



## Orchid scores industry first with launch of 'Red Tractor' ale

The Orchid Group has won an industry first with the news that it is set to become the first pub company in the UK to sell cask ale which has been certified with the Red Tractor logo.

In a major industry move, leading UK brewer, Wells and Young's has announced that it will launch its top-selling cask ale, Young's Bitter – the first cask ale with Red Tractor certification, in Orchid's 'Contemporary Carveries' from 16th June 2008.

The Red Tractor certification, administered by Assured Food Standards (AFS), signifies that the ale has been brewed in the UK using ingredients grown to the very highest standards on farms and has been checked and verified by professional independent inspectors.

Made with 100% natural British ingredients, the casks are re-usable and the new lightweight bottles are recyclable.

Sharon Hammond, Carveries Concept Development Manager, says: "The Orchid Group is one hundred per cent committed to Red Tractor and is passionate about promoting the very best of British food and drink as well as supporting UK farmers. We were the first pub company to become a Red Tractor licensee for all meat across our Carvery estate and believe the scheme has a key role to play in Britain's food and drink industry. We are delighted to help launch Young's Bitter with the Assured Food Standards guarantee. Our partnership with Wells and Young's not only reinforces Orchid's pledge to support the Red Tractor scheme and its aim to raise standards right across the food chain but will also increase consumer awareness of the importance of quality assurance."

Chris Lewis, director of marketing, comments: "We are one of the leading suppliers of specialty beers in the UK and our decision to launch Young's Bitter in cask with Red Tractor accreditation demonstrates our commitment to delivering quality products while supporting the British farming community."

“It is incredibly important to us that we work with farmers and suppliers to raise industry standards. We have been impressed with Orchid’s commitment to the scheme and it was a natural fit for us to launch quality assured Young’s Bitter with the Group.”

The success of the Red Tractor scheme continues to soar and the food assurance mark now appears on over £7.5bn worth of food and drink in the UK. The number of businesses signing up to the scheme has increased by fifty per cent over the last two years with household names such as Dairy Crest, Nestlé Cereal Partners and McCain’s just a handful of the well-known brands which now bear the logo.

Sharon Hammond concludes: “We all want to know that the food and drink we are buying is safe. This only comes from knowing where the raw ingredients came from and the knowledge that they have been produced to the highest possible standards. There is no doubt that the Red Tractor scheme is boosting the reputation of UK food and drink production. The Orchid Group will continue to support AFS and its goal to raise the bar for all farmers, processors, distributors and retailers throughout the industry.”

**Ends**

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## Notes to editors

### About Orchid's Contemporary Carveries

Orchid's contemporary carveries offer a fantastic modern take on the traditional British carvery with stylish, up-to-date furnishings in an aspirational, yet comfortable 'home from home' setting. There are now 43 Orchid Carveries across the UK.

### About Red Tractor

Red Tractor is a food assurance scheme which covers production standards developed by experts on safety, hygiene, animal welfare and the environment. The Red Tractor certifies that food has been produced to independently inspected standards right across the food chain – from farm to pack.

Assured Food Standards (AFS) is the independent organisation set up to manage the Red Tractor mark. AFS is the independent not-for-profit organisation that represents the interests from each of the key links, including: the National Farmers' Union, the Meat & Livestock Commission, Dairy UK and the British Retail Consortium. Observers include DEFRA and the Food & Drink Federation.

1. Red Tractor can only appear on food that has been produced to Red Tractor standards at every critical link in the supply chain. This means feed suppliers, processing plants and, where relevant, animal welfare, must be independently inspected.
2. Red Tractor businesses must comply with approved standards for food safety, responsible management of pesticides and waste and, where relevant, animal welfare.
3. 450 independent experts carry out 70,000 inspections every year.
4. There are 78,000 Red Tractor farmers and growers in the UK, accounting for between 66% and 95% of output in the main commodity sectors.
5. There are approximately 400 companies licensed to pack Red Tractor assured food.
6. All product that carries the Red Tractor can be traced back to the farms.
7. The Red Tractor logo ensures ingredients have been farmed, and packed, in the UK.

All standards are constantly reviewed and updated and are available on the Red Tractor website [www.redtractor.org.uk](http://www.redtractor.org.uk)