



Red Tractor's response to the Farm Assurance Review

Progress Report 22 July 2025

Introduction

This document provides an interim update on Red Tractor's work and progress in delivering the recommendations of the Farm Assurance Review against the commitments made in our [full response, published 25 March 2025](#).

We continue to push ahead with delivering the recommendations of the Farm Assurance Review, in particular recommendations to streamline and review scheme requirements and assessments. During June, all six Red Tractor Sector Boards met to review documents which will put in place a pathway for improvements. There were also significant developments in delivery of Red Tractor's communications strategy, collaboration with other assurance schemes and work to identify opportunities for reducing audit burden.

Key activities delivered since our last update on 3 June, detailed in this document, include:

- Sector Board Terms of Reference and a Policy for Development of Red Tractor Standards have been reviewed by all Sector Boards, the Standards Committee and the AFS Board and are close to final. These will inform work underway to deliver improvements specific to each farming sector.
- Sector Strategies, which identify priorities and objectives for each sector, are in development and will be refined following feedback from the June Sector Board meetings. They will be presented to Sector Boards for further discussion in September.
- The [Fresh Produce Sector Board](#) is working with the Fresh Produce Consortium to pilot action plan to reduce audit burden on growers complying with multiple assurance schemes.
- Data from Certification Bodies on the number of joint assessments was presented at the Standards Committee meeting on 8th July. This data will be used to develop an action plan for discussions with relevant schemes on the potential to further reduce audit burden.
- Sector Boards provided positive feedback on Red Tractor's new communications strategy, which is now being rolled out. Some early results are:
 - Improvements to the [Red Tractor website](#), focusing on improvements to [assurance information for members](#) improving user journeys, SEO, accessibility, content and design.
 - Trialling new ways of cascading [information from Sector Boards](#) to representative's organisations.
 - Appointing a PR agency to deliver consumer-facing communications as part of Red Tractor's efforts to educate consumers on the importance of assured British farming.
 - Weekly communications updates to all staff and Directors.
 - [New research](#) showing increasing consumer trust in British food, which was used to generate media coverage and discussion with stakeholders.
 - Communications to all Red Tractor stakeholders to mark [25 years since the creation of Red Tractor](#).
 - [Commentary](#) on the UK Government's Food Strategy for England.

- Sponsorship of the Mixed Farmer of the Year Award at the Farmers Weekly Awards.
- A Red Tractor member roadshow is in development.
- Red Tractor repeated its offer of collaboration with other farm assurance schemes in a 'loose federation' with the offer to host the meeting in October. RT is in regular contact with QMS, FAWL, NIBL, FQAS and SQC.
- Red Tractor met with TIAH and BASIS to discuss developing a farm assessor job profile to be promoted on the TIAH website.

In the tables below we have provided an update on how we're delivering each of the commitments made towards each of the relevant detailed recommendations of the Farm Assurance Review. **Developments in bold have been added since the last update on 3 June.**

* Please refer to the [Farm Assurance Review](#) for the detailed recommendations.

** The lead organisations are those identified by the Farm Assurance Review as taking a lead responsibility for the recommendation.

Note, actions for other organisations to lead have been removed from this document.

Red Tractor's progress in delivering the FAR recommendations

Strategic Recommendation 1: On-farm audits must be reduced, simplified and delivered more consistently

PRIORITY FOR RED TRACTOR: Red Tractor fully supports this recommendation. We want farmers to experience real change with smarter risk-based audits which reduce burden. We are committed to prioritising the relevant recommendations in partnership with our certification bodies, assessors and other schemes to ensure audits to Red Tractor's standards are consistent, simplified, meaningful and as efficient as possible.

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I.1	Clarity about purpose	NFU & AHDB	RT will help and support at the request of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We would be pleased to help and support NFU, AHDB and other stakeholders to agree the purpose and scope of farm assurance if required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor representatives participated in a NFUs / AHDB hosted meeting on 29 May 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will participate in the next meeting on 17th September Continue to collaborate with the

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			the lead bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT wrote on 21 March to NFU and AHDB who lead this action offering our help and support at a time that they feel is appropriate. 		lead bodies, FA schemes and other relevant stakeholders
I.2	Revising standards	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT recognises the importance of this and has started work in this area in consultation with Sector Boards and key stakeholders to develop and finalise a policy for standards. The policy will initiate a review of and justification for existing standards and identify future changes as specified. This new 'Red Tractor Policy for Standards' will be published on our website with a review plan by July 2025. Progress against the review plan will be monitored and published every 6 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT has met with farming representatives from all our Sector Boards to listen to their views and help inform a draft policy RT Sector Boards have been briefed on the draft 'Red Tractor Policy for Standards' ahead of their meetings in June RT Sector Boards considered and discussed the draft 'Red Tractor Policy for Standards' at their meetings in June and provided views on the future sector strategy Sector Board feedback was incorporated into a revised draft which was considered and agreed by Standards Committee and the AFS Board at its meeting on 18th July The Policy will be published in August, following a final opportunity for Sector Board review. Red Tractor provided members with details of this work in its monthly newsletter, Member Matters, on 22 July 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In August and September Sector Boards will develop and finalise individual sector strategies setting out the priorities for standards and operational aspects
I.3	A right of appeal	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appealing audit outcomes is within the responsibility of the Certification Body so we will ask all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT hosted a meeting of all Certification Bodies on 7 May. Appeals were included on the agenda. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will monitor feedback from members to ensure

