 *News Release*

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Scottish Quality Crops (SQC) will shortly be open to tender applications for the future provision of assessment and certification services for the Scottish Quality Crops assurance scheme.

Tender applications will be circulated on 09 May with the closing date for applications set for 10 June 2022.

The purpose of this is to appoint a third-party Certification Body (CB) contractor, to provide independent assessment and certification services to its assurance programme. The programme provides reassurance to consumers that a crop has been produced under stringent standards of food safety, environmental protection and good farming practice. The scope of this tender includes all relevant activities related to the assessment and certification of the schemes including assessment of any new and existing assurance scheme members and continuous development of the SQC assurance schemes.

Andrew Moir, Scottish Quality Crops Chairman said, “In line with the SQC strategy and vision, as set by the SQC Executive and Board of Directors, we are always looking to add value to growers’ businesses by maximising cost-effective access to multiple market opportunities. And, to provide reassurance and confidence to customers that the independent verification of SQC growers demonstrates safe, traceable and environmentally responsible production of crops within Scotland. Our tender process will ensure that – for the next five years - we have on board a Certification Body who will continue to ensure these measures are reached and to work with us to provide the best possible service and assurance scheme to our members. We must always remember that participation to the scheme is voluntary and membership is open to all combinable crop producers in Scotland and the North of England who demonstrate, by independent annual assessment, that they operate to SQC standard.”

**ENDS**