

Assured Food Standards

FARM ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR SUGAR BEET

SCHEME STANDARDS 2005/6 *with explanatory notes in Italics*

Scope: This is a whole farm assurance scheme for Sugar Beet.

HACCP: The standards have been drawn up following a review and risk assessment of the industry. The standards are therefore based on HACCP principles and producers, through compliance with the standards are undertaking a risk management process.

Record Keeping: The basis of any assured production system is accurate and methodical record keeping. The assessor visiting your farm will need to be satisfied that you have up-to-date records documenting your procedures. Throughout the text the need for a record to be kept is shown by an **(R)** appearing next to the relevant paragraph.

Critical Failure Points: Within the standards a number of paragraphs are highlighted "Critical Failure Points". Where these standards are not met, certification cannot be achieved until corrective action has been taken and objective evidence received by the Certification Body. A revisit may be necessary, at the producer's expense. If a Critical Failure Point occurs and corrective action cannot be taken certification cannot be achieved for that holding.

Environmental Standards: The standards have been drawn up with close reference to the three DEFRA Codes of Good Practice for the Protection of Soil, Air and Water (as listed under literature requirements) and the Code of Practice for the Safe Handling of Pesticides on Farms and Holdings (Green Code) Throughout the text the standards which relate to environmental issues have been shown by an **(E)** appearing next to the relevant paragraph.

At the time of going to print Defra propose that the 'Green Code' will be replaced by a new statutory code- the 'Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products' in the autumn of 2005

NEW

Legislation and Codes of Practice: All sugar beet farms must comply with all current legislation and possess and be aware of all relevant Codes of Practice.

NEW

Prosecutions: Producers shall notify their Certification Body of any prosecutions applicable to scope brought or likely to be brought against them with respect to Food Safety or environmental legislation, including Cross-Compliance requirements.

ASSESSMENT FREQUENCY

The assessment frequency will be once in every crop cycle, with a minimum of six months and a maximum of eighteen months between assessments.

LITERATURE REQUIREMENTS

All the publications listed below can be ordered direct.

- 1.0 An awareness of the standards within the DEFRA Codes of Good Practice for the Protection of Soil, Air and Water are a requirement of the scheme as is members' conformance with them. Copies must be available for inspection by the assessor. **(E)**

Revised DEFRA Codes of Good Practice for the Protection of Soil, Air and Water are available on request at the time of application/renewal. All members must comply with the sections in the codes relevant to sugar beet production. Copies are available to download free of charge from the Defra website (www.defra.gov.uk/publications)

- 1.1. Everyone involved in the handling of pesticides must be conversant with the guidelines and have a copy available for inspection of the DEFRA Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticides on Farms and Holdings. (E)

Revised

The DEFRA Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticides is available on request at the time of application/renewal. All members must comply with the sections in the code relevant to sugar beet production. At the time of going to print it is proposed that the 'Green Code' will be replaced by a new statutory code- the 'Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products' in the autumn of 2005

- 1.2. Members should employ a crop protection strategy intended to avoid unnecessary chemical applications and take account of environmentally sensitive areas on the farm. Choosing pest and disease resistant varieties where available will contribute to this, as will the choice of seed treatments appropriate to the perceived risk to the crop and the use of threshold-based or other recognised decision-making systems. (E)

Members will find LEAF's new "Handbook for Integrated Farm Management" invaluable in identifying best environmental practice on the farm. It is only available from LEAF.

- 1.3. Members should be aware of, and must comply with, the Food Safety Act 1990.

The guide to the Food Safety Act 1990 is available on request from FSA.

- 1.4. Deleted

- 1.5. DEFRA's Fertiliser Recommendations for Agricultural and Horticultural Crops (RB 209, ISBN 0112430589) is required reading. See website www.tso.co.uk

NEW

- 1.6. Single Farm Payment Scheme Cross Compliance Guidance for Soil Management.

