

FAQs for feed companies

Frequently asked questions and answers about QS-Soy^{plus}

Relevant QS documents for QS-Soy^{plus}

Guideline QS-Soy^{plus}

- **Annex 4.1** Soybeans/products in the scope of QS-Soy^{plus}
- **Annex 4.2** QS-recognized standards for the soybean production
- **Annex 4.3** Recognized systems for QS-Soy^{plus} for feed trade and production

Scope of QS-Soy^{plus}

1. Which companies fall within the scope of QS-Soy^{plus}?

Within the scope of QS-Soy^{plus}, fall QS certified **feed producers** (including **small-scale producers** and **private labelling**) and **feed traders** who have soy that is included in the scope of QS-Soy^{plus} (see Annex 4.1) or compound feed containing this, in their product range. Accordingly, the scope of QS-Soy^{plus} also includes operators of **mobile milling and mixing plants** if they bring soy oil for mixing on the farm and sell this to the livestock owner (trading activity outside the service of milling and mixing). For the companies mentioned above, a certification according to QS-Soy^{plus} or a recognised standard according to Annex 4.3 is mandatory.

In Annex 1 to these FAQs, you will find graphical illustrations of the certification obligations at the feed sector level.

2. Which activities are not included in the scope of QS-Soy^{plus}?

Excluded from the scope of QS-Soy^{plus} are **additive** and **premix production, storage and transshipment**, and **transport**. In addition, companies that only process or trade products excluded from the scope (see Annex 4.1) are also exempted.

3. Are QS-certified traders also obliged to comply with QS-Soy^{plus} if they sell soy-containing feed exclusively in packaged form?

Yes. **QS-certified traders** who sell feed containing soy that falls within the scope of QS-Soy^{plus} must meet the requirements of the guideline or a recognised standard, regardless of whether the goods are traded in bulk or packaged (e.g. in bags).

Traders who sell **only packaged feed** and are **not QS certified** are not required to obtain certification under QS-Soy^{plus}. QS-Soy^{plus} does not result in any changes for these companies, as the QS scheme does not require certification for the trade of exclusively packed products.

Important

It must be ensured in all cases that QS-certified customers receive QS-Soy^{plus}-compliant goods.

Example

A QS-certified trader sells loose grain (e.g. maize) and additionally packaged feed containing soy in bags → For the bagged goods containing soy, he must comply with the QS-Soy^{plus} requirements (or a recognised standard) and have this checked in the audit.

4. Do farmers who grow soy have to be certified according to QS-Soy^{plus}?

No, for the primary agricultural production (soybean cultivation), a certification obligation applies according to a primary standard recognized by QS, which are published in Annex 4.2 *QS-recognized standards for soybean production*.

5. Which soy products are included in the scope of QS-Soy^{plus}?

All soy products included in the scope of QS-Soy^{plus} are published in Annex 4.1 *Soybeans/products in the scope of QS-Soy^{plus}*. Companies that produce, trade or process these products are obliged to be certified.

6. Do I automatically fulfil the requirements of the EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) by implementing QS-Soy^{plus}?

No, by implementing QS-Soy^{plus}, the requirements of the EUDR are not automatically fulfilled. This also applies vice versa.

The EUDR aims to ensure that products (including soy) do not contribute to deforestation. Companies must demonstrate that their supply chains are free from deforestation through traceability measures (e.g. recording geolocalisation data, completing due diligence declarations).

QS-Soy^{plus} aims to certify soybean cultivation in accordance with recognised sustainability standards. These sustainability standards cover around 73 different social, economic and ecological aspects of soybean cultivation, which cover far more than the absence of deforestation. The audit of QS-Soy^{plus} does not include checking geolocalisation data or due diligence declarations in accordance with EUDR.

Registration and auditing with QS

7. What must a company that is QS certified and produces or trades soy or feed containing soy do to get the eligibility of delivery for QS-Soy^{plus}?

The company must file in the QS database whether it handles soy and complies with the requirements of the guideline QS-Soy^{plus}. The verification of compliance with the requirements can take place retroactively in the next regular QS audit. If the company is already certified according to a recognised standard in accordance with Annex 4.3, it must also file this information in the QS database. In this case, no additional auditing of the requirements of the guideline QS-Soy^{plus} is required. You can find instructions for the QS database for depositing the information on soy [here](#).

