

JOURNAL

AUTUMN 2025 | Working in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture



**EU reset and Plant
Protection Products**

**Digital Grain
Passport progress**

**Engaging with
Stakeholders on
Sustainable Farming
Practices**

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An update from AIC Chief Executive Robert Sheasby

As summer draws to a close, AIC looks ahead to a busy autumn, with a successful Parliamentary reception and attendance at key political party conferences, ensuring your voice is heard by decision-makers and stakeholders.

With Scottish and Welsh elections due next year, the focus will shift to what AIC Members want from new Governments, particularly regarding devolved agricultural and environmental regulations. In England, the Food Strategy, Land Use Strategy, and 25-Year Farm Plan are expected to progress.

The Government's decision not to support the UK bioethanol sector is disappointing, given its role in crop purchasing and producing dried distillers grains (DDGs) for animal feed. With rising global demand for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), this feels like a missed opportunity.

AIC continues to raise Member concerns about the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) agreement with the European Union (EU). Work on the Digital Passport – Combinable Crops continues, with updates to follow.

Robert Sheasby,
Chief Executive, AIC



SPS Area, Precision Breeding, and Bioethanol policy update

Since the announcement in May that the United Kingdom (UK) and European Union (EU) will establish a Common Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Area, AIC has begun engaging in sector-specific meetings with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, as technical issues and practical challenges are starting to emerge. These include roundtable meetings on how dynamic alignment will work for Plant Protection Products (PPPs), particularly those approved in Great Britain (GB) but not in the EU, and vice versa. This is also relevant for regulated products in the feed sector, where divergence has led to differences in product availability.

AIC has met with the Government to discuss how the Precision Breeding Act, which could see applications made from November, might be compatible with an SPS agreement with the EU. This is especially important as the EU navigates its implementation of New Genomic Techniques (NGTs), which bear some similarities to Precision Breeding in England, but also key differences.

Engagement with our European association counterparts will be crucial as we collaborate with the Government to provide technical expertise on the implications of realignment. This cooperation will be particularly significant during the transitional phase, which will require considerable time and effort from both industry and the Government over the coming year.

On 8 May, the UK granted tariff-free access for 1.4 billion litres of United States (US) bioethanol as part of a broader US-UK agreement. In August, the Government announced it would not provide financial support to UK bioethanol producers to offset increased imports, despite lobbying from AIC and other industry groups. However, the Government has now issued a call for evidence on the use of crops in the UK Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) mandate, which would represent a change in policy. This change could present an opportunity for the sector, but only if there are sufficient regulatory incentives to encourage inward investment for domestic processors.



Ed Barker,
Head of Policy and External Affairs

Water sector reform: Independent Water Commission

In July, the Independent Water Commission published 88 recommendations to reform England's water sector, including a new regulator, catchment-based planning, and strengthened environmental targets. Among the key proposals is improved slurry and sludge management, aligning with evidence from the House of Lords Nitrogen Inquiry.

A white paper is expected in autumn 2025, followed by a consultation and the potential introduction of a Water Reform Bill in 2026.

AIC attended the National Farmers' Union Inaugural Water Summit, which echoed the Commission's priorities and reinforced collaborative momentum across government, industry, and the agri-supply chain.



Engaging with Stakeholders on Sustainable Farming Practices

AIC was delighted to host a session at Groundswell titled 'Does the agricultural input sector have a role in regenerative agriculture?'

Chaired by Kate Russell (Tellus Natural Capital Ltd), the panel featured Dr Lydia Smith (NIAB), Ruth Grice (Long Clawson Dairy), and Heather Oldfield (Limagrain).

The panel examined and offered interesting perspectives on break cropping, nutrient management, advisory services, and the seed trade's relevance in shaping future farming schemes.

Looking ahead, AIC will attend Sustainable Foods on 28-29 January 2026. Further details will follow.



Ed Barker,
Head of Policy
and External Affairs



Vicky Robinson,
Head of Sustainability



Andrew Pearson,
Policy Manager

AIC Stakeholder

Each Journal edition we look at how AIC works with a valued industry stakeholder in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture. This time we share how AIC collaborates with the Food and Drink Federation (FDF).

