



Red Tractor Assurance

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News, updates and practical advice from your Red Tractor Assurance team // JANUARY 2019

memberhelp@redtractor.org.uk • Combinable Crops, Fresh Produce, Pigs & Poultry, Dairy, Beef & Lamb - T. 0203 617 3670

New inspection regime to be rolled out to poultry sector

Poor performing farms to receive unannounced inspections in move to increase consumer confidence in Red Tractor logo.

From April 2019, Red Tractor poultry farms will move to a new risk-based inspection regime.

The decision to strengthen the inspection programme is part of a strategy to increase consumer confidence that food carrying the logo is safe, traceable and farmed with care.

This follows the rollout of the new regime to the pig sector last year.

Depending on the nature and number of non-conformances during a routine inspection, poor performers will receive an increase in inspection frequency, which will be unannounced.

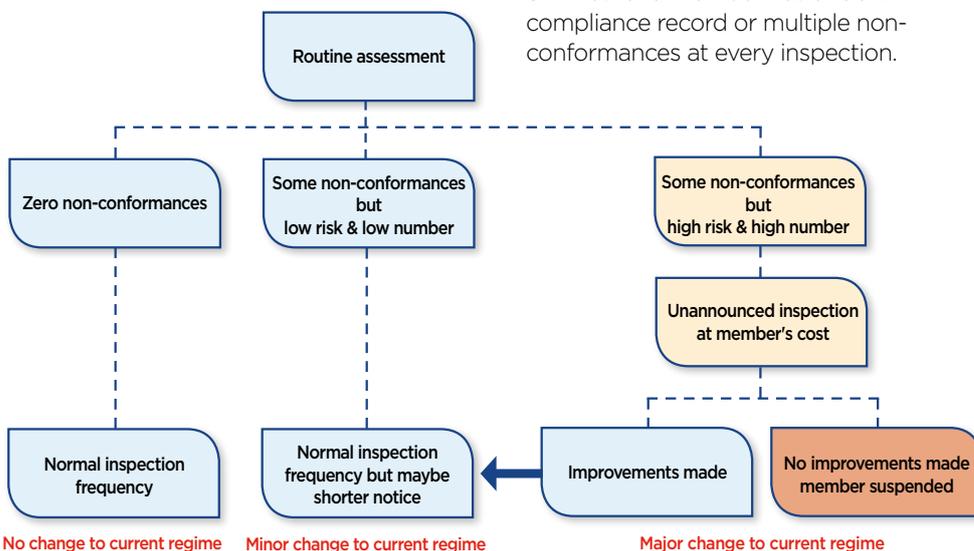
If improvements aren't made, those

poor performers will be suspended or withdrawn from the scheme to protect the reputation of British farming and the Red Tractor logo.

The vast majority of members do a fantastic job adhering to every standard every day, and those who continue to achieve these high standards and can demonstrate it at their normal inspection will notice no changes to their inspection programme.

How inspections are changing

Red Tractor's current system of measuring compliance is based on routine inspections regardless of whether a member has a 100% compliance record or multiple non-conformances at every inspection.



Red Tractor assured chicken thighs

From April, a new risk-based approach will be adopted.

A considerable amount of time has been spent developing a fair and objective method of identifying high-risk members.

This is an internal system which uses the nature and number of non-conformances to categorise each member according to reputational risk.

All standards have been weighted according to reputational risk, for example the standard requiring livestock to be handled in a way that avoids injury and minimises stress has been given greater weighting than having a farm map.

However, all standards are important and must be complied with at all times.

For most members, there will be no noticeable change; a routine inspection will take place and reported back to Red Tractor by the certification body.

If after the result of an inspection a member is classified by Red Tractor as higher risk, an additional unannounced inspection will be triggered at the farmer's cost and they will be notified by their certification body.

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Unannounced inspections

The inspection will take the form of a spot check and no notice will be given to the farm.

