

ADDING VALUE

FOR AIC MEMBERS

2026 | Working in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture



AGRICULTURAL
INDUSTRIES
CONFEDERATION



Competitiveness



Productivity



Environment

Welcome



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This year's highlights

2025 was a year in which Members, working hand in glove with AIC staff, delivered significant change and achieved progress on many priorities. These successes and milestones are outlined on the following pages.

We have also set out the key policy issues for 2026. AIC remains committed to staying relevant and focused on the concerns of your business and every Member business. If you believe something has been overlooked, please let me know so it can be fed into the relevant committee for consideration.

At the start of the year, our attention will be on the revised Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement with the EU and the United Kingdom, and its implications for trade with Northern Ireland. We will also examine sector-specific impacts, particularly the concerns raised by the Crop Protection and Agronomy Sector, as well as Animal Feed and Combinable Crops.

Elections in Scotland and Wales in May may lead to subsequent policy changes from any new governments. Our manifesto asks for both nations have been agreed at Member meetings, and I encourage all Members to engage with candidates before and after the elections.

We want to see the Government work towards increasing agriculture's contribution to GDP from 0.6% to 1%, making a positive contribution towards economic growth and inward investment. Achieving this ambition will create a rising tide for all UK agriculture and will require the support of every AIC Member business.

The legislative deadlines for Net Zero remain: 2050 for the UK and 2045 for Scotland. Ensuring a steady, long-term glide path to meet these targets, with time for any interventions or statutory or fiscal action, remains a strategic priority.

All of this work is possible because of your ongoing support of AIC. Our staff remain committed to "working in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture."



Robert Sheasby
AIC Chief Executive

► Policy

Key achievement 1

Driving progress on the UK-EU SPS agreement

In May 2025, the United Kingdom (UK) and European Union (EU) agreed to establish a Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement.

Since the 2024 [General Election](#), AIC has consistently provided the Government with detailed information on the costs of trade friction affecting the movement of goods between Great Britain, the EU and Northern Ireland (NI).

Before and after the May [announcement](#), AIC supported the Government by supplying comprehensive data and insight to assist formal negotiations on the SPS agreement. At the same time, AIC ensured Members remained informed through [webinars](#), [Member briefings](#), and sector-specific calls for feedback.

AIC has positioned itself as an objective, trusted organisation for the Government, helping to explain the full impact of the transition back to an SPS agreement. By using Member case studies, data and insight, AIC aims to inform policy and secure the most advantageous SPS Agreement possible.

To strengthen this work, AIC facilitated visits by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to Member businesses and provided case studies illustrating how trade friction with NI and the EU has evolved. A core part of AIC's efforts has been establishing working groups with European associations and collaborating to provide objective information to Defra.



Key achievement 2

Engagement with MPs and Ministers

In 2025, AIC strengthened its political lobbying and advocacy. A core component was AIC's work with the National Farmers' Union (NFU) in establishing the [Food and Farming Fellowship](#). Sponsored by AIC, this enabled 20 newly elected Members of Parliament (MPs) to gain first-hand insight into the agri-food industry by visiting different parts of the sector.

This initiative built long-term relationships with the new intake of MPs, creating a group of MPs for regular engagement and raising Members' issues in Parliament.

Following the Cabinet reshuffle in September, AIC secured early engagement with new Defra Ministers, demonstrated by initial meetings with participation in the AIC Conference, reinforcing AIC as a trusted voice for the sector.

In addition, AIC broadened its lobbying by attending six major party conferences across the UK, ensuring Members' interests were represented. This is especially important as the political landscape becomes more fragmented, and we look ahead to elections in parts of the UK in 2026.



► Policy

Key achievement 3 ➔ Policy developments

AIC influenced key policy areas in 2025, providing evidence and expertise to Parliamentary Select Committees on EU trade, nitrogen, per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and the Precision Breeding Act.

AIC engaged with the Defra Land Use Framework and the Farming Profitability Review led by Baroness Minette Batters, contributing to sustainable land management and future farming priorities.

2025 was also a significant milestone in UK agricultural innovation as the Precision Breeding Act cleared its final legislative processes and was placed into law. To support implementation and real-world solutions across the supply chain, AIC was asked to chair a Defra working group on the UK internal market and international trade.

AIC also responded to concerns from family-owned Member businesses over changes to Business Property Relief (BPR). By joining a cross-sector coalition, AIC collected feedback and lobbied the Government on BPR proposals. The coalition gathered evidence through reports, lobbying and survey work. It was therefore welcome that in December it was announced that the threshold for BPR (and Agricultural Property Relief) would rise from £1 million to £2.5 million per estate from April 2026. This demonstrates AIC's collaborative approach, and the coalition will continue to work together on remaining BPR issues and other family business concerns.