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				<p>who work with RT to ensure their appeals procedure is accessible to RT members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While RT has a Complaints and Appeals process which specifies that the appeal panel must include at least one person independent of RT, we will nevertheless consider steps to strengthen this process in line with the recommendation. We will then publish the process in full by June 2025. RT will review the process every two years. RT's existing suspensions process includes a 28-day grace period for non-conformances to be resolved with the exception of major non-conformances against key standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All RT members have access to their Certification Body's appeal procedure directly and links can be found on RT website Appeals section. RT Standards Committee met on 13 May and reviewed and updated the RT Appeals process to ensure the FAR recommendations were included. On 29 May RT published a summary of the appeals process and the detailed appeals process. Red Tractor provided members with details and links in its monthly newsletter, Member Matters, on 4 June 2025. 	<p>the Appeal process is understood and unless required before RT will review the appeals process in two years, by May 2027.</p>
I.4	Proportionate sanctions	FA Schemes	RT will collaborate and consult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While RT already has a process to ensure that sanctions are proportionate, the review has demonstrated that these sanctions are not sufficiently transparent or publicly available. Therefore, we will communicate and publish RT's sanctions by May 2025. Following discussion with other FA schemes RT will review sanctions in consultation with Sector Boards, to ensure they are consistent. RT has started progress against this recommendation by writing on 19th March to other FA Schemes to suggest we all collaborate on this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT Standards Committee met on 13 May and reviewed and agreed sanctions ensuring they were fair and proportionate and in line with the FAR. On 29 May RT published the Red Tractor Sanctions to ensure they were transparent and publicly available to all members and stakeholders. Red Tractor provided members with details and links in its monthly newsletter, Member Matters, on 4 June. RT has shared the Red Tractor Sanctions with Certification Bodies requesting they identify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will share with other FA schemes and discuss to identify if there are any opportunities to improve consistency of approach at meeting being arranged for September.

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				topic to ensure a consistent approach.	any opportunities to improve consistency.	
1.5	Risk based, coordinated inspection	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT already operates a risk based approach to audits in pigs, poultry and dairy however, a risk-based approach acknowledging low risk farms has not yet been developed or implemented. RT will work with UKAS, our certification bodies, regulators, other FA schemes to ensure all aspects are considered in developing an achievable roadmap by sector. RT will publish progress updates on this topic in Sector Board reports. We will publish details of the RT Assessor Protocol and Training programme to demonstrate the processes that all assessors have to follow when conducting an audit by July 2025. RT will work with our certification bodies to ensure appropriate information is shared prior to assessment including any guidance that may aid the member. RT Complaints and Appeals process will be reviewed as part of 1.3 to check the process meets this recommendation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The potential for risk based coordinated inspections was discussed at the RT hosted meeting of all Certification Bodies on 7 May with all recognising the longer-term opportunities and associated operational changes which will be needed in this area. A draft RT Assessor Protocol and Training programme has been drafted. RT Standards Committee met on 13 May and reviewed and agreed the RT Complaints process ensuring it met the FAR Recommendations. On 29 May RT published the Complaints Procedure to ensure they were transparent and publicly available to all members and stakeholders. Red Tractor provided members with details and links in its monthly newsletter, Member Matters, on 4 June. Standards Committee on 8th July agreed the RT Assessor Protocol and Training programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will use the pig sector initially to pilot potential risk-based solutions with input from the RT Pig sector board Updates will be provided in Sector Board reports RT will shortly publish the RT Assessor Protocol and Training Programme and will highlight to members and stakeholders
1.6	Learning lessons: using experience to support members	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT agrees there is an opportunity improve the value provided by audit information, and will consult with farming representatives on Sector Boards, other external support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT Dairy board on 17th June considered work already done in this area – e.g. Demonstrating Compliance and article on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will publish a technical article each quarter to highlight best practice examples

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				<p>organisations (e.g. AHDB) and auditors to review how such information, including best practice examples, can be shared widely across the RT membership and industry.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will pilot this with the dairy sector by Sept 2025. RT publishes compliance advice based on the most common non-conformances for members across all sectors. 	<p>Chlorates in January Technical Briefing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other RT sectors to discuss opportunities at meetings in November
I.7	Working in tandem: collaboration and cooperation between schemes	FA schemes, led by AHDB	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On a large proportion of farms where RT and other FA scheme audits are required by the member they are already conducted at the same time (e.g. RT + LEAF we estimate >95%). This is delivered through our work with our certification bodies who also assess for many other FA schemes. However, this can improve, and separate audits in some devolved regions and between RT and RSPCA audits are the exception. RT has started progress against this recommendation by writing on 19th March to all other FA schemes to suggest we all collaborate on this important area and seek ways to improve. In some sectors, considerable additional audit burden is created by separate processor and customer audits, which RT has identified as a significant area omitted from the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint inspections were discussed at the RT hosted meeting of all Certification Bodies (CBs) on 7 May. All CBs agreed to share data with RT to show proportion already delivered and identify opportunities. Red Tractor representatives participated in a NFUs / AHDB hosted meeting on 29th May. RT has been liaising with retailers and relevant fresh produce processors to help inform an accurate picture of audit burden additional to RT and other FA schemes in the sector. RT Fresh Produce board on 24th June discussed work to date on customer and processor additional audits and agreed priorities. An update was provided in the Fresh Produce Sector Board report. Data on the proportion of joint inspections which are currently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Fresh Produce RT will commission an external agency to survey members and work with Fresh Produce Consortium on audit mapping. RT will liaise with appropriate CBs and other FA schemes prioritised by the Standards Committee to identify steps to increase the number of joint inspections Updates will be provided in Sector Board reports