8. What happens if I do not agree to the general terms and conditions for QS-Soy^{plus} in the QS database?

For the QS scheme, it was decided by the advisory board that all soy must come from certified sources. Companies that do not agree to the corresponding general terms and conditions do not get the eligibility to deliver QS-Soy^{plus} and are therefore not permitted to deliver soy (products) into the QS scheme.

9. Does a company already have to register if the next QS audit and the associated control of QS-Soy^{plus} has not yet taken place?

Yes, the information regarding soy must be provided in the QS database as soon as soy is produced, traded or processed. In addition, the requirements from the guideline QS-Soy^{plus} must be met. Compliance with the requirements of the guideline QS-Soy^{plus} is checked retrospectively as part of the regular QS scheme audit.

General

10. Do the QS-Soy^{plus} requirements only apply to soy harvested after 31 December 2023?

No, all soy produced, traded or processed in the QS scheme since 1 January 2024 must comply with the QS-Soy^{plus} requirements. This also applies to soy still in stock from previous years, e.g. 2023.

11. What do feed companies have to do if contracts for 2024 have already been concluded for non-certified products?

The products can be purchased. If the products are not certified (according to Annex 4.2), feed companies have the option of compensating for the products that are not yet certified by purchasing credits (book & claim).

12. How does the livestock owner recognize that he can purchase feed from/with soy from a QS-certified or recognized company?

This can be seen as usual via the public scheme participant search. Companies that comply with the requirements for sourcing QS-Soy^{plus} are marked accordingly in the scheme participant search.

13. Does soy from Germany/European cultivation also have to be certified according to a primary standard?

Yes, QS-Soy^{plus} takes all origins into account. This means that all soy in QS feed for all animal species in the QS scheme, regardless of the country of cultivation, must be certified according to a recognized standard in accordance with Annex 4.2, unless the purchaser of the products compensates this with the purchase of credits (Book&Claim).

14. Which conversion factor systems are available and what types of division do they have?

For example, there is the RTRS conversion factor system. This provides two alternative conversion methods that can be selected based on convenience. Here, a distinction is made between economic division and apportionment by demand.

Economic apportionment: this method recognizes that soybeans may have multiple uses and that each use involves by-products that are used in other sectors. This method therefore uses the value of the various outputs to fairly represent that demand for soybeans is not always driven by a particular output.

Division by demand: this method uses conversion factors that consider the physical quantity of soybeans needed to supply enough soybean byproducts for the product. It does not consider other by-products that are generated in the production process.

15. Where can companies that purchase non-QS-Soy^{plus} compliant soy, buy certificates for the compensation (Book&Claim)?

For all soybeans and feed materials (according to Annex 4.1) that are not certified according to QS-Soy^{plus} (or according to a recognised standard according to Annex 4.2), the company must acquire quantity-related certificates via a standard recognised by QS for Book&Claim. The standards recognised for Book&Claim can be found in Annex 4.2 to the guideline QS-Soy^{plus} (supply chain model B&C). The requirements of the respective standard for the purchase of certificates must be complied with. The purchase of certificates via third parties is not permitted.

16. Is an organic certification of soybean cultivation recognized for QS-Soy^{plus}?

All standards recognized by QS, whether for soybean cultivation or for feed producers and traders, are published in the Annexes 4.2 and 4.3, respectively, for the guideline QS-Soy^{plus}. Standards that are not published there are not recognized by QS for soy deliveries into the QS scheme.

17. May non-QS-Soy^{plus}-compliant soy be purchased from a QS-Soy^{plus}-certified supplier?

Only QS-Soy^{plus}-compliant soy may be purchased from QS-Soy^{plus}-certified suppliers. This can only be deviated from if it is agreed in writing between the customer and supplier that the customer will take over the compensation of the products via Book&Claim.

Labelling

18. Is there a special labelling at QS for products containing soy?

Companies that are certified according to QS-Soy^{plus} must label the soy-containing products with QS-Soy^{plus}. If a company is certified according to a recognized standard pursuant to Annex 4.3, the regulations of the respective recognized standard regarding the labelling apply. "QS-Soy^{plus}" does **not** replace the labelling as QS product (e.g. with "QS product"). Examples of the correct labelling of QS-Soy^{plus} can be found in the *Explanation: Labelling of QS products (feed sector)*.

19. From which point in time am I allowed to label on my accompanying documents that my feed materials are QS-Soy^{plus} compliant or that my QS compound feed contain QS-Soy^{plus}?