To avoid logistical and practical issues, members who require an unannounced visit will be asked to provide information to reduce the chance of no-one being available to carry out the inspection.

This will include contact telephone numbers, routine and biosecurity requirements.

The assessor will wait for a minimum time period but if no-one is available and the assessor hasn't been able to speak to anyone after calling the contact numbers, a failed inspection card will be left.

The member will have to pay for a rescheduled unannounced inspection.

If improvement can be demonstrated, members are no longer categorised as higher risk and will be informed by their certification body.

They will then continue with the normal inspection frequency, albeit possibly at shorter notice.

If no improvement has been made, membership will be suspended. When a member is suspended, no products from the farm can be marketed as assured.

A member who has been suspended and has been re-instated back into the scheme after successfully correcting all non-conformances will be subject to a further unannounced inspection at their cost.

If there is no improvement after this inspection, membership will be withdrawn.

Upholding the reputation of Red Tractor

Red Tractor is working towards 100% compliance from every member on every standard every day.

It is vital that consumers have complete trust in the assurance scheme if they are to continue to buy food and drink bearing the logo.

Member rules on the new risk-based approach to inspections can be found here <https://tinyurl.com/y74uz4tf>

Watch a webinar

A webinar to inform farmers and stakeholders on how the risk-based inspection regime will work will be held on 21 January at 7.30pm. Make sure you register to take part at <https://tinyurl.com/y9ldharg>.



Shedding light on the subject

Changes to the Red Tractor poultry scheme standards announced earlier this year means that assured producers must have windows in poultry sheds by October 2020.

With that in mind, NFU Poultry Board and Red Tractor Poultry Board member Charles Bourns and the NFU's Chief Poultry Adviser Gary Ford, approached two contractors who are involved in retrofitting windows in broiler sheds.

Sam Drummond and Eamon Fitzgerald, gave sample quotes, so producers have a better understanding of the likely costs involved.

Mr Bourns said: "Red Tractor has just passed a requirement for 3% windows to go into all houses, they can go down one side only, they can be of polycarbon or toughened glass. A large number of houses will be old, like mine were.

Sheds that already have 1% of their floor area made up of windows will have to be 3% by 2023. We believe that, on average, it will work out about 60p per bird place, and that it will cost the industry as a whole £15 million."

Mr Bourns asked the contractors to

base a quote on polycarbon, double-glazed windows on 3% of his own sheds of 63,000 birds.

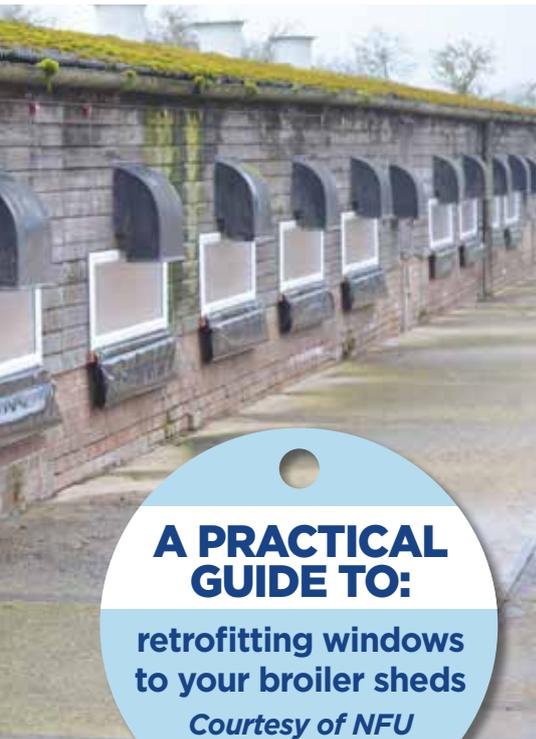
Mr Fitzgerald said: "I have looked at this in the light of previous similar jobs completed and would be able to provide a provisional estimate of between £350 and £375 per m² of additional uPVC window frames and external light baffles on slides, supplied and fitted.

