 *News Release*

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**SQC appoints FIA to conduct Quality Assurance Assessments**

Scottish Quality Crops (SQC) has appointed Food Integrity Assurance (FIA) to conduct assessment and certification services in support of Scottish Quality Crops’ Assurance Schemes.

Covering the production of crops in Scotland, FIA will be responsible for the assessments through to the provision of certificates for the schemes SQC currently operate.

Teresa Dougall, SQC Managing Director, says that the transition will take place over the coming months with FIA formally taking on the contract from 1 October 2022, which aligns with the start of the SQC scheme year.

“SQC members will continue to be audited as normal for this current scheme year and there will be no change to any of the service provision. However, talks with FIA are already underway to plan for a smooth transition and to ensure that members are kept up to date at each stage of the process.”

Scotland has taken the lead in the development of farm and quality assurance schemes. Scottish Quality Cereals was launched in 1994, and in2007 the company changed to Scottish Quality Crops to take into account that all combinable crops were now included within the scheme standards. SQC now work closely with their 3200 farmer members to firmly place Scotland's combinable crops at the premium end of the UK and European markets.

The scheme aims to provide industry and consumers with total assurance that cereals produced for the food chain are not only fully traceable and managed to safeguard food safety but also focus on the increasingly important sustainability requirements of the sector.

Stephen Sanderson, FIA General Manager, says:

“Since being established in 2021, Food Integrity Assurance business aim is to support, develop and build on Scotland’s key credentials of truly sustainable food production that is climate-friendly and supportive of our unique rural environment.

“We are looking forward to working closely with SQC and the wider industry to ensure requirements for the SQC Assurance Scheme are met and underpin the integrity of the Scottish Quality Crops Brand, whilst introducing assessment efficiencies through the adoption of new technologies and joint assessment capabilities with other assurance schemes we operate in Scotland.”

For further information on SQC, please go to [www.sqcrops.co.uk](http://www.sqcrops.co.uk)