From the moment you have checked the box in the QS database and agree to comply with the requirements of the guideline QS-Soy^{plus}, you may and must label the products accordingly with QS-Soy^{plus}.

20. Who is responsible for the labelling of QS-Soy^{plus} if a private labeller certified according to QS-Soy^{plus} has its products produced on a contract basis by a manufacturer that is certified according to a standard recognised by QS (according to Annex 4.3)?

Private labellers who are certified according to QS-Soy^{plus} are responsible for labelling the products. The products must be labelled as QS-Soy^{plus} accompanying the products and in relation to the article. This also applies if the contract manufacturer is certified according to a standard recognised by QS (according to Annex 4.3).

21. Which supply chain model must be labelled in the outgoing goods if a company uses different supply chain models?

Detailed explanations on the mixing of different supply chain models (e.g. "downgrading") can be found in Annex 2 to these FAQs.

22. How must soy be labelled if the B&C supply chain model is used and the non-certified products are compensated within a fixed inventory period?

Within a fixed inventory period (maximum 12 months), B&C soy quantities can be balanced in incoming and outgoing goods. By purchasing certificates, the company can compensate non-QS-Soy^{plus}-compliant soy incoming goods within the selected period and allocate QS-Soy^{plus} Book&Claim quantities in outgoing goods. Soya that meets the requirements of the B&C supply chain model must also be labelled as such on the accompanying documents when using a fixed inventory period, even if the compensation via the purchase of certificates is carried out in the future. The labelling of the supply chain model can only be omitted for deliveries directly to farmers.

Recognition of companies certified to a standard other than QS

23. What does a feed company that is certified according to a recognized standard such as GMP+ Int. and produces or trades soy or feed containing soy have to do to remain eligible to deliver into the QS scheme?

Feed producers and traders recognized by QS (see Annex 9.1 *Recognized standards* to Guideline Feed Sector) must also be certified according to a recognized standard for QS-Soy^{plus} (see Annex 4.3) if they supply soy into the QS scheme. The company must deposit this in the QS database. The requirements of the standard to which the company is certified or wishes to be certified must have been met from the date of entering the recognised standard for soy in the QS database.

24. Can further standards be benchmarked for recognition for QS-Soy^{plus} by QS?

Both Annex 4.2 (soybean production) and Annex 4.3 (chain-of-custody standards) are constantly updated and revised. All standard owners can compare their standard with the help of the QS benchmark list with QS-Soy^{plus} and then submit their benchmark to QS. The QS benchmark list for soy bean cultivation and for supply chain standards is published on the QS website and can be downloaded [here](#).

25. Can companies certified by third parties also be certified according to QS-Soy^{plus}?

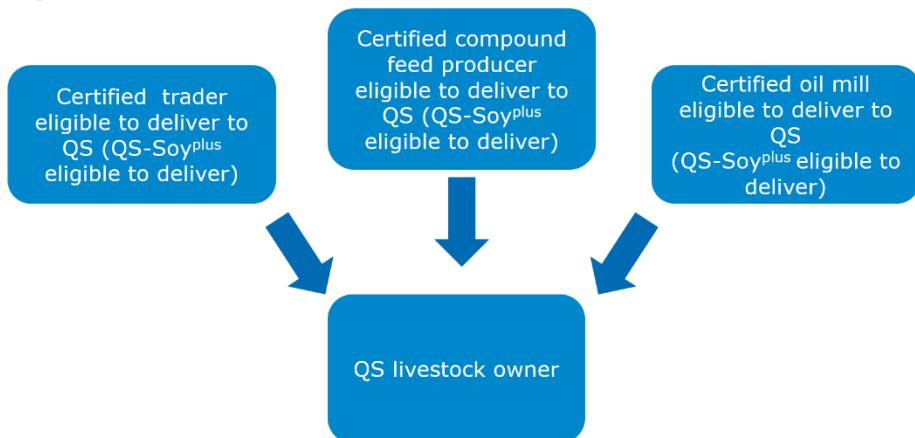
No, currently only QS-certified companies can be certified according to QS-Soy^{plus}.