Cross compliance guidance is available free of charge from www.defra.gov.uk/publications

CROP PROTECTION

- 2.0. Where an adviser, consultant or trade representative advises on pesticide usage on a member's farm, it is the member's responsibility to obtain the current/valid BASIS qualification number and to ensure the adviser, consultant or trade representative has read the Sugar Beet Standards and agrees to advise on pesticide use in compliance with it. (R)

- 2.1. CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

All operators of spraying equipment on a member's farm(s) must be registered with NRoSO (see Standard 2.16) or be born before 31 December 1964 (Grandfather Rights) and have undergone training. This applies equally to operators of granular pesticide applicators. Untrained staff **may** be allowed to apply pesticides only for the purpose of training, under the continuous supervision of an operator holding the relevant certificate of competence. (Grandfather Rights do not allow them to be trainers).

The assessor will wish to inspect all certificates of competence as issued by the National Proficiency Tests Council (NPTC) and/or training certificates. (R)

- 2.2. CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

When not in use, all pesticides must be kept in their original packaging, in a locked secure ventilated (walk in stores only) store, displaying the correct warning sign. The store must be constructed to contain the pesticide in the event of spillage, fire or other

accidental occurrence and have the means to contain accidental spillages. Materials used for floors and walls must be impervious and a bund of similar impervious material must be in place, suitable to contain 110% of the maximum contents.

An inventory of stored pesticides must be kept with a copy held in the office. **(E)**

Where small quantities of pesticides are stored, the use of lockable metal containers is acceptable. Similarly chest deep freezers are acceptable on the assumption they are banded or relined with impervious material. Where it is inappropriate to display a pesticide warning sign, i.e. to deter vandalism/theft, the local fire brigade must be informed in writing, of the location of the store, whereby prompt action can be taken in the event of fire. Sand/absorbent granules are a suitable means of containing accidental spillage.

Members must be aware of Health and Safety Executive (HSE) publication – Guidance on storing pesticide for farmers and other professional users – Ref AIS No. 16

2.3 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Stored pesticides must be clearly labelled in English and members must check annually that stores do not contain pesticides which have had approval revoked. Any out of date or unapproved pesticide must be disposed of according to the Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticide on Farms and Holdings.

Information regarding the approval and use of pesticide products can be found on the PSD website www.pesticide.gov.uk. In addition, although of no legal standing, the UK Pesticide Guide published annually by CAB International and The British Crop Protection Council, the “Green Book”, is a useful summary of pesticides and the uses for which they are approved. It provides guidance on compliance with the law and the choice of the safest and most effective pesticide.

2.4 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

A safe method of transporting pesticides around the farm(s) must be adopted. **(E)**

Transport containers must be secure, lockable and carry a warning sign. Assessors may wish to satisfy themselves that the methods employed are in accordance with DEFRA Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticides on Farms and Holdings.

2.5 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

It is an offence under the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 (as amended) (COPR) and the Plant Protection Products Regulations 2003 (PPPR) to apply pesticides outside the statutory conditions of use. These are given in the ‘statutory box’ on the product label. **(E)**

2.6 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

All pesticide applications must comply with the requirements of the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 (as amended) (COPR), the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) and the Plant Protection Products Regulations 2003 (PPPR). Members must implement a staff training programme for pesticide application, handling and storage which covers legislative requirements and industry Codes of Practice relevant to the operations being carried out (Grandfather rights do not allow the holders to train others) The statutory Codes of Practice from DEFRA and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) must also be adhered to. Members must have appropriate personal protection equipment on site, including boots, gloves, coveralls, apron and face shield. **(E)**

- 2.7 If reduced spray volume applications are used, the guidelines given in the DEFRA Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticides on Farms and Holdings should be adhered to. (E)

Revised

At the time of going to print Defra propose that the 'Green Code' will be replaced by a new statutory code - the 'Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products' in the autumn of 2005

- 2.8 Members should identify high pollution risks on the farm where applications of pesticides, fertilisers and organic manure should not be carried out. Farm maps should be used to show these areas.

2.9 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

All pesticide applications whether carried out by the member or a qualified contractor must be recorded and kept for a minimum period of 3 years, as stated in the Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticide on Farms and Holdings. These records must be made available to the assessor and should include: Name of equipment operator, crop and growth stage, crop location/field name, area to treat, chemical required, rate of application, product name, volume of water, reason for application, special precautions required (i.e. LERAP), date of application, time of application, weather conditions, including wind speed and direction, at application. (R) (E)

Members who use the services of contractors must ensure they have the necessary certificate of competence and that they observe both the provisions of the Law and of this scheme in respect of all aspects of the use of pesticides.

