

JOURNAL

Winter 2019 | Working in support of modern, sustainable, commercial agriculture



Allan Wilkinson,
Head of Agrifoods,
HSBC

Agribusiness 2020: new horizons for the UK agri-food supply chain

Great progression required of the UK agricultural industry to meet sustainability and productivity targets. More on page 3.



Tom Heap
BBC Rural Affairs Correspondent

The Political landscape

An update from AIC CEO Robert Sheasby

Robert looks at how we proceed towards an overall net zero carbon economy.

AIC Manifesto for incoming Government

AIC has produced a manifesto for the General Election and the incoming Government.

Annual Fertiliser Dinner:

Industry must be proactive in balancing food production and environmental benefit.

The Political landscape

An update from AIC CEO Robert Sheasby

This autumn has been the wettest in recent times, and we know the challenge this creates for our industry. Meanwhile, the political wheels are turning at speed. We are in the last days before a general election. We have to wait for the outcome, but the most important thing you can do now is use your vote wisely. Take the time to see how your prospective parliamentary candidate is going to represent you – not just yourself, but also your family and your business interests. If you can, take the time to ask questions. After all, once elected, it is their job to make decisions on your behalf. We all have a responsibility to meet with them both before and after the election, in order to make sure that they are informed when making decisions.

Beyond the here and now of a general election, AIC is continuing its work on Brexit, and has been speaking with members via committees about the “*deep and comprehensive free trade agreement*” that it is proposed the UK will have with Europe. It is so important that we help Government to understand which trading relationships will matter – both now and in the future – to ensure that opportunities are not missed.

The other obvious shift is the increasing focus on sustainability, with the UK setting a target for net zero carbon emissions by 2050. It is going to be important that we address this across our committee structures and consider how we can present a united and considered vision of our contribution

to meeting this target. This is the beginning of a 30-year process of change. As we stand at the first step, we have to be clear about what we want and how we will proceed towards an overall net zero carbon economy.



Robert Sheasby,
Chief Executive, AIC

Will 2020 deliver a Brexit outcome for trade?

With an election outcome still to be determined, the break in Westminster activity allows more time to consider where we might be heading in 2020 if Parliament does approve legislation to enact the Withdrawal Agreement.

The conclusion of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the UK and EU by the end of 2020, as foreseen in the Agreement, is a tall order. Starting from the same legislative position should certainly be an advantage but any FTA negotiation as both sides will have an eye on the other's future, as well as current position. The idea of regulatory divergence, as suggested by some politicians will, inevitably bring another layer of complexity and time to the negotiating table.

One of the definite opportunities for the agri-food sector is the potential for legislation to be based on sound scientific, evidence-based criteria, maintaining – or even enhancing – food & feed safety, climate and environmental benefits.

At some point both sides will be faced with the reality of the ticking clock as we move through to December 2020. Will that see negotiations extended or a damaging no-deal exit for the UK. Or a third option with both sides seeking to deliver an interim FTA, thereby meeting the WTO requirements and giving the necessary space to fill in the details?

Paul Rooke,
Head of Policy, External Relations



Agribusiness 2020: new horizons for the UK agri-food supply chain



This year's Agribusiness Conference in Peterborough saw over 200 delegates attending, all of whom were clear when surveyed: the industry is undergoing unprecedented change and requires strong leadership. A robust agriculture and food strategy that delivers increased productivity and environmental protection is essential for the industry going forward.

These sentiments were echoed by other speakers, including Allan Wilkinson, Head of Agriculture at HSBC, who praised the industry's strength while issuing a call for greater progression. "We are in slightly troubled times, but the economy has been remarkably resilient," said Mr Wilkinson.

As Mr Wilkinson described it, the "elephant in the room" that should concern industry figures is productivity. "The gap between the best and worst in the industry is larger than ever before," said Mr Wilkinson. This widening gap, he said, will be further highlighted by Brexit, as the level of financial provision from the government following the end of CAP is still unclear.