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				<p>Commissioners' Report. RT will write to all retailers to urge them to work with RT to address this together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant RT Sector Boards will identify areas for improvement in this area and develop an action plan to consult with relevant processors and customers. RT will publish progress updates on this topic in sector board reports. 	<p>delivered was presented to Standards Committee on 8th July and areas for improvement identified.</p>	
I.8	Joint training for inspectors	FA Schemes, working with TIAH	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT is committed to continuous CPD for auditors delivering RT audits, and we have a dedicated Assessor Training Academy and internal staff resource in our Compliance Team to focus and deliver this. RT will review the current training provision to ensure it delivers the required framework, and training around communications and interpersonal skills. We will publish details of the RT Assessor Protocol and Training programme to demonstrate this by July 2025. RT is already a member of the TIAH Consultation Group, and wrote to TIAH on 19th March reconfirming our commitment to the work TIAH are doing and asking for suggested appropriate training providers as recommended. Statistics on the RT assessor training programme will be published annually, starting in Sept 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards Committee on 8th July agreed the RT CB protocol for assessors and CB personnel. RT met with TIAH leadership on July 15th and agreed to progress the assessor profile for the TIAH website along with an interview video with a target publication date of Sept 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessor CPD events will continue to be attended by RT. RT will shortly publish the RT Assessor Protocol and Training Programme webpage based on the agreed CB protocol and will highlight to members and stakeholders RT will work with TIAH to develop a farm assessor job profile on the TIAH website.

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I.9	Transparency between schemes and regulators	FA Schemes and industry regulators	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT recognises that transparency with regulators could deliver benefits to all parties – members, FA schemes and regulators themselves. RT has started progress against this recommendation by writing on 19th March to all other FA schemes to ascertain the potential to collaborate on knowledge exchange initiatives with regulators. Through its existing memorandum of understanding with the Food Standards Agency, RT has agreed to host an on-farm awareness day for key FSA staff and inspectors. RT will produce videos showing elements of a RT farm inspection for sharing with FSA and other regulators to improve transparency by May 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT has produced a series of 8 videos showing key elements of a farm assessment. These were shared with FSA on 27 February 2025. RT hosted an on-farm awareness day for key FSA staff on 19 May 2025. RT together with FSA met the National Agriculture Panel (NAP) of Trading Standards regional representatives on 10th June to discuss earned recognition procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT to participate in an FSA hosted online meeting for all relevant Trading Standards officers to explain how the scheme works and answer questions.
I.10	Addressing the impact of audit on farmer wellbeing	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT recognises the huge challenges facing the farming community and the pressure placed on some farmers and is fully committed to ensuring RT staff and auditors working on our behalf are appropriately trained. In addition, we believe that work in streamlining audits and implementing a risk-based approach has the potential to improve the impact. To amplify existing efforts, by July 2025 the RT Board will identify a Director to take responsibility for overseeing this work and identify where improvements can be made, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the Board meeting on 18 July, Alistair Mackintosh, RT Chair, confirmed that the new Vice Chair would take on responsibility for overseeing support for farmer wellbeing. Recruitment for the Vice Chair is in progress, with an appointment expected shortly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor to confirm the appointment of the Vice Chair.

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				<p>for example in the prominence and frequency of published support, or in the training provided to auditors or the RT telephone helpdesk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RT website carries more information and details are published in our Member Matters newsletter from time to time. RT staff who liaise with members on a regular basis have attended RABl Mental Health Training, and RT direct communication with individual members, particularly when sanctions are being applied, always highlights where further support can be found. Certification Bodies working with RT all provide regular training for their staff and auditors. 		
I.11	Promoting consistency in inspections	FA Schemes	RT will consult with UKAS and Certification Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will consult with UKAS and certification bodies by July 2025 to identify what is possible whilst maintaining balance between consistency and objectivity and as such RT wrote to all RT certification bodies on 19th March. RT will also investigate whether capturing key information on IT systems and portals could assist with better knowledge retention in the future if the individual auditor has to change, for whatever reason. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussed at the RT hosted meeting of all Certification Bodies on 7 May. 	
I.12	Inspection as a career path	FA Schemes	RT will consult with Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will consult with Certification Bodies who contract / employ auditors as they are a key partner in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT met with TIAH and BASIS to discuss training opportunities for assessors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT is working with TIAH to develop a farm assessment job profile