Pesticides must never be applied to crops in unsuitable conditions, i.e. high winds or in other situations where there is likely to be drift onto hedgerows, woodlands and wetlands, into private homes or gardens, or into public places such as parks or school playgrounds or other non target areas. Engineering control systems designed to reduce drift must always be considered.

The use of a wind speed meter is recommended. A wind speed guide is available in Section 6, part 3, of the DEFRA Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticides on Farms and Holdings.

At the time of going to print Defra propose that the 'Green Code' will be replaced by a new statutory code - the 'Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products' in the autumn of 2005

2.10 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Appropriate action must be taken to avoid contamination of watercourses. (E)

Members must comply with statutory no spray (buffer) zones and be aware of and record Local Environmental Risk Assessments for Pesticides (LERAP). (R) Guidance on the LERAP scheme can be found on the PSD website www.pesticide.gov.uk.

- 2.11 Local beekeepers must be given a minimum of 48 hours notice of the intention to apply a pesticide that is potentially hazardous to bees. (E)

Members should be aware of their local beekeeper spray liaison contact's telephone number.

- 2.12 Crop sprayers must be calibrated and maintained at the beginning of the season and re-calibrated during the season especially after replacing any part of the spray delivery system. Regular maintenance and calibrations should also be carried out where applicable on knapsack sprayers and granular applicators. The assessor will inspect full records of both maintenance and calibrations. (R) (E)

It is not necessary for sprayers to be re-calibrated when minor alterations are made (e.g. replacement of a nozzle). Sprayers should, however, be re-calibrated following an overhaul as part of general maintenance routine. The maintenance and calibration of spraying equipment can be carried out by the member or their staff, according to the manufacturer's instructions.

2.13 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Members must follow the correct procedure as described in the DEFRA Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticides on Farms and Holdings for the disposal of spray washings and empty pesticide containers. (E)

Revised

At the time of going to print Defra propose that the 'Green Code' will be replaced by a new statutory code- the 'Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products' in the autumn of 2005

Members should also be aware of, and comply with, the Environmental Agency Ground Water Regulations 1998.

2.14 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Having regard to residue levels and environmental impact, members must follow all pesticide label recommendations in particular regarding:

- a) Maximum permitted dose rates.
- b) Restrictions on repeated applications to a single crop.
- c) Harvest interval and latest application stage. (E)

Care must be taken when an active ingredient may be available in different products or formulations. This information will be on the product label.

2.15 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

A written contingency plan must be available to all staff detailing the action to be taken in the event of a spillage or leak. Emergency contacts and numbers must be readily available to the producer and staff in the event of an accident e.g. Emergency Agency, doctor, Environmental Health Officer, HSE etc. There must be adequate washing facilities for washing off accidental splash or spillage on operators. (E)

2.16 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Sprayer operators are required to join the National Register of Sprayer Operators (NRoSO). Where spraying operations are contracted, it is the responsibility of the member to ascertain and record, the sprayer operator's name and valid NRoSO membership number.

An application form can be obtained from NRoSO. Telephone 024 7669 6553 Fax 024 7669 6128 Email: information@nroso.org.uk or downloaded from www.nroso.org.uk

NEW CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

2.17 All sprayers used on farms that have a sprayed area of combinable crops and sugar beet greater than 50Ha must be tested prior to harvest 2006 and annually thereafter. All sprayers used on farms that have a sprayed area of combinable crops and sugar beet of 50ha or less must be tested prior to harvest 2007 and once every two years thereafter

GRANULAR APPLICATION OF PESTICIDES

3.0 All equipment must be calibrated and recorded (note 2-12 refers). (R)

3.1 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Operators must have the relevant certificate of competence or Grandfather Rights and under gone training (note 2-1 refers). (R)

FERTILISER AND CROP NUTRITION

4.0 Where an adviser, consultant or trade representative advises on fertiliser usage etc on a member's farm, it is the member's responsibility to obtain the current/valid **FACTS** qualification number. The member should also ensure the adviser, consultant or trade representative has read the sugar beet manual and agrees to advise on fertiliser use in compliance with it. **(R)**

4.1 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Granular fertiliser must be stored on a hard, dry surface, preferably under cover, where spillage can be contained rather than carried by run off water into watercourses etc. **(E)**

Members should be aware of, the Dangerous Substances (Notification and Marking of Sites) Regulations 1990. Members should also be aware of the Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road Regulations 1996 and must comply with the requirements of the Agricultural Exemption if transporting AN fertiliser on a road between two pieces of land.