There are additional challenges: the UK economy is still growing, but barely. Consumer confidence is waning, and fewer workers from overseas are creating a labour shortage. In addition, Mr Wilkinson addressed shifting consumer demands as a younger generation demands more attention to rectifying climate change, greater biodiversity, and ethically sourced products. Industry leaders would be wise to see this as a business opportunity, he says, and capitalise on our comparatively strong sustainability measures and the global trust in our brands.

"We face an enormous change in our operating level and have to help all businesses understand where they are and how to improve," added Mr Wilkinson. "The industry is going to face a lot of change. What an opportunity we have to get it right."

"We need to deliver industry targets, not wait for regulation," said Robert Sheasby, Chief Executive for AIC, in his



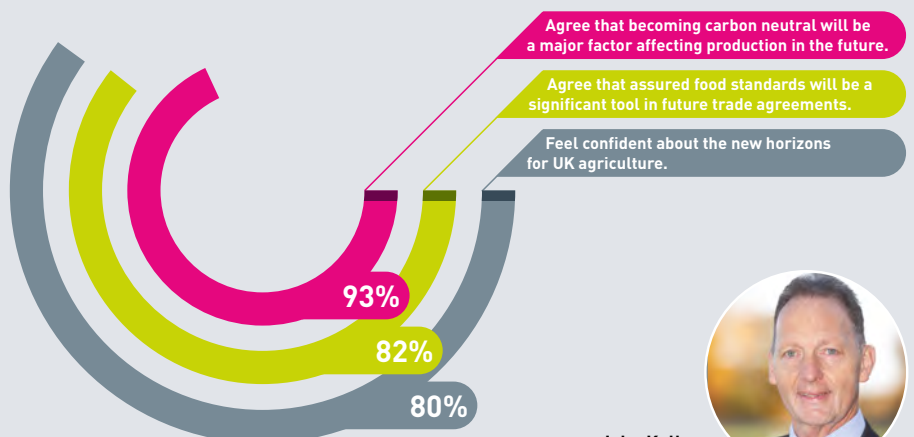
introduction. Other speakers echoed this, urging attendees – and the industry as a whole – to lead the industry charge forward, rather than waiting for change.

The Conference Chairman, BBC Rural Affairs Correspondent Tom Heap, surveyed the attendees both before and after the conference on whether they were optimistic about the new

horizons facing the agri-food supply chain. The result at the end showed a substantial shift, with a large number more optimistic at the day's end.

The message was clear and direct to the agrisupply chain: challenges are present, but we must lead the charge for increased productivity whilst meeting our sustainability obligations.

Poll results



John Kelley,
Chief Operating Officer



Key insights from the speakers



Allan Wilkinson

Head of Agriculture at HSBC

"We face an enormous change in our operating level and have to help all businesses understand where they are and how to improve. The industry is going to face a lot of change. What an opportunity we have to get it right."



Dr. Laurence Smith

Royal Agricultural University

"Meeting increasing demand to feed the world and, at the same time, reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a huge challenge for society but, extrapolating from the UK, it seems that 100% organic without drastic change is really not going to work."



Elaine Fitches

Fera Science Ltd

"We're in the early stages of research, but insect proteins really do help us get more from less. This will become more and more viable moving forward."



Baroness Neville-Rolfe DBE, CMG

Chairman Assured Food Standards

"I have three asks. If you're a farmer and haven't signed up to Red Tractor, please do. Second, let's continue to work together to ensure our industry remains fit for purpose and competitive in an ever-changing environment. Third, remember the consumer in all decisions you make."



Stuart Roberts

Vice President of the NFU

"In the next 30 years, we have to produce the same amount of food we've produced in the previous 10,000. It's a massive challenge, but a massive opportunity for British agriculture. Our high standards are critical for the future of British agriculture. We must be part of the solution, not seen as the problem."



Prof. Huw Jones

Aberystwyth University

"I'm convinced that by understanding genetics and packaging edited genes into a seed before sowing, is part of the answer to some of the challenges facing agriculture today."

The future of our industry

As part of AIC's aim of supporting the next generation, students from several agricultural colleges and universities were invited as guests to Agribusiness 2020.

"The conference is a great platform to inspire agricultures next generation of leaders by providing them with an opportunity to engage with industry and the big challenges that will undoubtedly shape their careers" says John Kelley, COO of AIC.