"Sheds that already have 1% of their floor area made up of windows will have to be 3% by 2023."

If a rack and pinion system was needed, it would lead to an additional cost of £100 per m².

"Obviously the price will vary depending on the type of house, ventilation, space available for windows, colour of windows etc. And each site would have to be surveyed for an exact price but this gives an indication.

"If polycarbonate glazed, wooden-



A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO:
retrofitting windows to your broiler sheds
Courtesy of NFU Poultry magazine.

framed windows were to be used, a provisional estimate of between £270 and £315 per m² of additional timber window frames, polycarbonate glazing and external light baffles on slides supplied and fitted, would be reasonable depending on the condition, type of existing building.”

Sam Drummond said: “It’s hard to give a detailed quote, as timber and steel houses vary so much. The costs depend on where the site is located. £250-£350 per m² is the range for poly carbonate. You can add another £20 per m² for double-glazed toughened glass.

“In an old shed there is asbestos to consider, a survey costs £290. If the fans



A rack and pinion shutter system on a broiler shed

Fitzgerald

are on the roof, then you can fit bigger windows, which reduces the cost – vents in the side mean lots of smaller windows.

“You must take into consideration the condition of the timber if you are cutting into the side of the shed – you might need additional timber to strengthen the sides.

“When dealing with a steel shed, you have to put timber work behind the steel to make a frame for the window to slot into. Steel sheds are slower to do and take longer to cut. Also, side cawling might need trimming to allow the light into the windows.”

“The cost is in cutting the window and the finishing, and doesn’t make much difference of the size to some extent.

Mr Drummond continued: “Once a site survey has taken place, we will provide the farmer with a written quote and process.

The lead time is flexible, but we would need a month’s notice.”

A 20,000 sq ft shed will take five days to complete. They aim to fit the windows during turnaround which is challenging, so a slightly extended turnaround is welcome, albeit preparation work takes place off site while the birds are still in the shed.

Disinfection should take place after the windows are fitted.

Sam suggested considering, for example, taking two turnarounds to complete a four shed site or even one shed per turnaround depending upon overall timelines.

Consideration should also be given to refurbishing the whole of the side of the shed at the same time depending upon age and condition of the side walls (and budget of course).

Matthew Ward, agricultural director at Crown Chicken, who has overseen the retrospective fitting of windows into 160 poultry sheds commented: “Don’t compromise on turnaround and do it properly by taking the shed out for a crop. The risk being that the shed does not get cleaned properly because of

Ensuring you have enrichments

It is now mandatory for Red Tractor assured poultry producers to provide enrichments for their birds. You can find additional guidance here <https://tinyurl.com/y7lbsm7y>

Bales

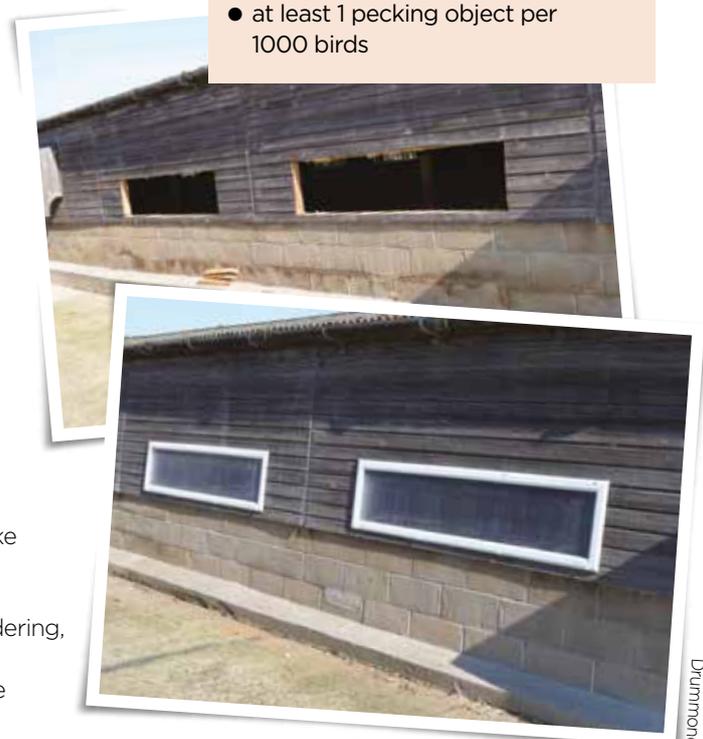
- at least 1 bale per 1,000 birds used throughout the bird’s life
- bales are wrapped or treated
- bales are placed in the house prior to chick placement