4.2 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Liquid fertiliser must be stored in suitable secure tanks/bowsers preferably away from watercourses. **(E)**

4.3 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

A written contingency plan must be available to all staff detailing the action to be taken in the event of a spillage or leak. Emergency contacts and numbers should be readily available to the producer and his staff in the event of an accident e.g. Environment Agency, doctor, Environmental Health Officer, HSE, etc. There must be adequate washing facilities for washing off accidental splash or spillage on operators. **(E)**

Liquid fertiliser tanks (if not bunded to Environmental Agency Standards) must have lockable or removable taps. Sight-glasses, if fitted, must be secured to avoid accidental or malicious spillage.

4.4 Fertiliser spreaders must be adequately maintained and calibrated annually or when changing from one product to another. Full records of both maintenance and calibration will be inspected by the assessor. **(R)**

The maintenance and calibration of fertiliser spreaders can be carried out by members or their staff according to the manufacturers instructions.

4.5 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Headland kits must be fitted where provided or equivalent action be taken, to prevent spreading fertiliser into ditches, field margins etc. **(E)**

Tilting spreaders or wider field margins are examples of other methods used to avoid contamination of ditches etc.

4.6 Members are required to record the date, type and rate of all fertiliser and organic manures applied to each field. **(R)**

4.7 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

The application of untreated sewage sludge to land used for food production ceased on 31 December 1999. Sewage sludge applications must be in accordance with the current Code of Practice for Agricultural Use of Sewage Sludge and any sewage applications must be recorded. For further information, see Appendix 3. **(E)**

4.8 Members must undertake regular soil analysis (at least every 4 to 5 years) for major nutrients to help optimise fertiliser applications and maximise soil potential. **(R) (E)**

Defra's Fertiliser Recommendations for Agricultural and Horticultural Crops (RB209 ISBN 0112430589) is available free of charge and is required reading. See website www.defra.gov.uk

4.9 Application of crop nutrients and organic materials should be matched to the requirements of the crop, its growth stage and the prevailing weather conditions. **(E)**

4.10 Producers should know the classification of soils on their farms and understand their characteristics and production potential. Production practices should be adjusted to maintain soil structure and control erosion and this can be demonstrated by a written soil management plan. **(E)**

Growers should be able to demonstrate awareness of erosion risk and measures to counter this. A Soil Management Plan is available to download from www.defra.gov.uk

4.11 Fertiliser applications, including organic should be avoided to continuously frozen ground or in waterlogged conditions, to minimise leaching and pollution of watercourses. **(E)**

Members should be aware of their legal obligations if they farm within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) and must comply with Action Programme Rules

CONTRACTORS

5.0 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Where members use the services of third party including a spray contractor, it is the members responsibility to obtain the relevant certificate of competence number, name of the operator, or to obtain from the contractor confirmation that the relevant employee holds such certificates and ensure they are aware of Sugar Beet Standards. **(R)**

Contractors should be made aware of Groundwater Regulations 1998 regarding the disposal of spray washings etc and must comply with any disposal authorisations for the farm

5.1 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Where members use the services of a third party granular application contractor, it is the members responsibility to obtain the relevant certificate of competence number, name of the operator, or to obtain from the contractor confirmation that the relevant employee holds such certificates and ensure they are aware of Sugar Beet Standards. **(R)**

NEW 5.2 CRITICAL FAILURE POINT

Where members use the services of a third party including a spray contractor it is the member's responsibility to obtain and record the sprayer operators name and valid NRoSO membership number and to obtain a copy of the relevant NSTS certificate for the active sprayer used

COMPLAINTS

NEW

6.0 Members should keep a record of customer complaints **(R)**

FUEL STORAGE

NEW

7.0 Holding areas for diesel tanks and waste should be environmentally safe and conform to the guidelines contained in the Defra Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Water (see Standard 1.0)

Members should also comply with the Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil Regulations 1991.