

To: Licensed Seed Companies in Scotland (by email only)

Our ref: 03/24

cc: AIC Scotland, BSPB, NFU Scotland, SSTA, APHA Defra, Welsh Government and DAERA

22 March 2024

UK Winter/Spring Vetch Seed Derogation

1. The Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC) has submitted a request to the National Authorities in Defra, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government for a derogation to market winter/spring vetch seed not meeting the required germination standard. AIC have advised us that there is large demand for winter/spring vetch seed to be used in sustainable farming initiatives and there is unlikely to be sufficient seed available unless a derogation from the usual germination standards is introduced. Consequently, to allow businesses to meet the expected market demand and contractual obligations for seed, Defra, the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government have approved the request from AIC to market **85 tonnes** of certified category winter/spring vetch seed of popular varieties such as Argan, Caravelle, Neon and English Early at a reduced germination level of **75%**. This list of varieties is not exhaustive and other varieties suitable for spring sowing in the UK may also be considered.

2. The purpose of this letter is to invite interested businesses to bid for a proportion of the specified quantity. Each of the National Authorities are issuing their own Seed Certification Information letters, with AIC coordinating allocations on a GB basis, treating bids from AIC and non-AIC members alike. If total bids exceed the available quantity, pro-rata reduction will be applied across the board.

3. All bids should be directed to Rose Riby at AIC, stating company name, quantity required, and the variety. Company names and allocations will be included in a General Licence for Scotland, whilst Defra and the Welsh Government will prepare individual Letters of Authorisation to cover their respective areas. Only those companies named in the schedule will be authorised to place on the market for the first time the allocated quantities of derogated seed. If you are submitting a bid to AIC on behalf of your company but intend to allocate quantities to other companies, AIC will require the names of those other companies. Bids must reach AIC by e-mail to rose.riby@agindustries.org.uk no later than 18:00 on **28th March 2024**.

4. To avoid duplication (and to limit the possibility of having to scale back the final allocation amount), applications should be made by the business which will be certifying the seed. However, where the business eventually certifying the seed is not known, applications may be made by as-grown wholesalers, but this must be clear in the application to ensure traceability at the point of certification.

5. No winter/spring vetch seed may be marketed below the minimum germination capacity of 85%, as prescribed in the Regulations, until formal authorisation has been issued. The authorisation will specify conditions for marketing, including labelling requirements. AIC will aim to inform companies of their allocations, and to provide information about the formal authorisation conditions as soon as possible.

Communicated on behalf of SASA, Plant Varieties and Marketing Policy Team.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Parker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

MICHAEL PARKER
Head of Seed Certification

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