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			Bodies and FA Schemes	<p>addressing this area, together with universities and colleges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT has started progress against this recommendation by writing on 19th March RT to certification bodies and FA Schemes offering to discuss how we can all collaborate to address this important topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT discussed the need for developing inspection as a career path with Certification Bodies in a meeting hosted on 7 May. See further details in 1.8. 	<p>for the TIAH website due to be published by September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> See further details in 1.8.
1.13	Risk-based inspection	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This directly links to Recommendation 1.5, in which all RT sectors fully agree this approach is an important ambition, whilst also recognising the risk assessment method and ways to deliver it will need to incorporate sector differences. RT will work with UKAS, our certification bodies, regulators, other FA schemes to ensure all aspects around audit efficiency and best use of time are considered in developing an achievable roadmap by sector. RT will publish progress updates on this topic in sector board reports on an ongoing basis. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The potential for risk-based coordinated inspections was discussed at the RT hosted meeting of all Certification Bodies on 7 May with all recognising the longer-term opportunities and associated operational changes which will be needed in this area. A number of sectors discussed risk-based approaches as part of the future sector strategies at their June meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will use the pig sector initially to pilot potential risk-based solutions with input from the RT Pig sector board. Updates will be provided in sector board reports.

Strategic Recommendation 2: There must be a transformational step forward in embracing technology and managing data to deliver more effective farm assurance with greater added value for all

PRIORITY FOR RED TRACTOR: Red Tractor fully supports this recommendation and is committed to investing in and embracing technology and improving data management. This will start with the roll out of initial developments to the Red Tractor Portal to improve the functionality for members and assessors. We have started to seek views from stakeholders on which data integration options should be prioritised and piloted.

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2.1	'Tell Us Once': making good use of data	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT and our Sector Boards unanimously agree with this recommendation on the proviso farmers – given their wide variation in levels of technology adoption – can still choose whether to use the portal or not. Priority work is already well underway to improve the portal experience for assessors. We will deliver training and issue a survey for further feedback on ideas for improvement by April 2025. RT wrote to all certification bodies on 19th March stressing the importance of all assessors using the portal where farmers indicate they want to. RT recognised this issue a number of years ago and developed its portal in late 2019 and launched it in 2020 partly to address this and partly to address the challenge of Covid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to assessor feedback improvements to RT portal tools were launched with user guides issued to all assessors. Assessor training sessions held in April both online and with assessors in Northern Ireland. Focus on how RT can support assessors more with the RT portal was discussed at the RT hosted meeting of all Certification Bodies on 7 May. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor assessor use of the portal and continue to provide training where needed. Consider further improvements in light of assessor feedback.
2.2	Data ownership: the need for resolution	Farm assurance schemes, NFUs and AHDB	RT will collaborate at the request of the lead bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT recognises that the issue of data ownership is extremely important to our members, so we support this recommendation. RT wrote on 21st March to those identified to lead this action offering to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor representatives participated in a NFUs / AHDB hosted meeting on 29 May. 	

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				collaborate at a time they feel is appropriate. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In February 2024 Red Tractor was awarded a full Farm Data Principles Certificate, independently verifying that we operate to the highest standards of data security, privacy, and integrity. 		
2.3	Creating a data co-op	FA Schemes	RT is committed to relevant consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will discuss this further with Commissioners to ensure a full understanding of the recommendation and is committed to consulting with necessary stakeholders to establish their views prior to agreeing a way to progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor representatives participated in a NFUs / AHDB hosted meeting on 29 May. 	
2.4	Supporting farmers in a digital world	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In April 2025 RT will publish the first in a regular update in Member Matters and on the website about the RT portal, how it works and the benefits to members of using it, together with a survey for farmers to feedback ideas that RT can use to improve. RT currently provides user guides and a video on our website to help farmers use the RT Portal. RT does not charge members to use the RT portal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT published details of improvement to the Portal in its special edition of Member Matters, on its website, and social channels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT continues to make improvements to its Portal. Developments underway include data integration for complex farm structures and live task logging, which will support a more streamlined assurance process.
2.5	Future possibilities: harnessing collective expertise	NFUs, AHDB and Defra Data Group, with Agri-Tech E &/or UK Agri-Tech	RT will collaborate with others as requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT is committed to playing its part with the wider industry in this area and awaits further clarification on how this will be coordinated across the wide number of industry stakeholders identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor representatives participated in a NFUs / AHDB hosted meeting on 29 May 	

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		Centre & FA Schemes				
2.6	'Tell Us Once': collecting and storing data	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT and our Sector Boards unanimously agree with this recommendation, although feel that mandating it at this time would not be appropriate as use should be a farmer choice, with efficiency and visit frequency driving that decision. As outlined in 2.4, in April 2025, RT will publish its first of a regular update in Member Matters and on the website about the RT portal, how it works and the benefits to members of using it, together with a survey for farmers to feedback ideas that RT can use to improve. As described in 2.1, RT previously recognised this challenge and launched our portal in 2020. As at March 2025 the RT portal has been used for documents relating to 10,482 member sites. RT commits to publishing an update on usage figures annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In response to farmer feedback improvements to the RT portal were launched in April Red Tractor published a special printed edition of its monthly newsletter, Member Matters, on 24 April with a feature on the RT portal and improvements which have been launched RT team have met with farming stakeholders to identify further portal improvements for development. RT is progressing developments on portal functionality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamline the portal functionality for members and publication of updated user guides and helpful hints Updates at Sector Boards Developments focussed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate structure pilot (poultry) Integrating data - pilot with Pigs eMB data from AHDB Scoping potential for 'tasks' record using photos on portal (Crops & livestock)
2.8	Keep it live: reviewing standards	FA Schemes	RT is committed to relevant consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the standards review (see 1.2) RT will consult with Sector Boards and government agencies to identify other similar opportunities. In February 2025 RT changed the beef and lamb standard to recognise the DEFRA Pathway visit as a way to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 1.2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 1.2 – Sector boards strategies to be developed