Agricultures next generation of leaders from industry



Agri-food students from leading Universities

Save the date

We look forward to welcoming you to Agribusiness 2021, which will take place on the:

11 November 2020

preceded by the pre-conference supper on the 10 November 2020.

To watch or listen to recordings from Agribusiness 2020 – including all of the guest speakers – visit: www.agribusiness.org.uk/agenda

New Future Agricultural Policy for Scotland

This Future Agricultural Policy document aims to ensure policy makers and other influential industry members understand the role that the agri-supply industry has to play in the future success and prosperity of Scottish farming. Officially launched at the AIC Scotland meetings and dinner held on the 28th November, the document aims to tackle the complex challenges facing our industry and give the industry a collective voice. The document allows us to work in a joined-up approach with each other and government to achieve a sustainable future for Scottish agriculture.

It can be downloaded online at www.agindustries.org.uk/latest-documents/a-future-agricultural-policy-for-scotland/ Author Ian Muirhead, Policy Manager at AIC Scotland is keen to engage with anyone wishing to discuss the document further ian.muirhead@agindustries.org.uk



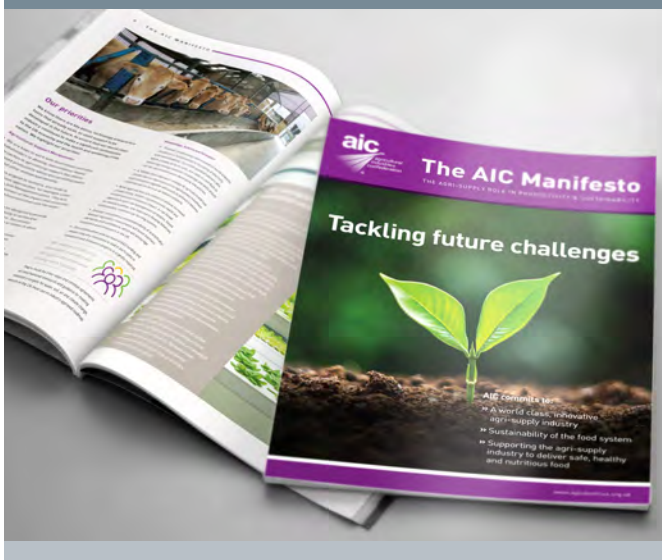
Ian Muirhead,
Policy Manager at AIC Scotland



AIC Manifesto for incoming Government

AIC has produced a manifesto for the General Election and the incoming Government, a copy of which is found online at www.agindustries.org.uk/latest-documents/the-aic-manifesto-2019/ Its focus is very much on positive engagement and pressing Government for decisions which allow the industry to move forward and be a part of delivering the solutions to many of the current national and international issues.

We would encourage you to use it as part of your engagement with the prospective parliamentary candidates in your constituency, but also with your elected MP in the weeks and months ahead.



'New Plant Health Regulation and seed'

On 14th December 2019 the new Plant Health Regulation comes into force. This will not affect any seed harvested before that date but will be very relevant for seed harvested in 2020. The Regulation introduces the new category of RNQPs (Regulated Non-Quarantine Pests). These are pests that negatively affect plants for planting and have an economically unacceptable impact. Cereals are not affected, and this primarily applies to vegetable seeds but also includes oilseed rape and linseed. There is no RNQP requirement on fodder rape and linseed. There is on vegetable beans, but there is on vegetable beans. Plant passports will be required where there is an RNQP requirement, and this is to be integrated into the label.

Regardless of Brexit developments, enhanced measures for UK plant health protection are to be expected. AIC continues to engage with Defra for clarity on what the practical implications are for the seed industry, and guidance should be available in early 2020.



Catherine Barrett,
Sector Manager, AIC



Annual Fertiliser Dinner: industry must be proactive in balancing food production and environmental benefit

The UK fertiliser industry has much to be proud of and has an influential part to play in new legal frameworks that balance food production with an enhanced environment, Peter Scott, Chairman of the AIC Fertiliser Sector, said at the annual fertiliser sector dinner.

