

1. SPREADMARK SYSTEM STANDARD

This section of the Spreadmark Code of Practice relates to the Spreadmark System Standard and contains the Spreadmark Internal Audit Checklist.

It contains the following material:

- 1.1 Spreadmark System Standard for Groundspread Companies
- 1.2 Internal Audit Checklist
- 1.3 Spreadmark Groundspread Environmental Code
- 1.4 Spreadmark Auditor Protocol for Groundspread Companies
- 1.5 Spreading Equipment Testers Protocol
- 1.6 Transitional Arrangements

1.1 SPREADMARK SYSTEM STANDARD FOR GROUNDSPREAD COMPANIES

SCOPE

This is the quality management standard that will be used by the Auditor to assess the degree to which the fertiliser spreading company's management system works to ensure that customer needs and Spreadmark standards are reliably met.

STANDARD

1. MANAGEMENT

- 1.1 The fertiliser spreading company must have a documented system, appropriate for their size, which shows how farmer/grower requirements are communicated and reliably delivered.
- 1.2 The company must designate someone to have overall responsibility for quality assurance.
- 1.3 Proper records must be kept of orders and deliveries.

2. CUSTOMER NEEDS

- 2.1 There must be a way of recording customer orders completely.
- 2.2 There must be a way of reliably communicating customer orders to appropriate staff.
- 2.3 Records of orders delivered must be recorded so that reconciliations between individual orders and deliveries can be made.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- 3.1 Fertiliser spreading companies must have an acceptable written environmental care policy (see also the Spreadmark Groundspread Environmental Code of this Code of Practice).
- 3.2 Companies must follow their environmental care policy.

4. SPREADING EQUIPMENT

- 4.1 Only equipment with a current Spreadmark Spreader Performance Certificate will be used on jobs where a Spreadmark accreditation has been requested or specified. In addition, either all fertiliser spreading equipment in the company will hold a current Spreadmark Spreader Performance Certificate or there will be a system in place to ensure that non-certified equipment is not used for jobs where Spreadmark accreditation has been requested or specified.

- 4.2 Spreadmark Spreaders will be checked annually. There are a number of different ways that this can be done. Options include all or some of the following:
- using Approved Spreading Equipment Testers annually.
 - using Approved Spreading Equipment Testers on a two-yearly basis and competent person checking the performance of the spreader between Approved Tests, or
 - using the self-checking system described in Section 4.9 below.

In order to be considered as Spreadmark Certified Spreaders, machinery will either:

- hold a Spreadmark Spreader Performance Certificate that is less than one year old, or
 - hold a Spreadmark Spreader Performance Certificate that is less than two years old and which has also been checked by the company.
- 4.3 The substantial majority of the spreaders in a Spreadmark accredited fertiliser spreading company will hold a current Spreader Performance Certificate. When auditing this requirement due recognition will be made of machines where it is reasonable that they not be certified (eg new spreaders which have not yet been tested and specialised orchard machines).
- 4.4 Spreading machinery must operate at a bout width that is within the limits that are defined by its Spreadmark Test Certificate for the fertiliser being spread.
- 4.5 All fertiliser spreaders will be provided with a suitable sieve box for testing fertiliser.
- 4.6 All fertiliser spreaders should have a Spreader Maintenance Diary which records significant maintenance and repair work which could affect the machine's fertiliser spreading capability. It should also record the results of the subsequent spreading pattern checks on that machine.
- 4.7 Where the fertiliser spreading company has an acceptable system in place for the regular checking of fertiliser spreading capability, the Auditor shall review this.
- 4.8 Written records shall be kept of all spreading equipment checks and calibrations.
- 4.9 Where the company has a Spreadmark Type Approved Spreader, or has spreaders with a demonstrably repeatable performance (i.e. internal company checking shows that the spreader continues to perform consistently to an external calibration check over a sustained

period) and where there is appropriate evidence of maintenance and on-going checking of the spread pattern, then the Spreader Performance Certificate issued by the manufacturer/importer (in the case of Spreadmark Type Approved Machines) or by the Approved Spreading Equipment Tester, may have the term of its certificate extended for up to two years at a time by the Spreadmark auditor.

- 4.10 Spreaders with Spreadmark Certification shall be clearly identified as such and shall carry a copy of their current Spreadmark Spreader Performance Certificate.