The Food and Drink Federation represents the United Kingdom's (UK) food and drink manufacturing sector, advocating for policies that support sustainable sourcing, food safety, and resilient trade. AIC works closely with FDF to ensure the agri-supply chain remains aligned with evolving UK and European Union (EU) regulations, particularly around trade, sustainability, and food security.

This collaboration enables UK voices to be heard in Brussels and contributes to shaping future trade frameworks. By maintaining strong ties with European counterparts, AIC and FDF help Members navigate post-Brexit policy divergence and support efforts to establish a robust Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement, which is essential for smooth cross-border trade and high standards in food and feed.



fdf food & drink
federation
passionate about food & drink

Digital Grain Passport progress

Since June, the Digital Passport Leadership Group, including AIC, has engaged with the Government after submitting its business case. The group plans to meet Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Minister to discuss traceability, efficiency and data accuracy, while pursuing public funding. AIC ensures Member interests shape system development.

Updated UK emissions values (NUTS2)

The European Commission has approved updated UK NUTS2 emissions values, incorporating the latest regional data and practices. Stakeholders can now apply regional greenhouse gas values instead of farm-level data. Legal validation is expected within three to six months.

Join the Sustainability Liaison Group

AIC's Sustainability Liaison Group (SLG) is seeking new Members from the Combinable Crop Sector, including pulses to strengthen representation. The SLG supports Members across all sectors and works with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' Food Data Transparency Partnership, the Climate Change Committee, the Waste and Resources Action Programme and others.

AIC joins Global Pulse Confederation

AIC has joined the Global Pulse Confederation, giving Members access to market tools, webinars, and global events, and strengthening AIC's influence in global discussions on sustainable agriculture and trade. AIC will actively represent UK perspectives and share sector knowledge.



Rose Riby,
Head of Combinable Crops and Seed



Pea bruchid risk

Pea bruchid has been confirmed in commercial crops, favoured by a warm, dry spring. The pest threatens pea quality and value, especially for human consumption. AIC is working with Processors and Growers Research Organisation to encourage vigilance, reporting and coordinated action, and will convene an industry forum.

Defra Seed Certification changes

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs propose introducing fees for seed certification and International Seed Testing Association sampling in England and Wales, currently free via the Animal and Plant Health Agency. Changes would affect Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development certification, re-certification, imported seed entry and official sampling. AIC invites stakeholder feedback.

Ergot management updates

New guidance from the Ergot Working Group outlines four strategies: reduce inoculum, lower infection risk, limit spread and prevent contamination. AIC's guidance supports compliance, food safety and supply chain confidence. Further research and collaboration will continue.

BASIS Seed Sellers' course

AIC and the British Society of Plant Breeders now offer the BASIS Seed Sellers Certificate, a three-day programme covering seed treatments, pest and disease control, compliance and stewardship.

EU Reset and Plant Protection Products

Plant Protection Products (PPPs) are covered by the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement under the European Union (EU) reset. AIC continues to engage with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on PPP access, particularly where Great Britain (GB) approvals differ from those of the EU.

This discrepancy arises either because GB has completed the assessment of new active substances ahead of the EU, or because the EU made a non-renewal decision after EU Exit, meaning the actives remain available in GB.

AIC has raised concerns around availability, conditions of use, and the Health and Safety Executive's role in future EU decisions.

Showcasing the work of sector Members

This summer, AIC Members hosted six events across England, attended by 46 stakeholders from the Chemicals Regulation Division, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, and Natural England.

Topics included cover crops and crop rotations for blackgrass control. Feedback from attendees showed increased understanding of agronomic choices and cover cropping complexity.



Hazel Doonan,
Head of Crop Protection and Agronomy

GB Feed Additive Register progress

Following concerns raised over the removal and revocation of additives from the GB Feed Additives Register without consultation, AIC, alongside the British Association of Feed Supplement and Additive Manufacturers (BAFSAM), British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA), and UK Petfood, worked closely with the Food Standards Agency (FSA) to address errors and agree principles for the reinstatement of entries.