"Our industry is positively engaged in painting the future picture on a canvas of a new Agriculture Bill, a new Environment Bill, the 25-year environment plan, the Clean Air Strategy and Governments commitment to Net Zero by 2050. Our role in shaping the future is enhanced by working collaboratively with numerous key partners," said Mr Scott.

To ensure a wider range of stakeholders understand the vital role of the fertiliser industry, Mr Scott announced the formation of a new communications group and urged AIC fertiliser members to play their part in telling the good news of the industry.



FIAS i-learning – new module launched

AIC Services are pleased to announce that the next addition to the AIC Trade Assurance Scheme i-learning portfolio is now live. FIAS Merchant joins the existing FIAS Transport and FIAS Driver courses to support participants of the FIAS scheme.

FIAS Merchant consists of five modules which cover all requirements of the FIAS Merchant Standard: legislation, security, risk assessment, internal audits, supplier approval, product sales and delivery, training and record keeping.

These courses can be accessed on PC, tablet or smart phone. On completion of the course, a certificate is issued by email, which can be added to personal training records and used as evidence of training during an audit.

The next module to follow will be FIAS Storage.

Access to the courses is available to all participants via the i-learning portal on the AIC website. Login details can be requested from Kiwa on uk.feed@kiwa.com or 01423 878873.



FAR launches first CPD subject module

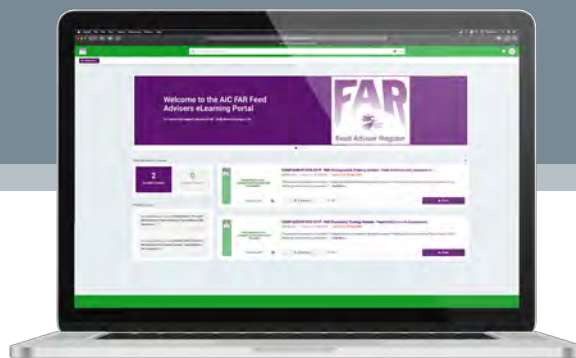
On 1st October this year, FAR launched its first subject module for CPD. The online course and set of 10 i-validation questions provides training on feed additives, legislation and maximum permitted levels (MPLs). There is one presentation for the ruminant sector and one for the monogastric sector, with presentations and questions being allocated per area of expertise.

It is important to note that we are using a new IT provider for FAR CPD: VBMS. We will continue to work with them throughout future FAR CPD modules.

Core competency and further documents for CPD Year 1 have been created and are now available to feed advisers through their training portal and on the FAR website: www.feedadviserregister.org.uk/cpd-homepage/

For next year, FAR will be developing training with industry experts on AMR. This subject will make up the training for Year 2.

Please contact inge.verwoerd@agindustries.org.uk for any CPD queries.



AIC Deliver Successful Regional Feed Meeting Roadshow

In total 153 Members attended the seven events with representation from 85 companies. The roadshow kicked off at The Moredun Research Institute just outside Edinburgh and finished at the Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute at Hillsborough, N Ireland. Each meeting consisted of a full industry briefing from AIC, an update on UFAS and FEMAS assurance schemes and then a tour and presentation of the hosting venue.

The objective was for AIC to engage with those employed in member businesses and assurance partners who do not

have direct or regular contact with AIC, in order to convey a better understanding of the work AIC carries out in terms of policy and legislative engagement in the UK and Brussels. AIC used the opportunity to update members on plans to establish a sustainability roadmap designed to map out how feed businesses can reach net-zero carbon and clean air and water targets.

The events were favourably received by attendees, who particularly enjoyed the opportunity to tour world-leading agricultural research and educational institutions.



In total 153 Members attended the seven events with representation from 85 companies.

Sugar beet trials highlight need for aphid control measures

AIC invited CRD and Defra officials to the BBRO sugar beet trial site at Swanton Morley on the 13th and 15th November. The aim was to demonstrate to policy makers the need for effective measures to control aphid transmitted viruses in sugar beet, which are expected to be an increasing issue following the withdrawal of neonicotinoid seed treatments from 2019 plantings onwards.