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				demonstrate compliance with the standard requiring a health performance review. Details published in Technical Briefing .		
2.9	Investing in technology	AHDB to coordinate with FA Schemes	RT will support and collaborate at the request of the lead body AHDB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT awaits further clarification from AHDB on how this will be coordinated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor representatives participated in a NFUs / AHDB hosted meeting on 29 May 	

Strategic Recommendation 3: Farm assurance schemes need to reset and/or restate their decision-making structures to establish farmers as the driving voice in standards development

PRIORITY FOR RED TRACTOR: The input and contribution that farmers make to the development of our standards, governance structures and on our Board is of vital importance to Red Tractor. We acknowledge that more can be done to ensure farmers feel consulted, listened to and able to influence decision-making. However, our Board and Sector Boards agree that as a whole supply chain assurance scheme, it's important that decision making is a collaborative process balanced between all stakeholders - this was also recognised by the Campbell Tickell Review.

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3.1	Creating and amending standards	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT acknowledge that more can be done to ensure farmers feel consulted, listened to and able to influence decision-making on standards. We also recognise that farmers have concerns about representation. We are committed to continuous improvement in this area and will review how we consult on creating and amending standards as part of the Standards Review plan set out in 1.2. Feedback from members on standards or other areas will continue to be encouraged via direct communication or our post assessment surveys, and we will consider other methods. The input and contribution that farmers make to the development of our standards, governance structures and on our Board is of vital importance to Red Tractor. Farmers are involved in RT Governance at all stages from Ownership Body to Board, Sector Boards and Technical Advisory Committees Details are available in our Governance Handbook. In the past RT members have had a clear route to making their views known on proposed RT standards through an open and transparent consultation process which we will improve. E.g. Version 5 Consultation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 1.2 for updates on how RT is reviewing its policy for standards, and 8.1 on communications. In April-June, RT consulted on amendments to its Pigs Standards. The consultation received 122 responses from a broad range of stakeholders. Details of the consultation and responses have been published on our website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 1.2 and 8.1

3.2	Appointments to Sector Boards	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RT recognises that some farmers do not feel their voices are heard. To address this, we will review the Sector Board Terms of Reference covering the structure of each Sector Board, how members are recruited and appointed, and their duties outlined to both represent their sector and disseminate information back from RT. They will also particularly examine how RT and those on our Sector Boards can be more transparent and engage with the wider farming community more thoroughly. • Sector Board Terms of Reference will be reviewed by July 2025. • Farmers are involved in RT Governance at all stages from Ownership Body to Board, Sector Boards and Technical Advisory Committees • Details are available in our Governance Handbook. • The appointment process is defined in the Nominations Committee Terms of Reference which is published in the Governance Handbook • RT publishes summaries of the Red Tractor Board and Sector Board meetings on our website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RT has met with farming representatives from all our Sector Boards to listen to their views and help inform a revised Sector Board Terms of Reference • RT Sector Boards have been briefed on the draft document ahead of their meetings in June • RT Sector Boards considered and discussed the draft 'Sector Board Terms of Reference' at their meetings in June. • Sector Board feedback was incorporated into a revised version which was considered and agreed by Standards Committee on 8 July. • AFS Board will review a final version of the ToR following final feedback from Sector Boards. • The new ToR will then be published in the RT Governance Handbook • Red Tractor provided members with details and links in its monthly newsletter, Member Matters, on 22 July 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector chairs will review the composition of each sector board to ensure the skills mix is balanced.
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3.3	Board structures in farm assurance schemes	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT welcomed the Campbell Tickell report in March 2024 and has implemented its recommendations since then. A report will be published in May 2025 on how these recommendations have been completed. RT and our Sector Boards unanimously agree that there must be balance across the food supply chain on RT Sector Boards. Following a review of our Sector Board Terms of Reference in July 2025 (see 3.2) we will then review each Sector Board to ensure the skills mix is balanced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT published a report on how it's delivered the recommendations of the Campbell Tickell Report on 3 June 2025. See 3.2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 3.2
3.4	Balancing scheme demands	FA Schemes	RT is committed to relevant consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT Board will consult with the Commissioners and Sector Boards to consider how best to meet this recommendation. 		
3.5	Using impact assessments	FA Schemes	RT is committed to relevant consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 1.2 - RT will consult Sector Boards on a new RT Policy for Standards and take this recommendation into account when finalising. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 1.2 – included in the draft Red Tractor Policy on Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See 1.2 – included in the draft Red Tractor Policy on Standards
3.6	A federation of farm assurance schemes	FA Schemes	RT is committed to collaborating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT has started progress against this recommendation by writing on 19th March RT to other FA Schemes to suggest we all collaborate on this recommendation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor representatives participated in a NFUs / AHDB hosted meeting on 29 May attended by other FA schemes Individual meetings with some FA schemes have taken place to discuss potential ways of working RT has offered to host an initial meeting of FA schemes in October. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will continue to liaise with those FA schemes agreeing to collaborate

