



**SCOTTISH  
QUALITY CROPS**

# NEWS UPDATES

July 2025

## WE'RE OUT AND ABOUT

In this issue of the SQC enews, we'll be looking again at the delivery of PDF grain passports – remembering that they are still a paper passport – and updating you on the new Industry Checker and associated Affiliate Membership.

Our SQC Chair, John Hutcheson, talks about using assurance as a springboard to build value through collaborative marketing. And, I'll give you the lowdown on my day at Royal Highland Show – where I

was running late from start to finish due to the fantastic discussions I kept getting involved in when bumping into SQC growers and stakeholders as I moved around the showground.

I'm also going to be at Border Union Show on Friday 25 July and look forward to speaking with many more members and stakeholders there.

In the meantime, and as always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.



**Teresa Dougall,  
SQC Managing Director**

## Important Reminder SQC Grain Passports

**SQC and our Certification Body, FIA, have been working hard since the start of the year to ensure that all growers are aware of the change to the distribution method of the SQC grain passport. We have now ensured that all members have been contacted – whether by email, post or phone – and thanks also go to NFUS who have helped spread the word via their own channels.**

As a reminder, the most recent communication – providing instructions on how to access your new member portal and PDF grain passport – were distributed.

Since then, we have been working on collating feedback and will shortly be issuing an update addressing a few snagging issues that have arisen and, more importantly, how to resolve them.

We really do appreciate all feedback that has been received and are endeavouring to take all points on board to make these minor

adjustments and improvements as we progress.

Please find reminder details below of the 3 step process, issued in June, to access your new member portal and grain passport.

So, my final word for just now on this – 'thank you' for once again working with us as we look to improve the service we provide to you.

<b>STAGE 1</b> 	<b>Week commencing 2/6/2025</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You will receive an email from "no-reply@foodassurance.co.uk"</li><li>Email Subject: "Welcome to INTACT Platform"</li><li>Email contains instructions how to login and register to the FIA Auditee Portal</li></ul>
<b>STAGE 2</b> 	<b>Week commencing 2/6/2025</b> <p>Register to become a user of the FIA Auditee Portal by following the instructions outlined in the above "Welcome to INTACT Platform" email</p>
<b>STAGE 3</b> 	<b>Week commencing 9/6/2025</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>FIA will issue a second email from "agriculture@foodassurance.co.uk"</li><li>Email Subject: "SQC Harvest Passport"</li><li>Email will inform you that your SQC Grain Passport is available for you to view and download within your FIA Auditee Portal</li><li>Following receipt of the above email, please log in to your FIA Auditee Portal, proceed to view and download your SQC Grain Harvest Passport following the user guide provided</li></ul>
<b>Please Note:</b> To assist with the transition of the new Auditee Portal, a pdf copy of your specific grain harvest passport will also be attached to the above email – allowing quick access to print copies as required.	

# Assurance Needs to be the Golden Ticket to Markets

**I have recently returned from a meeting in London on the UK-wide Farm Assurance Review. This was the review commissioned to gather the industry's opinions on all of the UK's assurance schemes to determine whether standards and processes are still relevant, following the sector-wide debate on the subject last year. I am really proud that SQC was highlighted as a leading example of an effective assurance model.**

This recognition is based on the lean and collaborative approach SQC takes to both running the organisation and setting standards. We are constantly liaising with the industry, through our cooperative board, our Standards Setting Committee and the Scottish Crops Supply Chain Hub to ensure the standards are required and relevant – and removing those that are no longer necessary.

The work is never done though, and at SQC we continue to review and revise our systems and processes to work for the whole supply chain, including currently introducing digital portals for growers and industry to increase efficiency and strengthen traceability.

The holy grail is how the value created through assurance is returned back to growers. This value is not always visible.

Some growers say they see little financial benefit from being assured, particularly in the cereals sector where cheaper imports with a less certain assurance status can be brought in.

The simple, unavoidable truth is that without assurance, the routes to market are very limited and difficult to navigate.

We all want to see assured Scottish grain as the first choice for buyers. Where there is supply, Scottish grain should be the default. Unfortunately, however, as an assurance body, SQC can't dictate what merchants choose to buy – commodity markets will always be driven by business priorities.

It's not a race to the bottom though – we, as growers, need to be proud of what we produce and to use assurance to our advantage.

I believe strongly, as grower myself, that the most effective way to leverage a premium for our Scottish Combinable Crops is through collaborative marketing within producer groups, using SQC standards as a baseline and introducing additional customer-specific protocols that are audited at the same time.

These should be farmer-designed, agreed with the customer and built into the terms of a supply contract.



**John Hutcheson,  
Chair of SQC and arable farmer**

The gathering and sharing of data should be part of this process with data held under the ownership of farmers withing a co-operative governance model and licensed to the customer as part of the supply terms.

SQC and FIA, our certification body, have all the tools to enable this to happen, and SAOS have the collaborative and co-op expertise to help set up producer groups, but ultimately it is up to us as growers to take more control and market our crops more effectively. We need to use quality assurance as the golden ticket to attract the markets and price we want from our product.

## New Industry Checker and Introduction to Affiliate Membership

Over the past year, SQC has been consulting with the supply chain and undertaking a review of the Member Checker, the online service for the supply chain which allows them to quickly and easily verify the quality assurance status of grain grown in Scotland.

The digital landscape has moved on substantially since the Member Checker service was first introduced and following the feedback, the SQC Board agreed to upgrade the platform to improve its functionality and the overall user experience.



The upgraded service, developed by ScotEID, will be renamed the Industry Checker and will become

a paid subscription service for buyers in the supply chain. This will enable SQC to cover the ongoing maintenance and development costs of the service, covered by those who use it. This will not affect annual membership fees for growers.

The Industry Checker has been piloted in recent weeks and we look forward to its full launch this month.





## SQC – ON THE GO At the Royal Highland Show

What a cracking day – all around. Great weather, great chat and great to catch up with so many. As always, we also used the show to meet with some key stakeholders – NFUS, AHDB and AIC – where there was plenty to discuss and to consider. We also enjoyed seeing many coop partners at the SAOS

reception. Amongst the topics covered were the ongoing issues around imports and RED; changes at SQC – including some of the work as mentioned above; the Farm Assurance Review and what we are doing at SQC to deliver on some of their recommendations; trade deals and much more.

## WHAT'S COMING UP

We will be in touch with all members soon with some important news on the SQC Standards Review. Given the importance we place on our Standards, we wish to reach out as widely as possible and take a close look at what is already in place – to ensure it is relevant and fit for purpose.

Taking that into account, we have decided to extend our period of consultation and review through to

01 October 2026. This means that the Standards document for October 2025 will change very little – aside from changes already promoted via the Addendum to Standards October 2024 document.

I am also looking to pull together a guide to the Renewable Energy Directive (RED) – looking at why and how it is incorporated into our standards.



### SQC on LinkedIn

Have you followed us yet? Don't forget that we are now on LinkedIn – a new space for us to share our news, blogs and views. Please like and share our posts.

Click icon above to take you to our LinkedIn profile page.



### New SQC Website

We are working with CP&Co and Jane Craigie Marketing to upgrade and develop the SQC website and look forward to launching the new look in the Autumn.

**Keep your eyes peeled!**



### FIA Contact Details

Telephone: 0131 609 0558 or [info@foodassurance.co.uk](mailto:info@foodassurance.co.uk)

Website: [sqcrops.co.uk](http://sqcrops.co.uk) (where you will find an enquiry form) or [foodintegrityassurance.co.uk](http://foodintegrityassurance.co.uk)



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