5. OPERATORS

- 5.1 All fertiliser spreading equipment operators shall be competent. There will be training records for each person, signed by a person competent to do so, that record that that person is competent to do the tasks that are assigned to them.
- 5.2 In addition, either all fertiliser spreading equipment operators in the company will hold a current Spreadmark training certificate or there will be a system in place to ensure that operators who do not hold a current training certificate are not used for jobs where Spreadmark accreditation has been requested or offered.
- 5.3 Records shall be kept of operator training.

6. WORK INSTRUCTIONS

- 6.1 Fertiliser spreader operators must be provided with appropriate written Work Instructions which detail how all significant facets of the standard tasks involved in fertiliser spreading are done.
- 6.2 Operator Work Instructions may include information on fertiliser testing with a sieve box, interpretation of the resulting information, using this information to decide on the optimal settings for the spreader and on adjusting spreading machinery.

7. CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS

- 7.1 The company must have a written procedure for investigating and resolving customer complaints so as to identify the real cause of any problem.
- 7.2 The company must follow its customer complaints procedure.

8. INTERNAL AUDIT

- 8.1 The company must conduct an internal audit of its systems to ensure that they remain sound. This audit will be done in the interval between Spreadmark audits. A specimen internal audit checklist can be found at the end of this section.

8.2 Records will be kept of internal audits.

1.2 SPREADMARK INTERNAL AUDIT CHECKLIST

Purpose

The purpose of this checklist is to guide the company internal auditor to ensure that the Spreadmark Quality System continues to operate effectively.

Note that the Code References are to the Spreadmark System Standard for Groundspread Companies.

Checklist

Code Ref	Question	Complied with?
1.2	Is the person with overall responsibility for quality assurance still the person shown in the Quality Manual?	
1.3 & 2.1	Are we still keeping proper records or orders and deliveries?	
2.2	Is the method that we use to communicate customer orders to drivers still appropriate?	
2.3	Are reconciliations between orders and deliveries still able to be made?	
3.1	Is our environmental care policy still current?	
3.1	Are we still taking care to ensure that fertilisers are not being spread or blown into waterways?	
3.1	Are our loads still covered when on public roads?	
3.1	Is spreader washdown still being done under controlled conditions?	
4.1	Are enough of our spreaders still certified?	
4.3	Are our spreaders still operating within the bout width limits defined by their Spreadmark test certificates?	
4.4	Are we still keeping records of spreader checks and calibrations?	
4.5	Are our certified spreaders still identified as such?	
5.1 & 5.3	Are our spreader operators still competent?	
5.2	Do enough of our spreader operators still hold a current Spreadmark training certificate?	
6.1 & 6.2	Is the written guideline material provided for the drivers still up-to-date?	

Signed

Date

1.3 SPREADMARK GROUNDSREAD ENVIRONMENTAL CODE

SCOPE

This is the Environmental Code of Conduct for groundspread fertiliser companies operating within the Spreadmark programme. Fertiliser spreading company environmental care policies and practices, as required by the Spreadmark System Standard, must comply with this Environmental Code.

The application of fertiliser to agricultural land is an activity of profound economic importance but which has the potential to inadvertently cause environmental damage. For this reason, fertiliser spreading companies must comply with good environmental care practices in all parts of their operations.

ENVIRONMENTAL CODE

1. All fertiliser shall be handled, stored and applied in accordance with the Code of Practice for Fertiliser Use – in particular, Part 5 “Fertiliser Application” and Part 6 “Handling Fertilisers”.
2. Care will be taken to prevent fertiliser being spread or blown into waterways.
3. Spreaders will not operate on soils that are so wet that serious soil damage or runoff risks are produced.
4. Spillages of fertiliser are to be avoided. If spillages occur they are to be cleaned up in a way that minimises environmental damage and complies with such legal requirements that apply.
5. When on public roads all loads will be covered, whether empty or full, to prevent fertiliser dust blowing over following vehicles or on to roads.
6. The wash down of spreaders will be done under controlled conditions and with measures in place to prevent wash water flowing into water ways.
7. A safety data sheet (SDS) for the fertiliser being carried should be available within the company.

1.4 SPREADMARK AUDITOR PROTOCOL FOR GROUNDSPREAD COMPANIES

1. SCOPE

This protocol sets out the roles and responsibilities of the Auditor for the fertiliser groundspreading industry.