This collaboration has resulted in the reinstatement of a number of key additives, including urea, clinoptilolite, and several strains of *Lactobacillus plantarum*, which are now listed as 'authorised' following FSA review. Corrections have also been made to entries for vitamin E, niacin, folic acid, and selenomethionine.

The FSA continues to review additives such as sodium hydroxide and L-Cystine, seeking industry input on their importance and the availability of alternatives. The Agency has committed to regular updates and maintaining transparency throughout the process.

AIC remains focused on providing timely updates and engaging regularly with FSA to ensure the industry's viewpoint continues to be heard, thereby maintaining feed additive availability for Members.



James McCulloch,
Head of Animal Feed



House of Lords report on Reactive Nitrogen features AIC evidence

On 24 July, the House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee published its report *Nitrogen: Time to Reduce, Recycle, Reuse*, featuring AIC's written and oral evidence prominently.

Jo Gilbertson and Vicky Robinson highlighted the need for updated fertiliser regulations and improved market access for innovative products.

AIC supports the report's recommendations, particularly those aligned with its advocacy on fertiliser regulation reform, regulatory simplification, and manure management.

The report calls for a National Nitrogen Strategy and improved integration of nitrogen management across sectors. Key recommendations include extending Environmental Permitting Regulations, updating Farming Rules for Water, revising fertiliser product regulations, and introducing statutory nitrogen reduction targets for wastewater.

AIC will continue engaging with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and stakeholders to support the practical implementation of the report's recommendations, particularly those promoting nutrient recycling and regulatory clarity.

To further this dialogue, a luncheon at the Houses of Parliament later this year will provide an opportunity to present the sector's position to MPs and legislators.



Jo Gilbertson,
Head of Fertiliser



AIC Scotland gives evidence on UK-EU SPS agreement in Scottish Parliament

Stephen Kenyon of Harbro Limited represented AIC Scotland before the Scottish Parliament's Rural Affairs and Islands Committee, highlighting trade and regulatory challenges posed by the proposed EU-UK Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement. He called for clearer technical alignment, reduced export complexity, and UK involvement in shaping agricultural standards, using sector-specific examples to illustrate impact. **WATCH HERE >>**



Red Meat Resilience and Climate Leadership

AIC Scotland is actively contributing to the "Meating Our Potential" campaign led by Quality Meat Scotland (QMS), which aims to increase Scotch Beef production. Members signed a pledge board at the Royal Highland Show alongside Cabinet Secretary Mairi Gougeon MSP and Minister Jim Fairlie MSP.

As part of AIC Scotland's presence at the Royal Highland Show, Robert Sheasby and Ian MacDougall engaged with a wide range of Members and stakeholders over two days. They welcomed the Cabinet Secretary's commitment of £14 million in flexible capital support to help farm businesses improve efficiency and invest in nature and climate-friendly farming.



Ian MacDougall,
AIC Scotland Policy Manager



Michael Muncey, AIC with Alister Davies, Chair of AIC Cymru

Show reception brings industry and Welsh Government together

Members, policymakers, and industry stakeholders joined an AIC Cymru reception at the Royal Welsh Show (RWS) on 21 July. The show was dominated by recent announcements on the Sustainable Farming Scheme for Wales.

This timely and well-attended event brought together the wider food and farming sector with the Welsh Government and other political parties for productive conversations supporting agriculture and food production in Wales and across the United Kingdom.

The gathering provided a valuable opportunity to share AIC's priorities on food security, land use, trade, and sustainability data.

Ahead of the reception, AIC also held constructive talks with the Farmers' Union of Wales and National Farmers Union Cymru on areas of common interest.

The event is becoming a recognised fixture and offers stakeholders a relaxed networking environment during what is always a packed schedule on the first day of the RWS. AIC Cymru intends to continue with this format.