Priorities for 2026

- 1 2026 will be a pivotal year for implementing the UK-EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement as Parliament progresses through the necessary legislation and transition. AIC will provide expert, objective information to Government to ensure a clear understanding of the needs of businesses and the supply chain. This will include working with our European associations in presenting evidence to the European Commission. Meanwhile, AIC will keep Members fully informed of any changes through a regular series of webinars and briefings.
- 2 Further policy developments are expected as the Government moves into its second year. AIC will prepare for and influence initiatives, including an anticipated Defra 25-year Farming Roadmap and review into contractual relationships in the combinable crops sector that could have impacts across all five AIC sectors.
- 3 AIC will continue to engage with the next cohort of MPs signing up to the Farming Fellowship Scheme, which AIC will support. AIC will drive further activity in encouraging Members to host MPs. Meanwhile, engagement with new Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) and Senedd Members will be critical as elections take place in Scotland and Wales in 2026.



Further information:
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► Policy - Environment



Key achievement 1

Influencing Environmental Land Management reforms

AIC continued to work closely with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to ensure Members' interests were considered during revisions to several parts of the Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes. AIC actively participated in working groups and meetings as views on the revised Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) and Countryside Stewardship were gathered.

In addition, we represented Members through our position on the Farming and Countryside Programme's (FCP) Senior Stakeholder Roundtable and the Rural Payments Agency's (RPA) Agri-Environment Scheme Working Group.

Key achievement 2

Driving strategic change in packaging compliance

AIC provided essential information, promoted best practice, and advocated for Members' interests in policy discussions with Defra as the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging scheme progressed.

This included the continuation of packaging data reporting requirements and the introduction of full net cost responsibility for large packaging producers regarding household packaging waste and recycling. This represents a strategic shift, as packaging design now directly influences compliance costs.



Key achievement 3

Securing a revised energy target

Working closely with Members of AIC's Feed Manufacturing Committee, AIC submitted evidence to the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DES NZ) in support of a counterproposal to the sector's original 12% target.

The quantitative and qualitative information submitted resulted in a revised target of 8%, which secured ministerial approval and is expected to be implemented from January 2026.



Priorities for 2026

- 1 Collaborate with Defra's Farming and Countryside Programme and the Rural Payments Agency on the content and delivery of the reformed SFI offer.
- 2 Engage with policy developments on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS).
- 3 Contribute to the Government's commitments on soil health, air quality and water quality as outlined in the 2025 Environmental Improvement Plan.

Further information:
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► Sustainability

Key achievement 1

Sustainability Action Plan outreach

AIC presented the key messages from its Sustainability Action Plan to a wide range of stakeholders, including government officials, trade associations and environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs). AIC also secured a highly sought-after session at Groundswell, hosting a panel discussion entitled “Does the agriculture input sector have a role in regenerative agriculture?”.

The Sustainability Action Plan achieved a combined reach of over 36,000 through social media impressions, webinar engagement, downloads, print readership and press coverage. It also formed AIC’s entry to Edie’s Net Zero Awards, where AIC was shortlisted in the Researcher of the Year category.



Key achievement 2

Advancing Food Data Transparency

AIC continued to engage with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs’ (Defra) Food Data Transparency Partnership, including Defra’s attendance at AIC’s Sustainability Liaison Group meeting in January. AIC is developing a set of default emissions factors for a range of reference diets, for a variety of different growth stages of different livestock species, which has been widely welcomed.

In addition, AIC continues to advocate for an expanded Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics Level 2 (NUTS2) dataset of UK crops.



Further information:
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Key achievement 3

Influencing water pollution regulations

Alongside providing evidence at the House of Lords Nitrogen Inquiry (see Fertiliser), AIC represented Members’ interests as a stakeholder in Defra’s ongoing review of water pollution from agriculture regulations.

This included one-to-one discussions with Defra’s Policy Lead on the role of Fertiliser Advisers Certification and Training Scheme (FACTS) and Fertiliser Assurance Regulations (FAR) advice and being a joint signatory to a letter proposing solutions to emerging themes.

Priorities for 2026

- 1 Develop a baseline survey on the sustainability activities of AIC Members.
- 2 Collaborate with Defra’s Agri Net Zero team and the Climate Change Committee on Carbon Budget 7 (CB7).
- 3 Establish AIC’s position on nutrient management planning.

► Scotland

Key achievement 1

Ensure representation specific to Scotland

In May, AIC Scotland welcomed a new Policy Manager, Ian MacDougall, to continue the important work of AIC Scotland. This appointment has ensured that the expertise and influence of AIC Scotland Members at political and industry stakeholder level remain strong.