Annexes

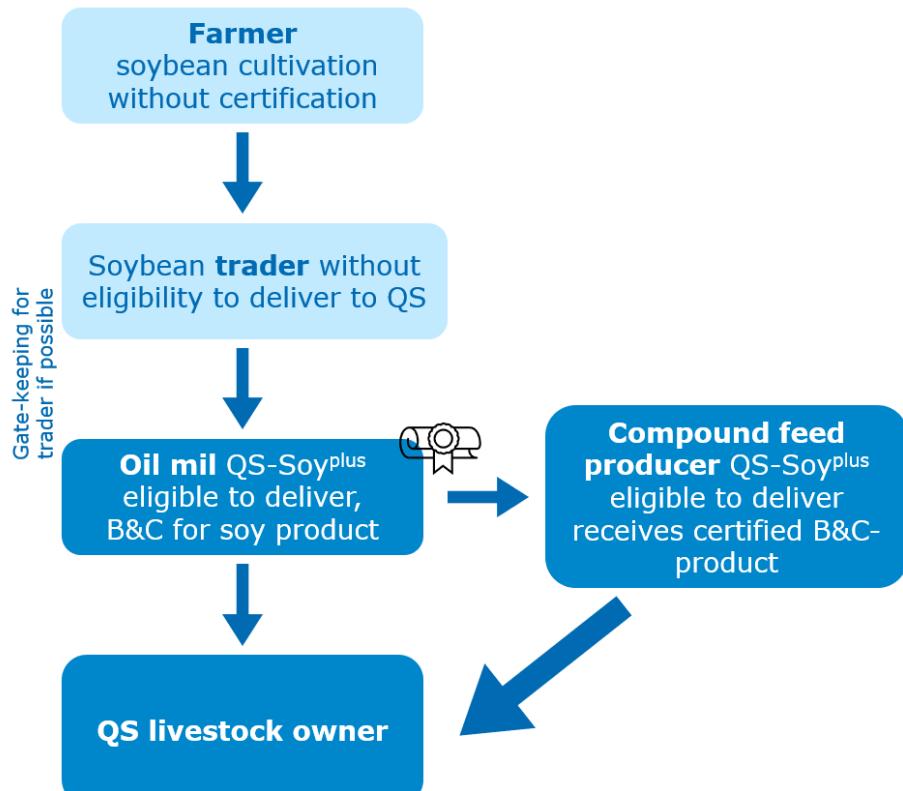
Annex 1: Case studies and graphical representation of certification obligations

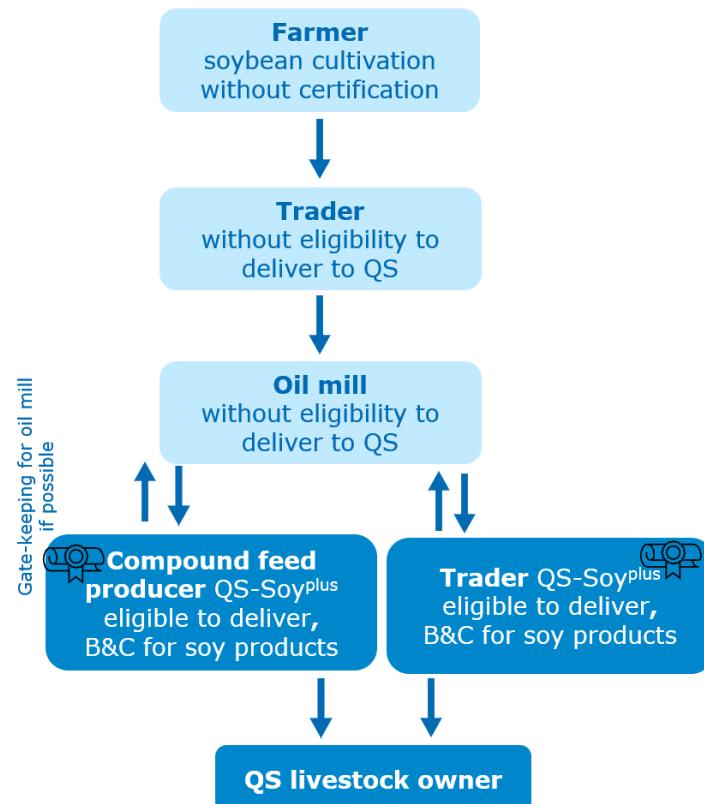
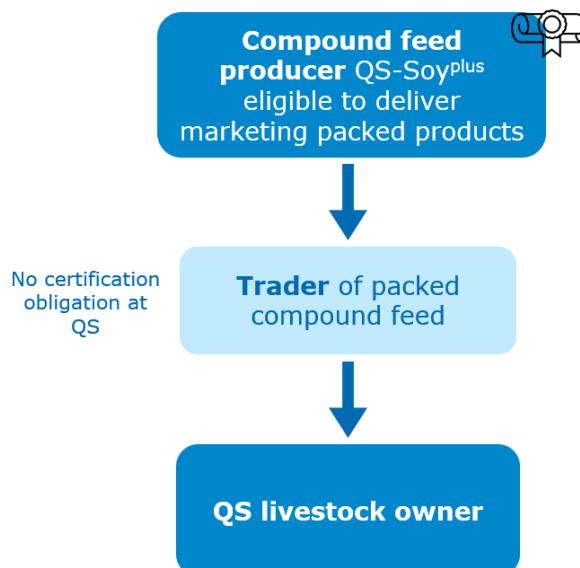
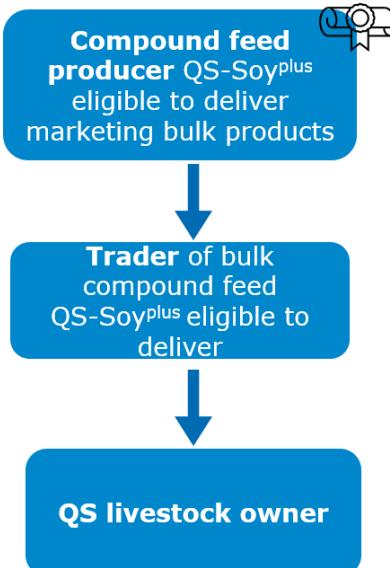
Generally, applies:

Soybeans/-products listed in Annex 4.1 and compound feed containing it may only be supplied to QS livestock owners as QS-Soy^{plus} (or compare to Annex 4.2) certified and labelled by feed traders and producers eligible to deliver to QS.

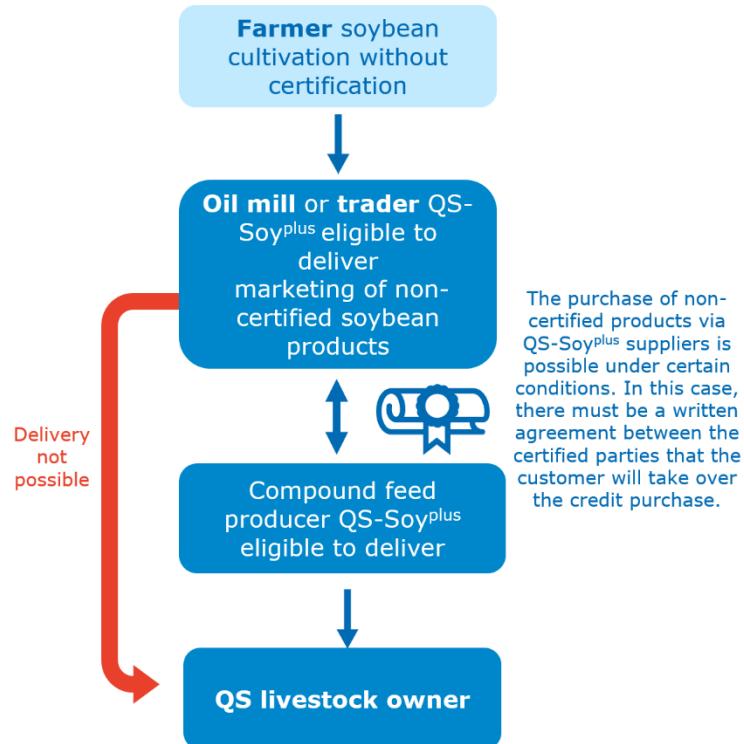


Case 1

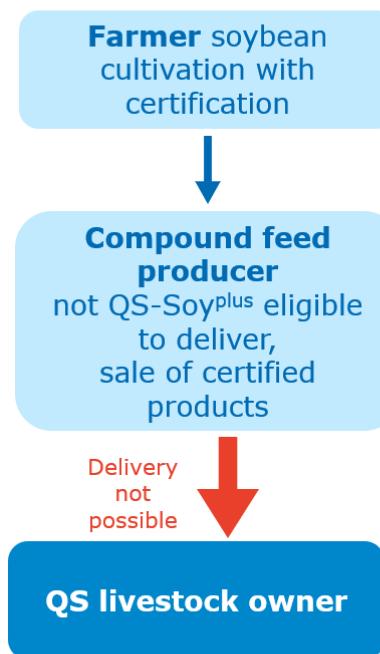


Case 2

Case 3a: Packed compound feed

Case 3b: Bulk compound feed


Case 4



Case 5



The delivery of certified products via non-certified suppliers is not possible.
Certified products may only be supplied via certified suppliers.

