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By Michael Barker

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Tacon appointed Red Tractor chair

Former Groceries Code Adjudicator replaces Dame Lucy Neville-Rolfe from January 2021



Christine Tacon has been appointed chair of Assured Food Standards, which operates the Red Tractor Assurance scheme.

The former Groceries Code Adjudicator takes up the role on 1 January 2021, replacing Dame Lucy Neville-Rolfe, whose term ended last month.

Tacon joins Red Tractor with decades of experience as a leader and advocate for the British food and farming industry and with an extensive background in change management, regulation and the food chain.

She started her professional career as an engineer and then moved into marketing, working at organisations including Mars, Vodafone and Anchor (now Fonterra). For more than 10 years, she ran the Co-operative Group's farming business - the largest of its kind in the UK. In 2004, she was awarded a CBE for services to agriculture.

She currently serves as chair of the BBC Rural Affairs Committee and MDS - a management training scheme for the food and fresh produce industry. She is also a director of the AF Group, a £250m purchasing co-operative for agri-businesses.

Until October 2020, Tacon was a government regulator responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Groceries Supply Code of Practice by large grocery retailers, who are designated by the Competition and Markets Authority, in their dealings with direct suppliers.

A spokesperson for the ownership body of Red Tractor, comprising of the farming unions, AHDB, Dairy UK and the BRC, responsible for the appointment, commented: "This is a pivotal time for UK agriculture, with the UK's departure from the EU and the uncertainties of future trade deals.

"Red Tractor's standards are the bedrock

of British agriculture. They have helped establish the UK's food and farming industry as the benchmark for quality across the world. Now more than ever is the time to demonstrate strong leadership, to protect the integrity of the food chain and the agricultural standards that we have built up in Britain over the decades.

"Christine's proven credentials and a career that spans across the supply chains of food and farming, will be an enormous asset in helping Red Tractor fly the flag for our industry and to deliver on its core purpose to reassure consumers."

Tacon said: "I'm really looking forward to joining Red Tractor. This role builds on my experience in farming, the food chain, working with government and most of all with consumers. With uncertainty on standards of food imported into the UK post Brexit, this is a great time to be working on British standards and ensuring they are fit for purpose for all its stakeholders."

<http://www.fruitnet.com/americafruit/article/1474/parts-of-san-diego-quarantined-as-psyllid-count-mounts>

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