Membership of groups such as the Food and Agriculture Stakeholder Taskforce (FAST), the Red Meat Industry Resilience Group and Quality Meat Scotland (QMS) have become an increasingly important channel for policy and strategy development with the Scottish Government.

The role has also acted as a first point of contact to facilitate queries and resolve issues with sector-specific policy managers, including those relating to EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and UK Soy Manifesto matters.



Key achievement 2

Positively influencing the implementation of the Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Act

Under this Act, support for Scottish farming and the agricultural and food supply chains has been evolving through both short- and long-term programmes.

AIC has attended cross-government roundtables, met individually with Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs Mairi Gougeon and Minister for Agriculture Jim Fairlie, and worked through FAST in collaboration with the Scottish Government to shape these programmes.

We continue to press for a clear multi-annual support package for farming while advising and influencing details within programmes, such as Ecological Focus Area (EFA) greening requirements.



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Key achievement 3

Supporting the development of equivalent Precision Breeding legislation for Scotland

AIC has continued to advocate for Precision Breeding legislation in Scotland, recognising that the current Government has aligned with EU legislative progress.

We have taken every opportunity to keep this topic on the agenda in discussions with Scottish Government officials, politicians and SASA (formerly the Scottish Agricultural Science Agency). AIC has led industry stakeholders on this issue, drawing on experience south of the border and highlighting the associated commercial opportunities.

With recent progress in EU discussions, feedback from Scottish Government officials has been positive.

Priorities for 2026

- 1 Review and respond to the Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan 2026–40, ensuring Scottish agriculture and food production are treated positively. AIC Scotland will support and encourage Members and stakeholders in their activities following the Plan's approval.
- 2 Build on AIC Scotland's election manifesto, engaging with politicians before the May 2026 elections and supporting new and re-elected MSPs in understanding the importance of the rural and food-producing economy to agri-businesses in their constituencies.
- 3 Engage with, represent and support AIC Scotland Member businesses, ensuring two-way communication on current, new and developing policy, particularly where Scottish-specific elements apply. For example, in Sanitary and Phytosanitary agreement discussions, the importance of glyphosate to the arable sector in Scotland and the inclusion of specific minerals (cobalt and selenium) in Scottish livestock diets.



Graeme Logan, AIC Scotland, Chair

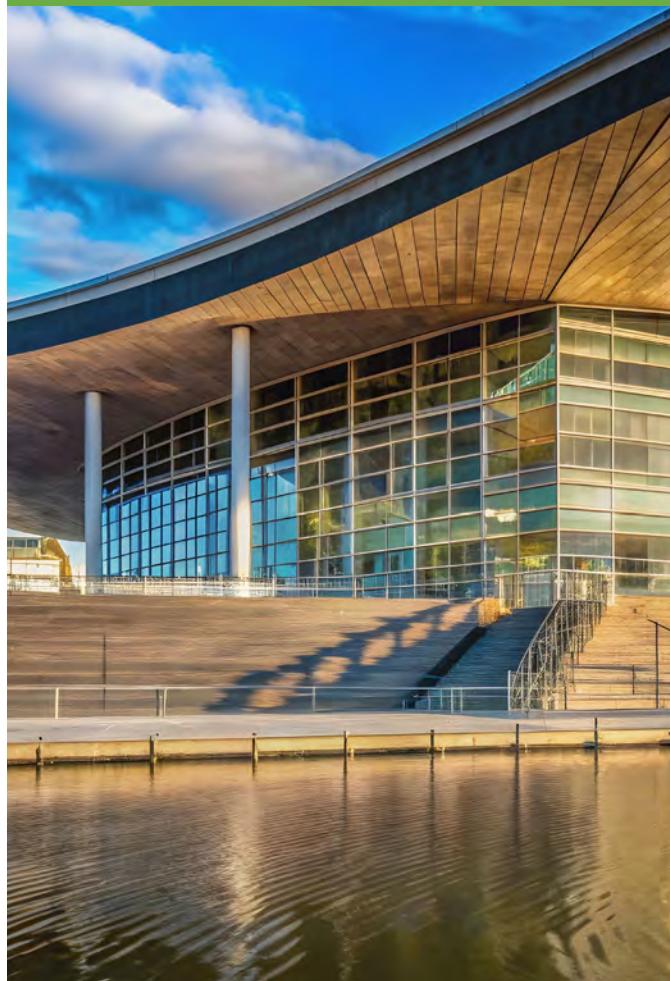
► Cymru

Key achievement 1

Supporting Sustainable Farming Scheme development

Highlights in 2025 centred on the Sustainable Farming Scheme for Wales, where AIC Cymru provided Members with insights into ministerial roundtable developments and negotiations on the scheme's Universal Actions.