Strategic Recommendation 4: A new industry-led initiative must set out the future environmental ambitions for farm assurance, establishing this as an area of competitive advantage for UK farming

Red Tractor accepts this really important area is for others to lead and is ready to support the sectors to help meet the environmental ambitions of UK farming, but only if we are asked to do so by all stakeholders within the sector.

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4.1	Developing acceptable environmental standards	AHDB, NFUs, Gov Ministries and relevant agencies	RT will support at the request of the lead bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT strongly welcomes this recommendation and in particular urges the AHDB/NFUs to clearly articulate what is required to be legally compliance with current environmental legislation. RT will support in this area where required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor representatives participated in a NFUs / AHDB hosted meeting on 29 May 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to collaborate with the lead bodies
4.4	Telling the wider world what farming delivers for the environment	FA Schemes	RT is committed to relevant consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will consult with Sector Boards and stakeholders once requested to be involved in communicating enhanced environmental standards to the wider public by NFUs, AHDB and wider farming and food chain stakeholders. RT will continue to highlight good practice in farm animal welfare to the general public through our consumer marketing campaigns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT has championed British farming standards, including on animal welfare, in its recent communications on trade negotiations with the US and EU. This has included a media statement shared with mainstream media and social media communications. RT is developing a consumer marketing and PR campaign which will profile the high standards of British produce, due to go live at the end of August. RT has developed a communications strategy which includes activities to promote British farming (see 8.1) RT published results of new consumer research showing support for British food, with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering communications strategy (see 8.1) Consumer marketing and communications campaign to go live in August

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					coverage across social and trade media. • RT appointed a consumer PR agency, WPR to work on the delivery of its 25-year consumer PR campaign.	
4.5	A 'foresight' exercise on future environmental standards	FA Schemes with farming and food chain industry reps	RT is committed to relevant consultation	• By necessity, this will be built upon 4.1, hence RT will await a steer from AHDB and the farming unions upon which we will consult with our Sector Boards and stakeholders.	• See 4.1	

Strategic Recommendation 5: The inclusion of regulatory requirements within farm assurance standards and audits should be conditional on government and regulators agreeing a form of 'earned recognition'

Red Tractor welcomes the suggestion of inclusion of earned recognition in government policies and agrees this important area requires a cross-industry approach to open the door. We would welcome the opportunity to work with regulatory agencies to identify further opportunities for earned recognition that would reduce audit burden for Red Tractor assured farms. We do not agree with the broad statement that regulatory requirements should only be included in farm assurance standards in return for Government 'earned recognition' as many of these will also be vital to deliver core elements of assurance (e.g. food safety, animal welfare, traceability etc) and the right approach will differ depending on the sector.

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5.2	Consistency of regulatory use of farm assurance	Gov depts, regulatory agencies and NFUs	RT will collaborate at the request of the lead bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT has experience of earned recognition arrangements with some government agencies (e.g. FSA) and is committed to working in collaboration with NFUs and Government departments as soon as is practically possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor representatives participated in a NFUs / AHDB hosted meeting on 29 May 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to collaborate with the lead bodies
5.3	Agreeing how regulatory sanctions and farm assurance work together	Regulatory agencies with FA schemes	RT will collaborate with the lead bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT welcomes this recommendation and urges Government agencies to act so we can engage as soon as is practically possible. RT recognises that there are significant sensitivities amongst farmers in this area and so any proposals must provide clear benefits to RT members and be fully consulted with sector boards and farming organisations before agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued on-going liaison with FSA to deliver earned recognition arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will progress with other government departments once clarity over the appropriate contacts available – see 5.1
5.4	Extending 'earned recognition'	FA schemes in consultation with gov depts	RT is committed to relevant consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will consult with Government departments on the concept of 'earned recognition'. A letter will be sent to set this in motion once there is clarity over 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not started 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will write to other government departments once clarity over the appropriate

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				the appropriate contacts within Government (see 5.1).		contacts is available – see 5.1
5.6	Improving government understanding of the role of farm assurance	DEFRA	RT will continue to liaise with DEFRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT liaises with DEFRA's Farming & Countryside Programme on a monthly basis to ensure an understanding of Red Tractor's programme and always uses the opportunity to reenforce the importance of the farmer within the supply chain. We will continue to do this proactively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT representatives have attended a DEFRA 25-year farming roadmap session for stakeholders and a DEFRA Food Strategy workshop. At both the importance of the farmer and assurance within the supply chain were emphasised. RT's CEO has met with the Minister for Food Security and Rural Affairs to <u>offer collaboration</u> to understand how assurance can assist in delivery of the UK Food Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to participate in DEFRA led initiatives

Strategic Recommendation 6: There must be greater coordination in the way in which farm assurance operates across the UK nations

Red Tractor is committed to ongoing collaboration with Welsh, Scottish, and Northern Irish farming bodies and assurance schemes to ensure we understand and reflect devolved regulatory requirements in our scheme, maximise efficiency across the different assurance operations and identify opportunities for earned recognition of common standards.