Twelve varieties of sugar beet were trialled with some plants, inoculated with aphids carrying virus yellows and mild virus yellows. Visual differences in crop yellowing were very obvious between varieties, and it will be interesting to see how this is manifested in yield.



15 November - three Defra staff discussing aphid transmitted virus control with BBRO and AIC member Darryl Shailes, HLH

AIC helps farmers tackle impact of unprecedented wet weather

Provisional Met Office data shows that parts of the UK received over 180% of average rainfall in September and October 2019, leaving many fields too wet for drilling winter crops, and an uncertain future for some planted fields.

AIC wrote a letter to the Secretary of State and key policy makers, co-signed by the NFU and NFUS, asking for an extension to the grace period for sale and supply, disposal, storage and use of two plant protection products. This would then give farmers maximum opportunity to use those products in this cropping season.

The wet weather has brought the setting of the time allowed for sale and supply and storage and use of plant protection products, which are not renewed for approval, into focus. Timings are determined by scheduling of the non-renewal vote on an active substance at SCoPAFF meetings, which does not bear any relation to the main season of use. To avoid the need for costly disposal, AIC will continue to press policy makers for stakeholder consultation ahead of setting timings, to minimise disruption mid-season and minimise disposal costs.

New AIC appointments

Sue Whittington joins AIC Services as Technical Manager

Sue Whittington has joined the AIC Services team as a Technical Manager working largely on animal feed assurance and sustainability.

Sue brings over 20 years' experience in managing and developing assurance schemes and standards both in the UK and overseas. Most recently, Sue was with Linking the Environment and Farming (LEAF) where she was involved in developing, monitoring and evaluating the LEAF Marque Certification and Chain of Custody globally. In addition, Sue also led the LEAF Marque training programme for certification bodies and delivered overseas training.

"We are delighted to have Sue and her expertise join the team," said John Kelley, Managing Director of AIC Services which operates the AIC Assurance Schemes including FEMAS, UFAS and TASC which focus on food and feed safety. *"Sue will be instrumental in helping us address the increasingly important issue of sustainability across the supply chains."*



Sue Whittington,
Technical Manager

Members Matter

Following our successful members conference a few weeks ago, my plan is to come out and about again visiting as many members as possible through December, January and February.

Having the opportunity to talk through how AIC can add value is essential to ensuring that we are delivering the best membership proposition to all Members irrelevant of business size or sector.

Please contact me direct to arrange an AIC Membership visit – 01733 385232 or mobile 07442 862380.



Tracy Smith,
Membership Manager

AIC elects Angela Booth as new Vice Chairman

Angela brings many years of broad experience in the industry, including several years as Chair of the AIC Feed Executive Committee, a member of the AIC Board, and several roles on industry executives and committees. She is currently the AB Agri Director of Feed Safety.

"I'm delighted to assume the position of Vice Chairman at AIC, an organisation that continues to act as the leading voice for the UK farming industry," says Angela Booth. *"We operate in unpredictable times, making AIC's role as the leading voice for agrisupply trade members more vital than ever."*

"As it becomes more important than ever to both produce food efficiently and manage our natural resources, AIC will be a strong voice for its members in discussions with government departments, NGOs, and relevant bodies both in and outside of the UK."



Angela Booth,
AIC Vice Chairman

AIC appoints RDP as new communications partner

RDP – a specialist agribusiness marketing agency – has been appointed as AIC's new communications partner, taking over the role from Geoff Dodgson who, having provided public relations and marketing services for AIC since its inception, has begun training for ordination in the Church of England.

"We're very grateful to Geoff and the invaluable contributions he's made to AIC over the years," says Robert Sheasby.

"Since its founding in 2003, Geoff has played a key role in establishing AIC's position as the voice for the UK's agri-supply chain."

"We're really pleased to be working with the highly skilled and well-connected team at RDP," says AIC Chief Executive Robert Sheasby. *"Their strategic approach to ag marketing, focus on results and experience in creating successful campaigns for big brands meant they were the obvious choice."*



AIC, CONFEDERATION HOUSE,
EAST OF ENGLAND SHOWGROUND, PETERBOROUGH PE2 6XE
E: enquiries@agindustries.org.uk