AIC Cymru offered stakeholder support to farming unions and communicated key messages to the Welsh Government. The policy, mechanics and financial details were formally published just prior to the Royal Welsh Show in July.



Further information:
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Key achievement 2

Strengthening AIC Cymru governance

AIC's Cymru Committee membership was refreshed with the appointment of a new Chair, Alister Davies (ForFarmers), a Vice-Chair, and a new committee member, Claire Ebdy (Northwest Farmers).

Each committee member now takes a sectoral lead during AIC Cymru quarterly meetings to ensure relevance and active participation.



Priorities for 2026

- 1 Monitor the transition and success of the Sustainable Farming Scheme from both a Member commercial business activity perspective and its wider economic multiplier effect.
- 2 Conduct outreach following the Senedd elections in May 2026 to engage new Senedd members and highlight the importance of the rural economy, food production, and food security within their constituencies.
- 3 Maintain consistent communication with Member businesses on major policy implications, including:
 - a. Sanitary and Phytosanitary agreement
 - b. Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)
 - c. EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)



Alister Davies, AIC Cymru, Chair

► Animal Feed

2026 Outlook

In 2026, AIC feed sector will focus on securing a strong position for the feed industry in UK-EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) discussions. As most feed legislation falls within scope, it is vital the Government understands both opportunities and risks.

AIC will stress to the Food Standards Agency (FSA) the need to clear the backlog of regulated products already in the approval process, including feed additives and genetically modified organisms (GMOs). AIC will promote the AIC Sustainable Commodities Scheme (ASCS) as a tool to help Members provide transparency to downstream customers on the deforestation free status of their feed.



Beth Austermuhle,
Sector Chair,
Animal Feed

Key achievement 1

Securing mass-balance agreement in ASCS

A significant change in the position of the UK Soy Manifesto signatories, including the Retail Soy Group, was achieved during discussions and consultations in 2025. The original stance required physically segregated deforestation-free soya from origin to UK farm.

AIC consistently maintained the 'one soya bin' message and argued that segregation is impractical, costly, and that evidence of deforestation-free status can be achieved under the ASCS using a mass-balance model. This breakthrough benefits every AIC feed sector Member and represents cost savings running into millions of pounds.



Key achievement 2

Clarifying EUDR scope for compound feed

To maintain market access to the EU, the UK beef and dairy supply chain had requested feed suppliers to provide information on the deforestation-free status of feed.

Through continued membership of the European Feed Manufacturers' Federation (FEFAC), AIC sought confirmation from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment (DG ENV) that information on compound feed was not required, given that compound feed was not listed in Annex 1 of EUDR.

This confirmation was secured, enabling AIC to inform UK beef and dairy supply chain representatives that no legal requirement exists to provide such information, saving Members considerable cost and time.

Key achievement 3

Mitigating regulatory impacts with FSA

AIC convened several meetings between industry representatives (British Association of Feed Supplement and Additive Manufacturers (BAFSAM), British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA), UK Pet food) and the FSA feed unit and senior policy personnel to address serious impacts arising from the **Food and Feed (Regulated Products) (Amendment, Revocation, Consequential and Transitional Provision) Regulations 2025**.

As a result, the FSA agreed to review many revoked or removed entries from the Register of Feed Additives, ensuring continued access for Member businesses. This work is expected to continue into 2026.



Priorities for 2026



Further information:
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Represent feed Members interests in the coming discussions with the Government on the UK-EU SPS agreement.

Deliver events to inform Members how to engage with the AIC Sustainable Commodities Scheme (ASCS) and continue supply chain meetings on the roll-out of EUDR and UK Forest Risk Commodities (UKFRC) regulations.

Support the development of Global Feed LCA Institute (GFLI) datasets and complete and communicate the AIC reference diet Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) workstream.

► Combinable Crops

2026 Outlook

The UK combinable crop sector faces both challenges and opportunities. Protecting food security amid decreasing arable land, evolving regulations, and environmental pressures remains central. AIC will continue to represent Members in key industry consultations, from Red Tractor standards to fairness in the supply chain, ensuring your voices shape practical, balanced outcomes.

Collaboration across sectors, particularly with pulse Members, will be vital to address shared challenges and strengthen resilience. Through innovation, informed advocacy, and a focus on sustainable, productive agriculture, AIC aims to safeguard the sector's competitiveness and deliver long-term value for growers and the wider supply chain.