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6.1	Consider a new approach for combinable crops	Crops supply chain orgs, coordinated by AHDB	RT will help and support at the request of the lead bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT is committed to helping and supporting NFU, AHDB and all stakeholders in the crops supply chain to establish how best to address the import equivalence challenge for the sector. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT has provided feedback to AHDB on a draft project scope. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed to help and support AHDB.
6.2	Improving Red Tractor understanding of farming in Northern Ireland	Red Tractor	RT will consult with the UFU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT recognises that there is a unique trading environment in NI with the land border to the EU. RT is committed to further consultation with UFU to ensure that these issues are discussed transparently at all relevant levels within RT governance. The three schemes which RT operates in NI have UFU representatives on the Sector Boards and TACs. The RT Chairman and CEO meet with the UFU every two months. RT meets regularly with NIFCC the certification body certifying the RT Dairy and poultry scheme in NI. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advised by UFU to discuss once details of the UK EU trade deal are better understood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to consult with UFU and progress accordingly.

6.3	Creating 'one voice' for UK farm assurance	All FA Schemes	RT is committed to relevant consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT has started progress against this recommendation by writing 19 March to other FA Schemes to suggest we all collaborate on this recommendation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not started RT has offered to host a meeting of FA Schemes to discuss collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting to be arranged with FA Schemes.
6.4	The role of whole-life in farm assurance	Relevant FA Schemes	RT is committed to relevant consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering whole-life is a clear objective for the RT beef and lamb sector board at the right time and in consultation and agreement with all stakeholders. Other recommendations are considered a priority at this stage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not started 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On hold as other priorities for beef and lamb are progressed

Strategic Recommendation 7: Farm assurance schemes must better position the UK farming industry in world food markets and in competition with imported food

Red Tractor agrees this is an important area for the UK farming industry and looks forward to working with AHDB, farming unions and organisations, farmers, processors and government to promote British food both overseas and in the UK. We welcome the recommendations for others to lead to provide more transparency about standards for imported food.

Notes

*For ease of reading, and to demonstrate transparency, the table below includes a summary of what we understand to be the key asks of each recommendation. Please refer to the [Farm Assurance Review](#) for the detailed recommendations. **The lead organisations are those identified by the Farm Assurance Review as taking a lead responsibility for the recommendation.

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7.1	Standards for imported food	AHDB	RT will collaborate at the request of the lead body AHDB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT welcomes this recommendation to provide more transparency in this area and will continue to collaborate with AHDB on this work as we have done on the work prior to March 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT and AHDB have had regular meetings to share knowledge and support AHDB work in this area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support AHDB work in this area
7.2	Informing UK farming about food standards in other nations	AHDB & NFUs	RT will collaborate at the request of the lead bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT welcomes this recommendation to provide more transparency in this area and will collaborate as requested by AHDB and NFUs. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will collaborate as requested by AHDB and NFUs
7.3	Farm assurance for combinable crops	FA Schemes with Crops Sector reps & their customers	RT is committed to relevant consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT Board will consult with the Commissioners and the stakeholders represented on the crops sector board to consider how best to meet this recommendation. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On hold as other priorities for the crops sector are progressed

Strategic Recommendation 8: All farm assurance schemes must review, and, where necessary, improve their methods of communication with the farming industry

PRIORITY FOR RED TRACTOR: Red Tractor is totally committed to ensuring that farmers see, hear and feel real change. We are also focusing on improving how we communicate, particularly with farmers and growers, and embedding this into our leadership culture. We will implement a new communications strategy focused on building trust and engagement with farmers.

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8.1	A 'farmer first' approach to communications	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor is totally committed to ensuring that farmers see, hear and feel real change. RT will review its communications with farmers before developing and starting to deliver a new farmer engagement strategy from June 2025. RT will consult with other farmer-focused organisations to understand and collaborate on best practice approaches to farmer engagement. This strategy will include working with farmer representatives on RT's Sector Boards to ensure they have the tools needed to communicate effectively to those that they represent. As in 8.5, RT has developed new organisational values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since 25 March, Red Tractor's newly appointed director of communications and engagement has reviewed Red Tractor's communications, consulting with technical, communications and leadership staff, Board and farming stakeholders including the NFU, AHDB and specialist agencies to identify areas for improvement. This has informed a comprehensive communications strategy which seeks to strengthen communications with all stakeholders, with a particular focus on building farmer trust. This strategy was presented to, and agreed by, Red Tractor's Board of Directors on 23 May. Sector Boards were briefed on RT's new comms strategy with the opportunity to input on recommendations. Red Tractor staff and directors attended more than 50 farmer facing events, directly speaking to more than 750 stakeholders and members since 1 April 2025. 	Roll out of this strategy will result in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging with farmers at farming events throughout 2025. Working with a communications consultancy to support with farmer engagement, delivering value to members, significantly boosting our capacity to reach farmers. Improved research and insight into farmer views to inform our work. Sponsorship of the Mixed Farmer of the Year Award in the Farmers Weekly Awards, and the Cumbrian Farmers Awards. Recruitment of a digital