2. APPOINTMENT

- 2.1 The Auditor shall be nominated by the Fertiliser Quality Executive Committee, and that appointment shall be approved by the Fertiliser Quality Council, for such a term as the Executive Committee shall determine. This decision will be taken in consultation with the NZGFA.
- 2.2 The Auditor shall have received appropriate auditor training and shall be familiar with the fertiliser spreading industry.
- 2.3 The Auditor cannot also be a Spreading Equipment Tester as it is important that the functions of the certification testing of equipment and auditing be kept entirely separate.

3. COMPANY CONTACTS

- 3.1 The Auditor will maintain a register of fertiliser spreading companies and nominated company contact people. The nominated company contact people are to be the primary points of contact for the Auditor with the company.

4. NOTIFICATION

- 4.1 The Auditor will be notified by the Executive Director each time a valid application for Spreadmark company accreditation is received.
- 4.2 The Auditor will negotiate with the applicant fertiliser spreading company contact person for a suitable time to conduct the audit.

5. AUDITS

- 5.1 During audits the Auditor will assess the fertiliser spreading company quality system and records. The standard used for the audit will be the Spreadmark System Standard. The audit will focus on outcomes and evaluate whether or not they are being achieved.
- 5.2 During each audit the Auditor will examine the fertiliser spreading companies own spreading machinery test system and records to determine their effectiveness. Where companies have spreaders which have a current Spreader Performance Certificate and which have a demonstrably repeatable performance (i.e. internal company checking shows the spreader continues to perform consistently to the external calibration check over a sustained period) and where there is

appropriate evidence of maintenance and on-going checking of the spread pattern, then the Spreader Performance Certificate issued by the manufacturer/importer (in the case of Spreadmark Type Approved machines) or by the Approved Spreading Equipment Tester, may have the term of its certificate extended for up to two years at a time.

- 5.3 After the site audit is complete a recommendation as to the suitability of the fertiliser spreading company for Spreadmark accreditation will be sent to the Executive Director.
- 5.4 A site audit report will be sent to the nominated company contact person. It will include a copy of the recommendation as to the suitability of the company systems for Spreadmark accreditation sent to the Executive Director.

6. AUDIT FREQUENCY

- 6.1 Spreadmark audits will normally be carried out on a two-yearly basis from the date of accreditation.
- 6.2 The Auditor may determine that an increased audit frequency is appropriate if there are non-conformances or complaints against the company are sustained.

7. STATUS REPORT

- 7.1 The Auditor will maintain a status report showing the current status of each accredited company, when it is next due to be audited and any current issues that relate to it.
- 7.2 The status report shall be supplied to the Executive Director every six months or within ten working days of it being requested.

8. RECORDS

- 8.1 The Auditor shall maintain proper records. These records will include audit reports, status reports and correspondence.
- 8.2 Records, or copies of records, shall be supplied to the Executive Director upon request and in accordance with the Spreadmark Confidentiality Protocol.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 9.1 The Auditor will not communicate information about any fertiliser spreading company to anyone other than the company itself through its nominated contact person or the Executive Director. Requests for information are to be referred to the Executive Director.
- 9.2 All information held by the Auditor on a company is to be made available to that company on request by the nominated company

contact person.

9.3 For further information refer to the Spreadmark Confidentiality Protocol.

1.5 SPREADING EQUIPMENT TESTERS PROTOCOL

1. SCOPE

- 1.1 This protocol sets out the role and responsibilities of Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Testers.

2. APPROVAL POLICIES

- 2.1 Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Testers shall be approved by the Fertiliser Quality Council Executive Committee.
- 2.2 The term of approval shall be for a term of two years or any other lesser term that the Fertiliser Quality Council Executive Committee determines.
- 2.3 Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Testers will be appropriately qualified and will be able to display practical experience within the fertiliser spreading industry.
- 2.4 The certification of a Spreadmark tester will be held in the name of the person certified by the Spreadmark auditor. In the case of a person who transfers to another company, the transfer of the Spreadmark tester certification will be subject to the Spreadmark auditor being satisfied that the testing equipment meets the technical specifications of the Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Tests. All applications to alter the terms of a Spreadmark Approved Equipment Tester's certification must be made in the first instance to the Executive Director.
- 2.5 A Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Tester will be a fit and proper person capable of managing spreader equipment testing, but who is also able to maintain the integrity of the Spreadmark Spreading Equipment Testing process.
- 2.6 An Approved Spreadmark Spreading Equipment Tester must not do anything inimical to the interests of the Spreadmark scheme. Any complaint about an approved Spreadmark Spreading Equipment tester must in the first instance be made to the Executive Director for resolution.