Tom Wood,
Sector Chair,
Combinable Crops

Key achievement 1

Development of supply chain guidance resources

AIC published updated **FAQs** and detailed guidance on the combinable crops supply chain to help Members navigate risk management, contractual obligations and compliance requirements.

These resources were designed to support Members in adapting to evolving regulatory frameworks and market expectations, ensuring clarity on best practice and legal responsibilities.



Key achievement 2

Progress on the Digital Passport initiative

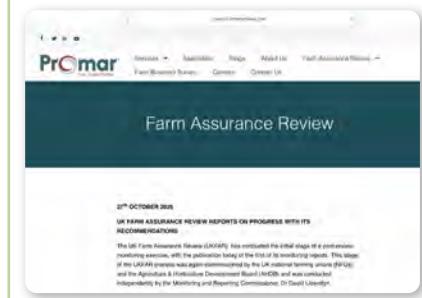
AIC continued to represent Members in the Digital Grain Passport Leadership Group, advancing discussions with the Government to highlight the system's benefits for improving traceability, efficiency and data transfer across the supply chain.



Key achievement 3

Continued engagement on Assurance and Standards

AIC actively contributed to discussions on farm assurance and imported crop standards, providing input into the UK Farm Assurance Review (UKFAR) report and consultations on Red Tractor standards, ensuring Members' perspectives were represented.



Priorities for 2026



- 1 Advocate for Combinable Crop Members in areas such as Red Tractor standards, the UK-EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary agreement, and *Contractual Relationships within the Crops Sector*.
- 2 Strengthen collaboration across sectors by working closely with pulse and other Members to address shared challenges, align strategies and promote a unified, sector-wide approach.
- 3 Protect food security and crop production by ensuring Government policies balance decreasing arable land with environmental, energy and production priorities. Monitoring the retention of productive arable land, domestic crop production and the extent to which Government policies explicitly balance food security with environmental and energy objectives will guide progress.

Further information:
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► Crop Protection & Agronomy

2026 Outlook

The year ahead brings significant challenges. While an EU reset may ease trade friction, aligning with the EU Plant Protection Product (PPP) list and Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) could impact product availability and usage in Great Britain.

The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) is reviewing whether trifluoroacetic acid (TFA) should be reclassified, with a decision due in October. This creates uncertainty around the future of some PPPs.

The **National Action Plan (NAP)** continues to promote Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which depends on diverse control methods. Maintaining access to active substances remains critical unless cost-effective alternatives can be secured to keep growers competitive and profitable.



Ronan Hughes,
Sector Chair, Crop
Protection & Agronomy

Key achievement 1

EU reset and PPPs

PPPs are within the scope of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement under the EU reset negotiations. If Great Britain aligns with the EU PPP list, AIC has emphasised potential gaps in crop protection solutions and the impact on UK productivity.

The sector has met with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Chemicals Regulation Division (CRD), and senior government representatives, to explain these issues in detail. AIC has stressed the need for long transition periods to ensure orderly movement and use of PPPs along the supply chain in the event of any withdrawals.



Key achievement 2

Addressing media attention on Poly- and Perfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)

PFAS have attracted media scrutiny, with some Member States taking unilateral action to withdraw products such as cosmetics and textiles, while others have restricted the use of certain PPPs believed to degrade to trifluoroacetic acid (TFA).

AIC submitted written and oral evidence to the Environmental Audit Committee, emphasising that analysis by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) indicated fire-fighting foams pose the highest environmental risk. A **Q&A** guide has been prepared for Members to address questions from farmers and growers. AIC continues to assess the evidence and highlight the minimal environmental impact of PPPs.



Key achievement 3

Delivery of the National Action Plan for sustainable PPP

The NAP includes a Pesticide Load Indicator (PLI) to help assess the relative risk of active substances in PPPs. Targets have been set for 20 metrics to reduce the PLI by at least 10% by 2030, using 2018 as the baseline. Following publication of the updated Pesticide Usage Survey in December 2025, PLI figures will be updated. AIC will monitor the trend; however, it is important to note that PLI does not assess how PPPs are used, which is a critical component of risk.

Priorities for 2026



Further information:

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- Advocate for long transition periods and clear guidance to minimise disruption from EU PPP list and MRL alignment.
- Manage PFAS and TFA regulatory risks by monitoring ECHA's review, providing evidence-based communication, and engaging with policymakers to influence balanced regulation.
- Support Integrated Pest Management and track PLI targets, highlighting risk-based assessments that consider actual PPP use.

► Fertiliser

2026 Outlook

2025 was a year of resilience and progress. Despite high gas costs, global supply chain disruption and tight delivery windows, the sector adapted and delivered. Similar challenges are expected in 2026, and we remain committed to overcoming them.