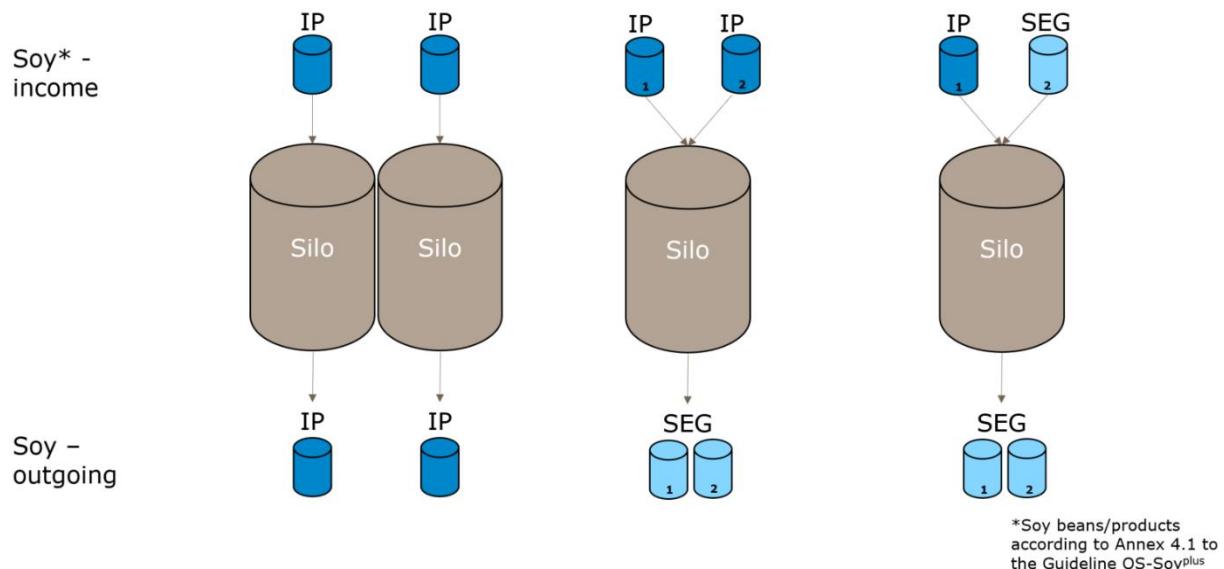
Case 6

Annex 2: Graphical representation of the mixture of supply chain models

Example 1:

The Identity Preserved (IP) supply chain model generally requires a batch-specific physical separation of QS-Soy^{plus}-compliant and other soy.

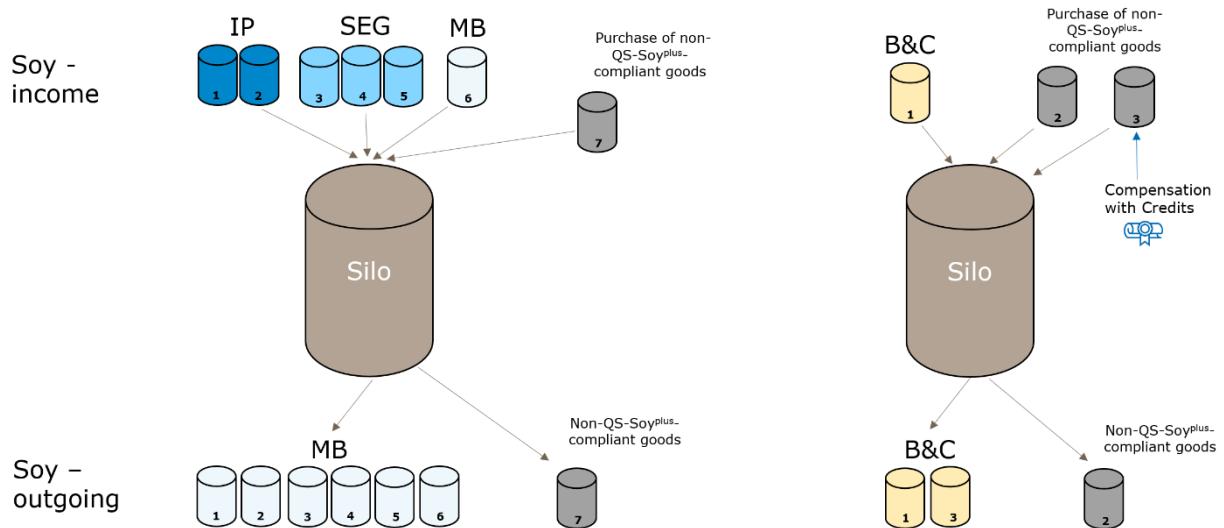
IP-certified products can be blended with another batch of IP products or segregated (SEG) products without batch traceability and are then considered segregated in the outgoing goods. The segregation supply chain model generally requires a physical separation of SEG-certified soy and other soy.