3. APPROVAL PROCESSES

- 3.1 Upon receipt of a request to become a Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Tester the Executive Director will forward the application to the Spreadmark auditor who will, without undue delay, contact the applicant to arrange a suitable time for an audit of their equipment, processes and software to evaluate whether or not they comply with the requirements of this Code.

- 3.2 The auditor shall report their findings and recommendations to the Executive Director who will seek approval from the Executive Committee for the applicant to be added to the register. Upon approval by the Executive Committee the applicant will be advised that they are able to carry out fertiliser spreading machinery testing and certification for the Spreadmark programme and that their name will be added to the register of Approved Spreading Equipment Testers.

4. SPREADER COMPANY CONTACTS

- 4.1 The Executive Director shall make available the list of Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Testers to all Spreadmark accredited companies and to spreading companies that have applied to the Executive Director for Spreadmark accreditation. All Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Testers shall offer Spreadmark testing services to all Spreadmark accredited companies or companies seeking Spreadmark accreditation.
- 4.2 Spreadmark accredited or registered companies may select the services of any Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Tester at a testing fee to be fixed between the parties.

5. SPREADMARK SPREADING EQUIPMENT TESTING

- 5.1 All testing done by Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Testers for Spreadmark purposes will be done in accordance with the current Spreadmark Code of Practice test standard.
- 5.2 All Spreadmark Spreader Performance Certificates will be of a form approved by the Spreadmark Executive Director.
- 5.3 Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Testers will only generate certificates with the Spreadmark name or logo on them for fertiliser spreading companies which hold, or which have applied to hold Spreadmark company accreditation.
- 5.4 Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Testers will, on request and without fee, provide spreader test data to the Executive Director if the information is sought for research purposes or to resolve disputes.

6. FERTILISER QUALITY COUNCIL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- 6.1 Immediately following Spreadmark spreader equipment testing, the Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Tester will forward the completed Spreadmark Spreader Performance Certificate to the Executive Director with a recommendation to the Executive Director about the issuing of a Spreadmark Spreader Performance Certificate.

- 6.2 The Fertiliser Quality Council Executive Director shall then issue the applicant with a Spreadmark Spreader Performance Certificate unless there are any other circumstances that may be taken into account.
- 6.3 The Executive Director will only issue Spreadmark Spreader Performance Certificates to fertiliser spreading companies which hold, or which have applied to hold, Spreadmark company accreditation.

7. AUDITS

- 7.1 The Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Tester shall be subject to regular audit by the Spreadmark auditor. The audit will be to determine that the standards specified in the Spreadmark Code of Practice are being maintained. The Spreadmark auditor will make available the results of the audit to the Fertiliser Quality Council Executive Director.
- 7.2 If in the opinion of the Spreadmark auditor the Spreadmark approved specifications are not being met, the Executive Director will require the Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Tester to provide an explanation within ten days. If the matter cannot be resolved the Executive Director may suspend the Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Tester from Spreadmark testing.
- 7.3 The Spreadmark auditor may be asked to conduct an audit of the Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Tester if requested by the Executive Director following any complaint.
- 7.4 In all matters in dispute the decision of the Executive of the Fertiliser Quality Council will be binding on the parties.

8. DISPUTES

- 8.1 Disputes that may arise between Spreadmark accredited or applicant companies and Spreadmark Approved Spreading Equipment Testers shall be managed according to the Spreadmark Disciplinary and Deregistration Procedure of the Spreadmark Code of Practice.

1.6 TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

SCOPE

This section of the Spreadmark Code of Practice lists the transitional arrangements that apply from time-to-time to the operational rules.

It may also be used to give advance notice of changes that are being phased in.

These transitional arrangements shall apply until they lapse by expiry. These transitional rules will then be removed or incorporated into main body of this Code.

TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR GROUNDSREAD COMPANIES

1. Longitudinal CV will be measured and reported but will not initially be a requirement of certification. It is expected that in about January 2008 this test will become part of the Spreader Performance Certification Scheme.
2. It is expected that a requirement to have a substantial majority of spreader operators in a company trained (or enrolled) in the Spreadmark approved training programme will be introduced in about October 2006.
3. It is expected that in the future the requirement to have 'a substantial majority' of spreaders certified will be replaced with a requirement to have all spreaders certified (with some exceptions still allowed).
4. The feasibility of increasing the tray spacing for transverse testing is being considered. This may result in a change in the testing rules.