></p> <p>The consultation closed in June of last year – AHDB have seen a change in personnel in Sarah Woolford now overseeing the work. In November the AHDB sector council agreed to support the principle of the passport. The work since has been refining the consultation out comes into the business case. AHDB are currently working on further financials. The leadership group would like to take a proposal to the minister in March to ask for funding.</p> <p>Last week there was a development group meeting to look at how a pilot and subsequent steps could happen on the basis there was a business case agreed, and proposal agreed. This would help them to revisit the costings and sense check before taking back to the leadership group. This is purely a project to replace the paper passport.</p> <p>The budget has seen additional costings added – AIC is asking for a ‘clean’ business case and explanations to all costings.</p> <p>Concern raised regards the context of the development group meeting from industries understanding – resulting in support easily been lost. Asked how this would also work with certain stakeholders not supportive – NFUS (for example) would have to be through MAGB.</p> <p><b>*Action</b> – JL and RS to feed back to leadership group</p> <p>‘AIC is supportive of the movement from paper to digital but until a fully costed, fully worked through methodology of delivery, AIC cannot support any ask to government for funding as is. In addition, the only way there will be full support is with the implementation of one system, not dual.’</p>
9.	<p><b>Trade</b></p> <p><b>Deforestation regulations</b></p> <p>EUDR is expected Q4 this year, there has been no update from the UK minister.</p>
10	<p><b>GAFTA UK trade engagement</b></p> <p><b>GSOP protocol beans</b></p>

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	<p>Update from SM - looking at what the issues are with SPS certificate applications for beans, this is a different process to grains. Beans sit under the same protocol as such things as strawberries and pot plants but not grain which is causing issues. SM is in the process of putting together a meeting with APHA, FERA and Defra to talk through these issues and how trade works. The agenda is looking at discussion around -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications for phytosanitary certificates: Plant Products. Focus on bulk cargos of pulses</li> <li>• Applications for phytosanitary certificates: Grain</li> <li>• Requirements for phytosanitary purposes vs commercial documents</li> <li>• Target Markets – Focus on North Africa</li> </ul> <p>If it is decided this is what the industry would like to pursue there seems a strong case to include pulses in the GSOP procedure. The committee agreed they are supportive of an in person meeting as suggested.</p>
<b>11</b>	<p><b>AHDB administration fees</b></p> <p>RS thanked the committee and in particular David Anderson for submitting evidence around what the costs are for collecting the levy for members businesses. This process started about two years ago, AHDB were intending in making the changes from April 2024, AHDB audit findings suggested a cost of 0.44%. following the work done by AIC an average cost to members showed to be 3.28% this was submitted to AHDB before Christmas. The AHDB sector council have since met where a recommendation was made to the AHDB board for ratification, it isn't officially known yet what the formal recommendation is. AIC has asked AHDB if it is possible to have sight of what the proposal to the AHDB board will be.</p> <p>RS asked the committee if they want to engage with the boards of AHDB to ensure they are fully aware of industry concerns as been laid out over the last year by AIC. Agreed RS to speak to the AHDB board chair and CEO and share a copy of the AIC letter with them. It is felt AHDB have a reasonable responsibility to recognise AIC member costs.</p>
<b>14</b>	<p><b>Date of next meeting: 28 April, Peterborough</b></p>