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				which will support a change in culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvements to Red Tractor's assurance website went live on 3 July, including improved navigation, more accessible content and a new design. Following the June Sector Board meetings RT trailed a new way of cascading updates, supporting representatives to talk about RT. Weekly communications updates are now being sent to all RT staff and Directors. 	communications manager.
8.2	Implementing the Commission's recommendations	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are committed to providing regular updates on progress at www.redtractor.org.uk/FA RT will work with David Llewellyn the independent Commissioner appointed to monitor progress to demonstrate transparently how the recommendations have been and will be addressed by us. RT will publish regular updates on its on our website to share our progress on delivering the Review recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of Red Tractor's leadership team met with David Llewellyn to confirm our commitment to implementing the Review's recommendations on 15 April Red Tractor published a special printed edition of its monthly newsletter, Member Matters, on 24 April. This newsletter was posted to all 42,000 members, detailing our response and highlighting projects already underway to deliver improvements. News shared in this newsletter have also been shared on Red Tractor's website and across our social media channels. Red Tractor ran a webinar to respond to member's questions on our response to the FAR on 28 April. An independent farmer member and journalist facilitated the session to ensure transparency and that member's questions were heard. A recording of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor will continue to provide regular updates on our delivery of the FAR recommendations.

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					the session, together with answers to questions asked during this webinar have been published. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This progress report confirms our ongoing commitment to report regularly on progress. Similar reports will be published following future Board meetings. 	
8.3	Using Features/Advantages/Benefits statement	FA Schemes	RT is committed to relevant consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT will work with the Review Commissioners to understand the expectations and structure for FAB statements, before developing these or similar Value Propositions for farmers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing clear messaging and value propositions is a deliverable within Red Tractor's new communications strategy. Once these are in place Red Tractor will use these to develop FAB statements. FAB statements are in development following a workshop with RT staff on 3 July. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalise messaging, tone of voice and value propositions.
8.5	Implementing culture change	FA Schemes	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT is doubling down on our efforts to increase engagement with farmers as part of our leadership culture. RT will implement an annual survey with our Sector Boards to measure the effectiveness of the way our leadership act and communicate. RT will continue to seek feedback from farmers on a regular basis to understand how they feel about Red Tractor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As detailed in 8.2 RT sought farmers views through a webinar on the FAR. RT has also met face to face with farmer groups, including at a local NFU event, Pigs Tomorrow and the Balmoral Show. Director appraisals involved feedback about behaviours. RT's values have been incorporated into staff development plans and objectives for 2025/26. RT's values are included in the recruitment process for new appointments. RT staff engaged in face-to-face farmer events, including Cereals 2025, The Three Counties Show, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT Sector Board survey to be carried out June-September. RT staff will continue to engage in face-to-face farmer events, including the Royal Welsh Show and NFU Livestock Board meeting. RT is organising a 'road show' to meet farmers around the country during the autumn.

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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over the past six months, RT has crystalised its organisational values (Integrity, Trustworthy, Community and Expertise) which include behaviours for its leaders and how we work with all our stakeholders particularly farmers. RT will integrate these organisational values into its performance development, feedback and appraisal process for Directors, management and all staff. 	<p>the Royal Highland Show and NFU Regional meetings as part of the role out of our communications strategy.</p>	
8.6	The ownership of Red Tractor	Red Tractor Board and Owners	RT Board will consult with its Ownership Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor welcomes the Review's recommendation that the RT Board is reaffirmed as the primary governing body for the organisation. The RT Board also welcomes the recommendation that the owners of the scheme must show greater and more active leadership. The RT Board is committed to consulting with the Ownership Body as to how to progress this recommendation. Discussions started at a meeting of the Ownership Body on 18th March 2025 and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT Ownership Body announced the appointment of Alistair Mackintosh as Red Tractor Chair on 23 May. It also accepted the recommendation that it should take a more active role and 'will support the Chair as the AFS Board considers the recommendations of both Reviews'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair will work with the Ownership Body to progress discussions in this area.

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				will continue at meetings over the coming months.		

Strategic Recommendation 9: The RT scheme must complete the implementation of recommendations in the Campbell Tickell report

PRIORITY FOR RED TRACTOR: Since the publication of the Campbell Tickell report we've published a Governance Handbook, introduced a Board Member Code of Conduct, developed a process for Directors' appraisals and reviewed the Risk Register. We will publish a briefing on how we've delivered the governance recommendations from the report by the end of May 2025.

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9.1	Reviewing progress with the Campbell Tickell report	Red Tractor Board	RT Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RT has implemented all the recommendations of the Campbell Tickell report. RT will publish a report detailing how the recommendations have been implemented by May 2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On 3 June Red Tractor published a report detailing how it has implemented the recommendations of the Campbell Tickell report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Tractor's governance now incorporates the recommendations made in the Campbell Tickell review.

Find out more about how Red Tractor is responding to the Farm Assurance Review

Visit: redtractor.org.uk/FAR

Email: memberhelp@redtractor.org.uk

