



## Remote Assessment Guidance For Red Tractor Scheme Members

During the unprecedented circumstances facing the country, Red Tractor want to ensure members are fully supported, to enable them to continue to provide high quality produce to feed the nation.

As the UK's largest food and farming assurance scheme, covering 75% of British Agriculture, we need to ensure that people have access to safe and responsibly sourced food. To do this, we need to protect the integrity of the food chain and UK farming standards, by upholding the key principles of our assurance scheme- food safety, traceability, animal welfare and environmental protection.

In doing so, it is essential that we safeguard the health and safety of our members, assessors, vets and those who govern the scheme.

On Friday 20th March we suspended all physical inspections in the Red Tractor farm schemes and have worked with our certification bodies to develop and trial a new protocol for remote assessments.

With this now in place, it will enable us to ensure continued compliance with standards, whilst ensuring we protect everyone's health and do not distract or disrupt the supply of food. In the coming weeks we will see this protocol being rolled out to members due an assessment and for new members who need to be assured to supply new customers.

### What is a Red Tractor remote assessment?

Simply put, its one that is conducted off site when a physical assessment isn't possible.

### How will the remote assessment work?

A remote assessment can be carried out by either one of the following ways:

1. Offline pre-assessment with a live streamed partial assessment
- OR
2. Live streamed full assessment

### What is the difference between these two remote assessment methods?

#### Offline pre-assessment with a live streamed partial assessment

Selected documents and information will need to be provided ahead of the mutually agreed date for the assessment, to be reviewed by the assessor- preferably uploaded to the Red Tractor Portal.

This will be followed by a video call to review the documents and to complete any inspection elements.

#### Live streamed full assessment

All documents reviews and inspections will take place via a video call on a mutually agreed day.

**Please note-** a strong and consistent internet connection will be required for this type of assessment.

## **What do we mean by 'Live Stream'?**

For both remote assessment options, the live stream element of the assessment will be conducted using technology such as Skype, Microsoft Teams, Zoom Meeting, GoTo Meetings, WhatsApp or the Certification Body may also have its own unique technology.

The assessment will include elements that are normally covered during a surveillance/routine visit, but it is accepted that some activities may not be able to be observed during a remote assessment. An example of this could be observing a member carrying out a task or speaking to secondary persons about their training.

These technical aspects may need to be assessed at a later date, but this will be discussed and agreed with your certification body.

## **How will it work?**

We will be maintaining our current audit cycle. Members whose assessments are overdue will be the priority, but if your assessment is due in the coming weeks, you will be contacted by your certification body to arrange a day to complete the assessment remotely.

Ahead of the assessment, members will be fully briefed on what 'remote' means, the options they have for either a fully or partial live streamed assessment and the deadlines for any paperwork.

## **What should Red Tractor members expect?**

The structure of the assessment may be a little different to the usual on-site assessment, but for both options these things will remain the same:

- Opening and closing meetings
- Review information throughout the assessment to ensure compliance to the Red Tractor standards.
- Evidence of non-compliance discussed and agreed with the member in accordance with the Certification Body and Red Tractor assessment protocol.

## **How and where do I upload documents?**

The Red Tractor online portal is the easiest, most secure and confidential way for members to do this. It allows every member to upload and review documents relating to their assessment. It also provides lots of useful guidance and information on how Red Tractor is supporting its members using the most up to date government guidance and information.

Some Certification Bodies might accept documentation by email or other file sharing systems, they will advise members when they arrange the audit.

The Red tractor portal can be found [here](#):

## **How to access help to use the Red Tractor portal to upload documents and photographs**

For members who want to use the Red Tractor portal to upload documentation for the offline pre-assessment, technical support is available in a number of ways:

1. Guidance is available on the Red Tractor Assurance website [here](#)
2. Telephone support from Red Tractor - 0203 617 3670
3. Telephone support from Certification Bodies:
  - Lloyds Register 0131 335 6643
  - NSF 01993 885610
  - SAI Global 01908 249973
  - NIFCC 028 9263 3017
  - QWFC 01970 636688

**What if I can't complete a remote assessment?**

Discussions with the assessor will determine possible solutions and if no route can be found then a follow up call will take place with the certification body to discuss how to proceed.

**What next?**

There is no need to contact your Certification Bodies, they will contact you in advance any upcoming assessments to schedule in a time and date.

Full support will be available through online guidance documents and certification bodies staff are fully trained and will be on hand to help.