Example 2:

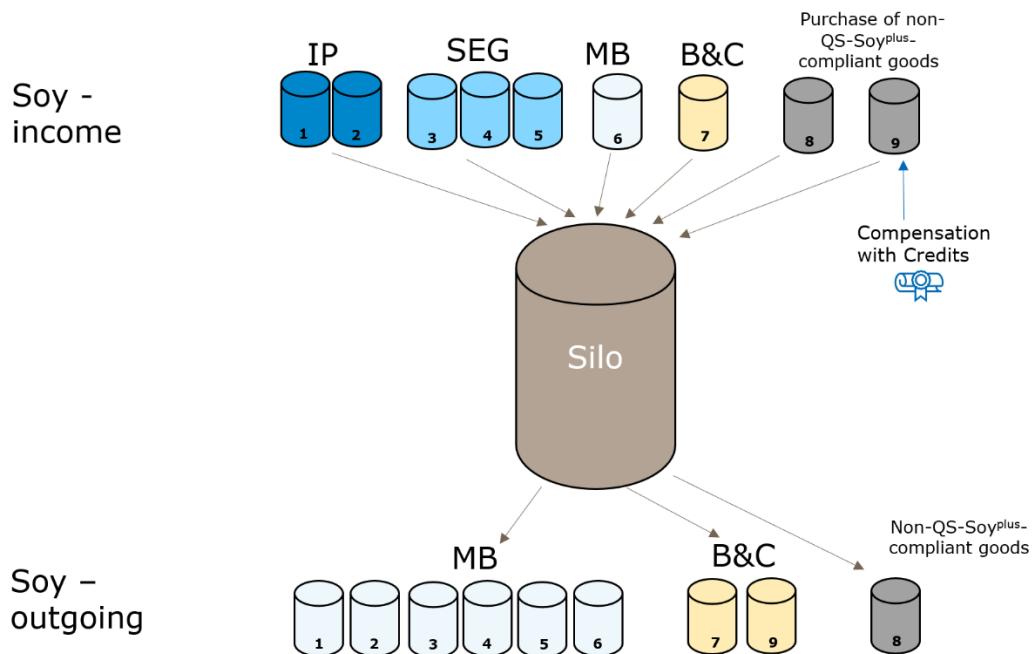
In the case of mass balancing (MB), the mixing of QS-Soy^{plus}-compliant products and other products is possible. There is no requirement for physical separation of the products. IP and SEG certified products can be mixed with MB products without physical segregation and are then considered mass-balanced (downgrading) in the outgoing goods.

The Book&Claim (B&C) supply chain model also does not require the physical separation of goods. Goods already balanced with credits can be stored with non-QS-Soy^{plus}-compliant products. The non-QS-Soy^{plus}-compliant products can be balanced with credits by the company itself and sold as B&C QS-Soy^{plus}. Soy that has not been balanced with credits may not be delivered into the QS scheme.



Example 3:

When mixing IP, SEG, MB, B&C and non-QS-Soy^{plus}-compliant products, the IP and SEG soy becomes MB soy in the outgoing goods. Soy that has been compensated with credits or is compensated by the company itself becomes B&C soy in the outgoing goods. MB soy cannot be "downgraded" to B&C soy (or vice versa).


Example 4:

As an alternative to the separate labelling of B&C and MB soy, the percentage of soy in the batch delivered that is MB and B&C soy can be indicated in the outgoing goods.