AIC represented Members at the House of Lords inquiry into nitrogen pollution, supported understanding of the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) application, and promoted sustainability initiatives with the Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD), highlighting the essential role of mineral fertilisers in resilient food production.

We continue to deliver a clear and consistent message to policymakers, commerce, and the public: "Fertilisers are the nutrients that feed the plants that feed us."



Robert Ingham,
Sector Chair,
Fertiliser

Key achievement 1

Influenced policy and raised awareness

AIC actively shaped the policy agenda by engaging with the **House of Lords Nitrogen Inquiry** into nitrogen pollution. This included providing evidence and insights on the sector's role in reducing environmental impact.

To reinforce these messages, AIC organised a high-profile lobbying lunch at the House of Lords, bringing together Members of Parliament (MPs), Lords and Members to discuss practical solutions and ensure policymakers understood the importance of fertilisers in sustainable food production.

Key achievement 2

Supported Members on CBAM compliance and regulatory change

As CBAM evolved, AIC guided Members through compliance requirements and represented the sector in the Treasury's Joint Industry Working Group. This proactive involvement helped shape workable proposals for UK fertiliser and agriculture, ensuring competitiveness while addressing carbon leakage concerns.



Key achievement 3

Promoted sustainability and industry reputation

AIC championed the value of mineral fertilisers through engagement with the IGD and Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) companies. We reinforced the sector's commitment to sustainability and resilience, while delivering clear, consistent messaging to legislators and the public: "Fertilisers feed the plants that feed us."

These efforts complemented AIC's input into per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) discussions, highlighting low risk levels in plant protection products (PPPs) and advocating evidence-based regulation.

Priorities for 2026



- 1 Drive improvements in nitrogen use efficiency and phosphorus balance as key metrics for sustainability across UK agriculture.
- 2 Advocate professional grassland management and push for enhancements to RB209 (Nutrient Management Guide) and Fertiliser Advisers Certification and Training Scheme (FACTS), recognising grassland accounts for 35% of UK fertiliser use.
- 3 Work to ensure evolving UK Fertiliser Regulations reflect industry realities and support competitiveness.
- 4 Continue dialogue with Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) and the Treasury to secure fair, workable CBAM proposals for UK fertiliser and agriculture.

Further information:
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► Seed

2026 Outlook

The year ahead will be pivotal for the UK seed sector. Certified seed remains fundamental to resilient and productive farming, and AIC will continue to support Members as they navigate climate pressures, market volatility, and trade complexities. Securing progress towards an UK-EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement remains a priority, offering the potential to reduce border friction and provide greater certainty.

Meanwhile, advances in precision breeding and gene editing present significant opportunities to strengthen domestic production and enhance food security. With continued collaboration, innovation, and a clear regulatory framework, 2026 can be a year of renewed competitiveness and confidence for the certified seed industry.



Toby Reich,
Sector Chair,
Seed

Key achievement 1

Strengthened plant health and compliance support

AIC developed practical **FAQ resources on ergot contamination** and issued timely alerts on pests such as pea bruchids, enabling Members to maintain high standards and manage risks effectively.

These measures safeguard crop quality and market reputation, reducing the risk of costly non-compliance and supporting the integrity of the certified seed supply chain.



Key achievement 2

Advocacy and policy impact



AIC secured ministerial engagement on oilseeds, represented Members in plant health fee consultations, and supporting the UK-EU SPS agreement to ensure smooth trade and fair regulation. Through these efforts, AIC ensured Members' interests were heard and addressed.

Key achievement 3

Driving innovation and building capability

We advanced discussions on precision breeding with the England-only variety list, partnered with British Society of Plant Breeders (BSPB) to deliver BASIS Seed Sellers training, and showcased UK leadership at Euroseeds 2025. At Euroseeds, we also showcased **The Journey to Seed Certification and Marketing infographic**. By driving innovation and skills development, AIC positions Members to capitalise on new breeding techniques and reinforces the UK's role as a leader in sustainable seed production.

Priorities for 2026



Further information:
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Enhance trade certainty and regulatory clarity by advancing SPS alignment, improving fee transparency, and addressing other regulatory issues to support competitiveness and reduce trade friction.

2

Promote the use of certified seed by supporting Members to adapt to changing market conditions and technological developments, addressing the decline in certified seed uptake, strengthening confidence in the value of certification, and ensuring Members are equipped to meet evolving customer expectations and regulatory requirements.

3

Strengthen resilience and innovation by promoting integrated approaches to plant health, encouraging investment in research and development, and driving workforce development to ensure sustainable, productive, and future-proof seed supply chains.

► Membership & Communications

2026 Outlook

In early 2026, AIC will contact Members with regards to the data it holds, including personnel for each Member business. This will allow AIC to better cater to the needs of individuals within Member companies and ensure you are receiving all relevant information and support.

Key achievement 1

Launching the Online Renewal Declaration System

Last year, we successfully launched a new Online Renewal Declaration System, making membership renewals simpler and more efficient. Many Members used the system for the first time, and its intuitive design mirrors the standard declaration form for ease of use.

As we approach a new membership year, full details are being sent to Member businesses on how to access the system via AIC's website: www.agindustries.org.uk.

Simply enter your figures as usual, select Submit, and they will be sent directly to your AIC account.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Tracy Smith at tracy.smith@agindustries.org.uk or call 07442 862380.

Key achievement 2

AIC Conference tackles new global norms

Our annual conference, titled "Managing New Global Norms in the Agri-Food Supply Chain", brought together over 200 delegates to explore some of the most pressing challenges facing the sector. The event featured a high-calibre speaker programme spanning politics, industry, and academia.

Highlights included keynote address from Dame Angela Eagle, Minister of State for Agriculture, outlining the UK's agricultural priorities for the year ahead. Other political contributions included George Burgess, Director of Agriculture for the Scottish Government, and Huw Irranca-Davies MS, Cabinet Secretary for the Welsh Government. Kelly Hewson-Fisher of Savills presented a comprehensive review of UK land use trends, while Dr. Elliott Grant, Visiting Fellow at Cambridge University, offered an insightful perspective on the role of artificial intelligence in transforming the agri-food supply chain.

The AIC Dinner featured Baroness Minette Batters as after-dinner speaker, sharing entertaining reflections on her career in the industry. This year's charity partner was the Farm Community Network, and we were proud to support their vital work once again.

Delegates reported excellent networking opportunities and valuable connections with speakers, reinforcing the conference's role as a key platform for collaboration and knowledge exchange.



Key achievement 3

Strengthening communication and Member engagement

AIC continues to provide clear, authoritative guidance on the issues shaping the agri-supply sector. We have strengthened our communications strategy through several key initiatives: the appointment of a new Communications Manager in April, the introduction of an 'At a Glance' section in Member briefings, and the ongoing rollout of a refreshed logo and visual identity to reinforce a modern, consistent brand presence.

These enhancements, combined with proactive content and strong media coverage, has increased AIC's influence and visibility during a period of significant change.



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► AIC Services

Professional Services



FAR
FEED ADVISER
REGISTER



FAA Forage Analysis
Assurance Group
QUALITY FORAGE ANALYSIS



CERTIFIED SUSTAINABLE PALM OIL
RSPO



aic
Services
Trade Assurance
Consultant
Register



PCN
PROFICIENCY
TESTING



HACCP



Hazard



Analysis



Critical



Control



Points

Assurance Schemes



FEMAS
Assurance Scheme



FIAS
Fertiliser Industry
Assurance Scheme



UFAS
Universal Feed
Assurance Scheme



TASCC
Trade Assurance Scheme
for Combinable Crops



ASCS
AIC Sustainable
Commodities Scheme



ESTA



RED
Renewable Energy Directive
COMPLIANT

Bringing confidence to your sector

AIC Services offers a full array of professional services that support the agri-supply industry, an area that has never been more critical during this period of change within UK agriculture. The organisation works closely with AIC to ensure that policy and professional services remain fully aligned.

AIC's Feed Assurance Schemes continue to deliver safe feed and food, providing confidence throughout the agri-food supply chain. Joint development work ensures these schemes remain fit for purpose, with regular reviews by industry experts to incorporate legislative changes and best practice. A consultation on the new Standards is expected in Quarter 2 of 2026 and we look forward to valuable industry feedback.

Working alongside this is the certification and audit body, Kiwa. AIC collaborates closely with Kiwa to ensure seamless delivery of the schemes. Auditor training is a key component and AIC actively participates in training auditors to meet scheme requirements.

The UK Farm Assurance Review has continued this year, with AIC consulted on recommendations and providing feedback across all areas. We look forward to strengthened schemes that further support feed and food assurance.

The Fertiliser Industry Assurance Scheme (FIAS) continues to provide safe, secure and traceable assurance for the fertiliser sector. A review of the Standard is currently out for industry and stakeholder consultation, with the new Standard scheduled for launch in Quarter 2 of 2026.

AIC Services has also worked extensively with industry and stakeholders to develop the new AIC Sustainable Commodities Scheme (ASCS), launched in December 2025. Implementation will begin in 2026 and beyond. This scheme responds to industry requirements for due diligence in sourcing sustainable commodities and supports compliance with the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).