Left to right: Rob Lewis Livestock Board Chair, Dafydd Jarrett NFU Cymru, Tori Morgan NFU Cymru, Ed Barker AIC, Michael Muncey AIC

Michael Muncey,
AIC Cymru Policy Manager



More AIC Conference speakers confirmed for 2025

More speakers have been announced for the AIC Dinner & Conference 2025, taking place on 11–12 November 2025 in Peterborough. This year's theme, Managing "New Global Norms" in the Agri-Food Supply Chain, will bring together leading voices from politics, business, academia, and the agri-food sector to explore how the industry is adapting to global change.

Confirmed speakers include:

- **Sam Lowe**, Partner at Flint Global
- **Elliott Grant**, Visiting Fellow at Cambridge University
- **Kelly Hewson-Fisher**, Director and Head of Rural Research at Savills Rural
- **Pete Falloon**, Science & Food Security Lead at The Met Office
- **George Freeman MP**, former Minister of State for Science, Research and Innovation, and Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Agri-Tech

The Conference will be chaired by BBC Radio Presenter and Reporter Caz Graham, with the Conference Dinner on 11 November featuring Baroness Minette Batters, former National Farmers' Union President, as the evening's guest speaker.

For more details and to book tickets, go to: www.aicconference.org.uk.

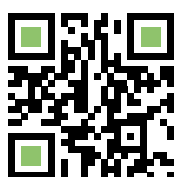
John Kelley,
Chief Operating Officer, AIC &
Managing Director, AIC Services



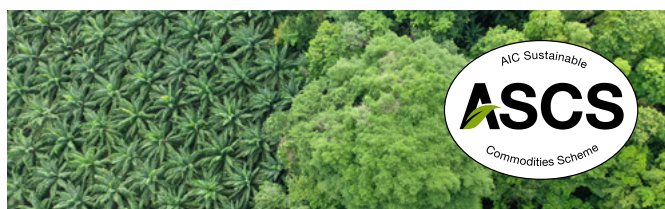
New FAR Game Feed Sustainability module launched

Building on the livestock sustainability training released in 2023, the **Feed Adviser Register (FAR)** has launched a new **Continuous Professional Development** module for game feed advisers. The module focuses on calculating the carbon footprint of feed materials and products, sector-specific sustainable feed principles, responsible sourcing of raw materials, feeding management through formulation, and the use of additives to optimise efficiency.

Participants must have completed the "Game – Core" and "Managing Antimicrobial Resistance and Biosecurity in the Game Sector" modules. Scan the QR code to find out more.



David Moss,
Technical Manager



Launching the ASCS

AIC Services, with a working group of feed industry Members, is developing the AIC Sustainable Commodities Scheme (ASCS) to provide businesses in feed and food supply chains with confidence that commodities such as soya and palm are not linked to deforestation.

It is designed for compound feed manufacturers and feed ingredient suppliers, with modules aligned to key regulatory and supply chain requirements, including the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) and United Kingdom (UK) supply chain partners.

Two modules were released for consultation in June, covering feed products from origin to UK delivery and those handled by UK operators. The Standards are now being finalised for publication and Scheme launch in the coming months.

For more information, visit the **AIC Animal Feed Sector page** or contact Sue Whittington at: sue.whittington@agindustries.org.uk

Sue Whittington,
Technical Manager



AIC online renewal system webinar

AIC will shortly invite Members to a November webinar focused on AIC's online renewal system. As a Member-driven organisation, AIC has invested significant resources in developing a digital platform that streamlines the annual renewal process, making it faster, simpler and more secure.

For any questions, please contact Tracy Smith, Membership Manager, at tracy.smith@agindustries.org.uk.



Tracy Smith,
Membership Manager



KEY DATES 2025	AIC AGM 10 October
	AIC Fertiliser Dinner 6 November
	AIC Dinner & Conference 2025 Peterborough – 11-12 November
	AIC Scotland Meetings & Dinner Glasgow – 27 November
	AIC Seed Trade Dinner York – 4 December SOLD OUT
	AIC Pulses Dinner Cambridge – 22 January 2026

