*Sent on behalf of the Digital Grain Passport Leadership Group*

# Consultation on Combinable Crops Digital Passport begins Monday, 20 November 2023

An industry-wide consultation on the business case for implementing a digital passport for combinable crop movements will begin on Monday, 20 November 2023, closing on Friday, 2 February 2024.

The business case will set out how the Digital Passport (Combinable Crops) system would operate, replacing the existing paper passport, which has been in use for more than 30 years. The electronic passport will, as now, be initiated by farmers with input from hauliers, before being transmitted to receivers.

Switching to a single, industry-wide digital passport, as set out in the consultation, is expected to improve data integrity and security, provide scope for real-time assurance checks, reduce costs across the supply chain, and increase confidence and credibility to growers, buyers' customers, stakeholders and regulators.

Live updates of assurance status, prior to the vehicle leaving farms, are expected to reduce the risk of delay or rejection at the receiver's site. The system will allow for data to flow simply and reliably between farmers, grain merchants and end users such as millers, maltsters and feed mills.

A spokesperson for the Leadership Group said that substantial time has been invested in developing a business case which addresses all the aspects of the new system, from governance to development and operation.

They concluded: "In essence this is a simple change, switching from the pieces of paper currently carried with each load across the country, to a digital equivalent in a robust, secure online system. Operationally it would be a marked change, and we are now keen to hear views from stakeholders across the supply chain on the proposal."

The Leadership Group will be looking at the feedback received during the 11-week consultation to assess support for the business case and whether it meets industry requirements.

The industry Leadership Group is chaired by AHDB Board member Stephen Briggs. It meets weekly, and comprises:

- Merchants and animal feed business – represented by the Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC)
- Farmers – represented by the National Farmers Union (NFU) and NFU Scotland
- Receivers – represented by UK Flour Millers, the Maltsters Association and Seed Crushers and Oilseed Processors.

From farmers and hauliers to merchants and processors, the entire industry has been represented through a series of working groups tasked with developing the detail of how the Digital Passport will work, as well as designing a data governance framework.

During the consultation, industry representative bodies are inviting feedback on the business case through webinars and meetings. To engage with the consultation, please contact your representative trade association or contact AHDB via David.Eudall@ahdb.org.uk.

For more information, visit [ahdb.org.uk/digital-passport](ahdb.org.uk/digital-passport).

– Ends –

**NOTES FOR EDITORS**

- The Combinable Crops Digital Passport will, as now with paper documentation, be initiated by farmers with input from hauliers before onward transmission to receivers. There will be live updates of assurance status prior to the vehicle leaving farms, avoiding the risk of delay or rejection at the receiver's site.

- The system will enable a multi-directional flow of data between farmers, grain merchants and end users such as millers, maltsters, and feed mills. This includes a commitment to the real-time return of information to those involved in the contractual chain.

- For the past year the Leadership Group has been working to address fundamental questions raised by the industry in 2022. Once the consultation closes, they will review all feedback and make a collective decision on how to proceed.

- Representatives from all parts of the cereals and oilseeds supply chain have been working together to create the business case, with support from experts at the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB).