



nabim

AUDIT & ACCREDITATION SCHEME

Testing wheat at intake is a key element of ensuring that it meets the contractual specifications. It is an essential part of maintaining quality control in flour mills and other grain-based processes that rely on the quality and suitability of raw materials. Ensuring that grain testing is consistently accurate remains an important step in this process.

nabim and its member companies take testing very seriously and have invested heavily in both equipment and training to ensure correct standards of analysis and the highest level of proficiency.

Central to the maintenance of this standard is the **nabim** audit and accreditation scheme. It consists of two elements – proficiency and accreditation. Some participants only join the proficiency element although many value joining both.

The scheme is available to all laboratories which test wheat quality such as those operated by merchant organisations and independent testing facilities.

For an annual fee a laboratory can be measured against the same standards used by UK flour millers.



Proficiency

The **nabim** intake scheme, which helps to establish and maintain common standards of wheat testing at flour mills, requires participants to follow established procedures in their laboratories, with methods of analysis traceable to reference methods where appropriate. It also requires participants to reach a standard of proficiency, independently assessed by Campden BRI on the basis of monthly tests. It is this measure of proficiency that differentiates the **nabim** scheme from others.

To assess proficiency, participating laboratories analyse one hard and/or one soft wheat sample (a set) per month, supplied by Campden BRI. Individual results are judged against the reference values for each sample, with the proficiency measured by the ability to match those reference standards. Testing proficiency is assessed for all participants in the **nabim** scheme; currently it covers protein, moisture and Hagberg Falling Number.

Accreditation

Laboratories may, if they wish, apply for accreditation. This was developed at a time when there were few accreditation systems for grain testing laboratories and has become well established throughout the milling sector. The scope of intake tests for accreditation exceeds other schemes in operation and currently includes: protein; moisture, Hagberg Falling Number, screenings, hardness, specific weight, gluten washing and visual examination.

Accreditation is obtained by an audit inspection that is usually made when other third party audits (BRC, CLAS etc) are being carried out. It usually takes the auditor no more than two hours to complete and they will charge directly for this.

Although both parts of the scheme may be used independently, undertaking them together earns an 'accreditation' certificate. Many millers value this both as a display item and to use with customers.

To achieve accreditation, two criteria need to be met:

- Laboratories must meet minimum performance standards, i.e. proficiency testing.
- Laboratories must demonstrate by independent audit that the processes required under the scheme are observed.

The performance and accreditation status is reviewed on a six-monthly basis and laboratories that consistently fail to meet minimum performance criteria lose their accreditation to the scheme.

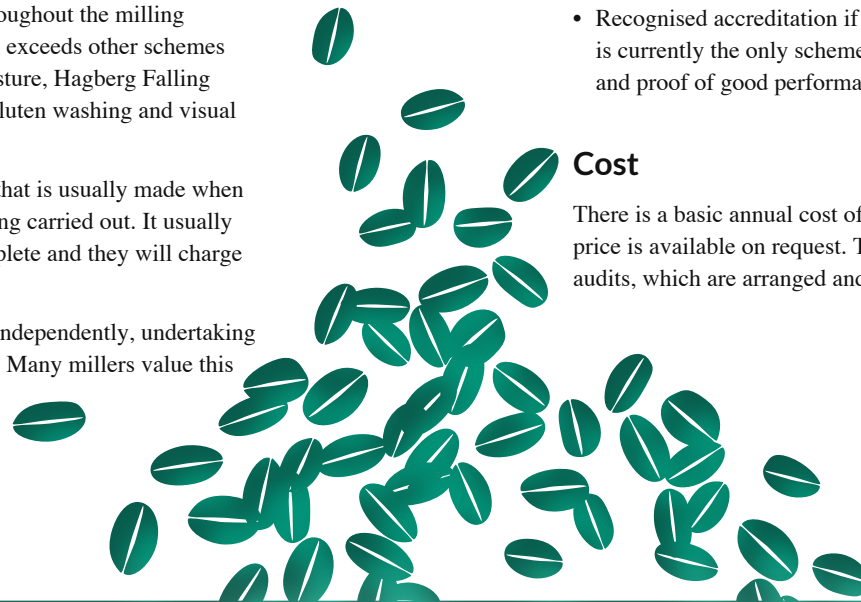
Benefits

The benefits are:

- Performance assessments each month.
- Provision of monthly updated control charts that show variation of results from the established value. This enables anomalous performance to be investigated preventing prolonged deviation.
- Key guidance on factors influencing test performance.
- Recognised accreditation if applied for and achieved. The **nabim** scheme is currently the only scheme that requires both good laboratory standards and proof of good performance.

Cost

There is a basic annual cost of participation in the scheme and the current price is available on request. This does not include the cost of third party audits, which are arranged and paid for by individual members.





For more information

The scheme protocol can be found on the **nabim** website (www.nabim.org.uk/wheat) by clicking on 'Wheat Testing at Mill Intake'.

Alternatively, you can contact us by:

Telephone: 0207 493 2521

Email: info@nabim.org.uk