Perches

- 2 linear metres of perches per 1,000 birds
- perches should be no more than 15cm off the ground

Pecking objects

- at least 1 pecking object per 1000 birds



Drummond

Above: Holes cut into timber frames
Below: The installed windows

the tight turnaround which risks a good chick start and bird performance.”

The windows at Crown were fitted at a typical cost of between 75p and £1 per sq ft of floor area, so a 300 X 60ft shed would cost £13,500 - £18,000. This is using polycarbonate and an external hand winched black out blind. If rack and pinion were fitted the cost would increase by 20p per sq ft (+ £3,600 on a 300 x 70 shed).

What would losing your farm assurance status mean to your business?

It is recommended as part of the risk-based approach to inspections that producers have a contingency plan in place to ensure they have considered what actions they will take should they lose their assurance status.

Suspension from the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme is just one reason why a farmer may be unable to move birds off site for processing, and we are aware that this could have implications for bird welfare.

Suspension can be avoided by remaining 100% compliant with the Red Tractor standards 365 days a year.

The Red Tractor standards already require all farms to have a documented emergency plan, covering the actions to be taken in the event of identified risks, such as a fire, flood or severe weather.

However most of our members' plans don't cover what to do if the farm is not permitted to move, sell or market their birds as assured which would happen when a farm loses its assurance status.

Farms which remain compliant with the



standards will be unaffected but Red Tractor is asking producers to consider alternatives in case this issue arises.

Things to consider includes identifying alternative outlets for unassured birds and liaison with your customers, processors and suppliers.

"Suspension from the Red Tractor Assurance Scheme is just one potential threat to a farm being unable to move birds off for processing."

New faces on Poultry Board



The Red Tractor Poultry Board has two new members.

Iain Gardner has taken the role of Poultry Sector Chairman while Jonty Hay will represent the independent broiler sector on behalf of the NFU.

Iain worked in the pig industry for five years before starting his career with BOCM PAULS and was part of the company as it was bought out by ForFarmers.

He has worked at executive and board level for the past 17 years before stepping down from his chief executive officer role at ForFarmers in December 2017.

Poultry farmer Jonty has supplied most processors through the independent supply chain, and understands the pressures of the marketplace combined with the reality of the need to drive the needs of the farm and the birds at the forefront of the business.

He said: "I applied for the position because I am passionate about the independent sector and the Red Tractor, which I believe we will need more than ever, whether you are an independent or retail supplier with the looming uncertainty of Brexit."



KNOW YOUR COMMON NON-CONFORMANCES

A review of data from certification bodies has been carried out to reveal the most common reasons for assured poultry farms to be given a non-conformance.

A common non-conformance in breeder replacements is standard HF.e, which is the need for adequate lighting levels in a shed.

The standard requires lighting of a minimum of 10 lux, whereas the broiler standard requires 20 lux.

Stocking density in breeder layer units has also been exceeded in some cases - standard HF.f (breeder layers).

Assessors noted that at a farm level there were instances where birds had been bigger than expected. The numbers per shed should be adjusted to ensure that the correct stocking density is achieved.