The Feed Adviser Register (FAR) continues to evolve, with investment this year in electronic identification cards for all feed advisers. This enhancement makes verification of adviser status more accessible and helps raise the profile of the scheme.

Finally, AIC Services works continuously with AIC to ensure policy developments are reflected in the services offered. A key focus for 2026 will be the EU Reset and the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement, with ongoing evaluation of their impact on assurance schemes.



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► Assurance scheme updates

AIC's Sustainable Commodities Scheme launch

The **AIC Sustainable Commodities Scheme (ASCS)**, launched in December, was developed with industry input in response to market demands across the supply chain. It provides a series of modules against which Participants will be independently certified, confirming that the sourcing of raw materials and products from specific geographical areas meets key sustainability objectives.

The first two modules released focus on preventing deforestation and ensuring compliance with legislative requirements:

Module 1: Enables Participants to demonstrate alignment with the **EU Regulation on Deforestation-free Products (EUDR)** from origin to the UK.

Module 2: Requires Participants to demonstrate that they operate a deforestation-free Chain of Custody for in-scope commodities used within the UK feed industry.



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Driving continuous improvement in assurance

The key focus of the **Fertiliser Industry Assurance Scheme (FIAS)** has been the revision of the Standard. A dedicated Review Group examined the wording of each clause and guidance section, using non-conformance data and Participant input to improve clarity and ensure the Standard is up-to-date and reflects current fertiliser industry practices.

The revised document has now been consulted on and is scheduled for submission to the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) for accreditation. Implementation is targeted for October 2026. In the interim, auditor training will take place, additional Participant support documents will be prepared, and updates will be made to the FIAS i-learning platform.

FIAS communications were also a priority in 2025, with a **case study** on a Lincolnshire transport company published in September. Further case studies, podcasts and targeted training support are planned for 2026.



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TASCC non-conformance data reporting

To assist Participants in improving their audit processes and enhancing compliance with the Standard, a detailed report is available on the **Trade Assurance Scheme for Combinable Crops (TASCC)** webpage. The document outlines specific clauses by scope, indicating the frequency of non-conformances for each clause and classifying them as critical, major or minor. This structured approach enables Participants to pinpoint exact areas requiring attention.

The report is reviewed at Working Group meetings, where ongoing dialogue remains essential for continuous improvement in compliance and the development of the Standard.



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Digital FAR membership cards

As part of the ongoing development of the **Feed Adviser Register (FAR)**, AIC Services introduced a digital Feed Adviser Card to replace the plastic cards currently used by feed advisers. This represents a major digital transformation project for FAR, integrating with the FAR database and providing easy access via Apple and Google Wallets.



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Earned recognition of FEMAS, TASCC and UFAS from the Food Standards Agency

During summer and autumn 2025, AIC Services organised visits to Universal Feed Assurance Scheme (UFAS) feed mills for the Food Standards Agency (FSA) in collaboration with the Industry Assurance (Earned Recognition) Team. The purpose of these visits was to demonstrate the mutual value gained by both the FSA and the feed industry through cooperation under Earned Recognition.

Attendees included Regional Lead Feed Trading Standards officers, with a focus on the operation of AIC schemes; FSA Industry Assurance team members, who were introduced to feed production and scheme processes; and FSA directors, who gained insight into how their decisions directly impact the feed industry.



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Sector engagement supports sector note development

Feed Materials Assurance Scheme (FEMAS) Participants include a wide range of businesses, from specialist additive manufacturers to food processors and brewers. Each sector is supported by a dedicated Sector Note, outlining specific risks and legislative requirements for feed materials. These notes are regularly updated to reflect industry changes.

In 2025, the Distilling and Malting Sector Note was updated to include consideration of the Assured UK Malt (AUKM) Scheme and introduce a risk-based approach for outdoor feed storage. A new Sector Note for the seaweed industry was also launched for seaweed products used in animal feeds.

Additionally, AIC, together with scheme owners EFISC-GTP (European Feed Ingredients Safety Certification – Good Trading Practice), GMP+ International, OVOCOM, and QS (Qualität und Sicherheit), updated the cooperation agreement on Aflatoxin B1 in maize, reinforcing collaboration to monitor aflatoxin risks in line with the Maize Aflatoxin Monitoring Protocol.



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► This year's highlights





A glimpse into some of AIC's highlights throughout 2025

AIC's team have had a successful and productive year of meeting, engaging and collaborating with Members, stakeholders, government officials and industry professionals.

How AIC adds value



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



Design & Development by RDP

AIC continues to cultivate deep connections with EU organisations as the UK and EU trade relationship develops. AIC is an active member of:

