



BRITISH FARMING

INSPIRING A NATION



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A collage of agricultural products. The top right shows a bouquet of colorful tulips (yellow, red, purple). The middle left shows a variety of food items including eggs, potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, broccoli, and meat. The middle right shows a close-up of white, curly wool. The bottom left shows a field of tall green grass. The text is overlaid on these images in a white, distressed font.

**FARMERS
AND GROWERS
PRODUCE**

FLOWERS

FOOD

FIBRE

FUEL

**FOR THE
NATION**

INTRODUCTION

British farmers and growers are inspirational. No other sector provides the foundation for the country's largest manufacturing sector, food and drink; acts as custodians of the iconic British landscape; is central to a thriving rural economy; and is essential to the country's net zero ambitions.

Farming is also a great way to engage children with STEM subjects and inspire the next generation of farmers and STEM professionals; it offers a huge variety of different careers for people from all walks of life; and our beautiful countryside plays an increasingly important role in the health and wellbeing of the nation.

Food production is at the heart of what farmers and growers do. Profitable, sustainable farm businesses are key to farmers being able to produce food, fuel, fibre and flowers for the nation as well as providing all these other benefits. That's why we need to see a cross-government approach that truly values British food and farming and all it delivers – to ensure we can continue to deliver for the nation.

So, whether you're inspired to try a new recipe packed with British produce; by a glorious view of our cherished landscape; by a walk in our beautiful countryside; or by a career in our largest manufacturing sector, you're inspired by British farming.

**BRITISH
FOOD AND
FARMING**
contributes more than
**£127
BILLION (GVA)**
to the economy
and supports more than
**FOUR MILLION
JOBS**

**THE HORTICULTURE
AND LANDSCAPING
SECTOR**
is worth
**£28.8
BILLION**
to the UK economy
and
**SUPPORTS
674,200
JOBS**

**AROUND
66%**
of all farm businesses
in England also run
other enterprises –
such as **farm shops,**
wedding venues and
B&Bs

Diversified
enterprises run by
farm businesses
generated
**£749
MILLION**
for the UK economy
in 2020/21

In 2019,
18.5%
of all money spent
on holiday trips in
England was spent in
the countryside –
just over
£2 BILLION

**FARMERS
PRODUCE
RENEWABLE
ENERGY**
that helps power an
average of
**10
MILLION
UK HOMES**

**FARMLAND
IS THE
DESTINATION
OF AROUND
4.1 BILLION
VISITS EACH YEAR**
– 48%
of visits to the
natural environment
in England

The UK's farm
welfare standards
**ALL
EXCEED**
the World
Organisation for
Animal Health's
12 farm welfare
global codes

**WOOL
IS 100%
NATURAL**
and a
renewable fibre
source
that can be used
for clothing and
insulation among
other things



FARMING FOR... **FOOD PRODUCTION**

THE FOOD PRODUCED BY BRITISH FARMERS AND GROWERS IS SECOND TO NONE. OUR WORLD-LEADING STANDARDS OF ANIMAL WELFARE, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND FOOD SAFETY MEAN IT IS IN DEMAND BY SHOPPERS AT HOME AND OVERSEAS.

British farmers and growers want to be the supplier of choice to shoppers in the UK and across the world. With the right policy support from government we can achieve this aim and help food security on a national and global level.

"British food is second to none. It's sustainable and traceable – you can literally track the high environmental, animal welfare and food safety standards from farm to fork – but above all it tastes great.

"As someone who produces a variety of foods from winter beans and mustard to beef and goat, and who loves to cook, there's nothing better than buying locally and seasonally. That's what's so great about running our farm shop. We are proud to say that our whole food chain is made in Britain, on our own farm and on other farms in the area, and you can see the seasons reflected in the produce we stock.

"For us, the farm shop isn't just a revenue stream, but a way to tell the story of provenance and British food production directly

to our customers. It's the same with the three local primary schools we supply. There's nothing better than a person with questions, whether it's how rapeseed oil differs to olive oil or which cut of meat is best for a low and slow stew. It's so rewarding when a simple discussion sparks a wider interest and appreciation grows for the standards associated with British food.

"I don't think anywhere produces food better than we do right here in Britain. On our farm, every crop and every animal is cared for to ensure our customers get the highest quality products, whether that's the farm shop or the local schools. For me, this is the story of British food."

JUDITH JACOBS
mixed farmer, Cambridgeshire

British farmers and growers want to produce food as efficiently as they can while doing even more to create jobs, boost the economy, maintain and enhance the environment, lead the way in achieving net zero and inspire the next generation of food producers.

Our climate and farming systems mean we are great at producing a huge range of food from carrots and parsnips to frozen peas, fresh potatoes, milk, cream, specialist cheeses, malting barley, poultry meat and eggs.

FARMING FOR... **THE ENVIRONMENT**

"Working with and for the environment, while keeping food production at the core, is the future of British farming. As farmers, we are fortunate to have the opportunity and ability to have a positive impact on the land around us, and we have a moral obligation to do so.

"Since taking on management of the farm estates, we have planted wildlife corridors of nectar pollen mixes, seed mixes and flower meadows which are woven in and around every field, providing undisturbed habitat for bees, birds, butterflies and insects.

"We've also introduced four-year herbal leys within our arable rotations which deliver improvements for soil health, carbon sequestration, soil organic matter, water quality and air quality, as well as helping reduce our use of inorganic fertilisers.

"We've introduced exlana sheep – derived from a native breed local to the area – to manage the leys, and we have plans to make more linking corridors of woodland spaces around the farms too.

"A key part of our success is down to our work with neighbouring farmers under shared farm agreements. This means our neighbours are very much involved in helping with establishment and can see first-hand the benefits environmental enhancement delivers. Many have now adopted similar practices on their own farms.

"This collaboration across community networks is a crucial part of spreading environmental ambitions far and wide across the industry.

"It's exciting to see how much enthusiasm there is within the industry to be doing the right thing – both for food production and the land we rely on – and I can't wait to see what this delivers over the next few years."

MIKE WILKINS

estate manager on mixed farms,
Wiltshire and Gloucestershire



To ensure the delivery of environmental and other broader public goods goes hand-in-hand with food production, schemes like the Sustainable Farming Incentive, and other elements of the Environmental Land Management scheme, must be adaptable, easy to access, practical to implement, make environmental delivery commercially viable and be compatible with emerging new private environmental markets.

Soils deliver many wider benefits to society including sequestration and storage of carbon, water regulation and resilience to climate change. It is crucial farmers and growers are rewarded properly for the work they do to maintain and enhance soil health.

A clean, reliable source of water is vital for food production. Policies that make it easier for farmers and growers to collect and store surplus water on farm and provide farmers with a fair share of water will help build resilience. Managing flood risk and reducing agriculture's impact on water quality are also essential elements of farmers' work.

FARMERS AND GROWERS ARE THE CUSTODIANS OF OUR ICONIC COUNTRYSIDE, MANAGING 70% OF ENGLAND'S LAND AND CARRYING OUT A HUGE AMOUNT OF WORK TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE LANDSCAPE, ENCOURAGE WILDLIFE, BENEFIT SOIL AND WATER, AND REMOVE CARBON FROM THE ATMOSPHERE.

FARMING FOR... **TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE**

Agriculture is almost uniquely placed to be part of the solution to climate change as both an emissions source and a sink, and British farmers are increasingly interested in measuring their own farm GHG footprints.

An ambitious and effective productivity programme from government is key for improving energy and nutrient efficiency on farm and reducing emissions. Farming can also grow the raw materials for bioenergy and the bioeconomy alongside food production, helping capture more carbon and further reduce the country's GHG footprint.

"As farmers we're on the frontline of the climate change challenge, and we're committed to achieving the industry target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2040. Whether it's more frequent extreme heat and dry weather or devastating floods, it is undeniable that UK weather patterns have changed, and farmers are working to mitigate the impacts of this.

"It's all of our responsibility to make a change now. On our farm, we've recently planted 500 acres of Paulownia trees, which are one of the fastest growing trees and store up to six times more carbon than mixed woodland. I'm excited to see how quickly they grow and what species of wildlife they attract.

"We've also installed an anaerobic digestion (AD) plant that turns organic matter into biogas, which is

then pumped into the National Grid and powers almost 8,000 homes. This is a fully circular renewable energy source as we use the by-product from the AD plant to fertilise our fields and improve the soil's organic matter, which then helps it retain water better.

"We're also going a step further by installing solar panels on the farm which will be dual use with sheep grazing underneath them, meaning both food and renewable energy is produced from the land.

"British farmers are some of the most climate-friendly in the world, but we can all do that bit extra to make sure we reach our net zero goal."

ANDREW BLENKIRON
mixed farmer, Suffolk



Research and innovation for adaptation is vital to understand the impact of climate change on UK agriculture and enable a range of technologies, tools, practices, and measures to be developed based on robust science, and applied commercially on farm.

FARMING FOR... **THE ECONOMY**

IT IS OUR AMBITION TO GROW UK FOOD PRODUCTION IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY AND INCREASE BRITISH FARMING'S SHARE OF MARKETS BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD.

With the confidence to invest in their businesses – through targeted productivity grants and the right planning, fiscal and labour policies to support on-farm diversification and attract investment in food production and food processing – farmers and growers will remain at the heart of a thriving economy, both locally and nationally, creating jobs.



We need a stable regulatory environment, specifically tailored to the UK, that manages risk while providing suitable incentives and sufficient freedom for farmers and growers to invest in their businesses and contribute to UK food security.

By creating the right environment, we can make the UK the go-to place for investment in agriculture and food production and a natural home for food processing companies.

Our food and drink is already enjoyed by people in more than 200 countries. With the right international trade strategy, we believe we can grow our food and drink exports by 30% by 2030 while ensuring our existing high animal welfare and environmental standards are not undermined.

"I launched my own brand milk, Cornish Moo, in 2018. The concept behind it was to inspire and reconnect local people with where their food comes from, demonstrate an understanding of what good local produce should taste like, and support the local economy.

"I'm a farmer, not a marketer or retailer, so getting a new dairy product off the ground wasn't easy. But you learn quickly and develop different entrepreneurial skills, working with the likes of the Food Standards Agency, with the aim of developing a high-quality product.

"For me, branding was key. It needed to be strong, clear and classy as people's first impressions on buying products, especially dairy, are extremely important. We worked hard to create this, resulting in us winning a number of local awards, including 'Best Branding' at the Taste of the West awards. The key to business success? Love your product and believe in it.

"I was one of the first farmers to install an on-farm milk vending machine. Selling milk this way is not an easy option, but local people have been incredibly supportive, backing British farming and coming down to the farm to get their milk, particularly children, who are Cornish Moo's biggest fans.

"Every opportunity I get, I remind people that farming is the bedrock of the UK's largest manufacturing sector, food and drink, which contributes more than £120 billion to the country's economy and supports jobs for four million people.

"As a dairy farmer in Cornwall, supporting the rural economy and helping drive local growth is really important to me, knowing that I am playing just a small part in contributing food, jobs and income across local communities."

GEMMA SMALE-ROWLAND
dairy farmer, Cornwall

FARMING FOR... **ANIMAL WELFARE**

"I'm up at the crack of dawn every day, milking and feeding the cows, giving them fresh bedding, keeping them happy and healthy.

"The comfort and well-being of our cows is my number one priority and a willingness to continually improve welfare not only improves the health of our cows but also makes financial sense too – a happy, content cow can spend more time on activities she prefers and needs less supervision by me.

"I designed a misting/sprinkling system in one of the barns to help keep the cows cool and comfortable in very hot weather, and we also have ventilation fans to help keep temperatures down. We've also got automated brushes which help keep the cows clean.

"I'm always looking at other innovations I can introduce to improve things and studying data to adopt evidence-based techniques on farm. Everything we do is a

team effort, so time is set aside to ensure everyone on farm, together with our vet and nutritionist, is always challenging themselves to do the best we can for the cows.

"I remember the moment I decided I would spend my life dedicated to improving animal welfare. As a child in the 1990s I spent time on a relative's farm and was left inspired by the dedication and compassion heaped on a sick cow by the entire family. That incident instilled in me the desire to grow into a person that is fulfilled by a deep responsibility of providing for the cows in my care.

"By backing British farmers, you help inject confidence back to all our farms, giving us the enthusiasm to continue producing safe, affordable, traceable food to the very highest standards."

PAUL TOMPKINS
dairy farmer, Yorkshire

The Animal Protection Index, which ranks countries around the world for their commitments to improving animal welfare, identified the UK as one of the top three best performing nations.

The UK has always been at the forefront of animal welfare legislation and offers some of the best farm animal welfare standards in the world, with a robust and comprehensive legal framework protecting animal health and welfare.



A recent report highlighted that the UK's farm standards are all in excess of the World Organisation for Animal Health's (OIE) 12 farm welfare global codes.



Post-Brexit trade deals give the UK the chance to firm up its ambition to be a global leader in best practice in animal welfare. Trade liberalisation, through tariff and quota reductions, should be linked to meeting core environmental and animal welfare standards to lift standards in countries we import from.

FARMING FOR... HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Providing access to the countryside also allows farmers to talk to people about where their food comes from and helps them make informed and healthy choices about the food they buy.

There is a growing body of research showing that people gain both physical and mental health, and a wider sense of wellbeing, from being close to nature through active pursuits, like walking, or from looking out across attractive greenspace from homes, workplaces and while travelling.

“British farming is special because of the huge range of high-quality produce we grow here and the wonderful landscapes we work in. If you shop seasonally, you can see just what is on your doorstep and how much variety and knowledge we have within our industry.

“It’s good to be able to engage with people about where their food comes from. We have public footpaths on our farm and sharing information with our local community, and other visitors, is important to me. We have ‘spot the crop’ signs in our fields which link to a website I built with information all about British farming, which helps tell walkers what is going on in the field around them.

“We saw during the coronavirus pandemic that access to the countryside plays an important

role for people’s physical and mental health and wellbeing, as well as providing an opportunity for people to find out more about how their food is produced. Following the Countryside Code, and recognising that much of this land is a working environment, means that everyone gets the most out of the experience in a safe and respectful way.

“If we bridge the gap between farmers and the public to talk about where our food comes from, it will allow us all to support a vital industry for the nation. Engaging with people as they enjoy the countryside is a great way of doing this.”

HANNAH BUISMAN
arable and viticulture, East Anglia

Our beautiful countryside has never been more important for people’s exercise and general wellbeing and farmers and growers are crucial to giving people the chance to enjoy our iconic rural landscapes.



The contribution green access makes to the physical and mental wellbeing of the nation means farmers’ efforts to maintain, create or enhance public rights of way as part of a modern and practical network should be recognised and rewarded.

FARMING FOR... **JOBS**

"There are so many things I love about farming; that I am producing food for the nation, that I get to work with nature and help it to thrive, that we are at the forefront of new technologies – that everything we do is a challenge that needs solving.

"That's what I try and portray as co-host of the podcast and YouTube channel Boots and Heels. It's all about showing people how their food is produced and that there is a place for everyone within the industry.

"Agriculture is one big puzzle piece. The careers in this sector are so diverse and there really is something for everyone, whether it's practical work or more academic, scientific or research based. And they all need a diverse range of people with different experiences and skill sets to fill them – to slot the puzzle together and make one thriving, progressive industry.

"Getting a foot in the door can often be the hardest part but there is no one route to follow. Going to university to study human, social and political sciences might not be the most obvious route into farming, but it suited me. It gave me conviction in my actions when I came back to the farm, the ability to talk to people from different backgrounds, and the confidence to stand in front of a microphone and share my farming experiences with the world.

"If we can continue to develop and harness the knowledge, experience and diversity of the people within the industry, and encourage new faces into the sector, there's no limit to our potential."

REBECCA WILSON

arable and sheep farmer, North Yorkshire



To enable the huge opportunities for growth in the horticulture sector to be met, and to provide certainty for businesses, we want to work with government to shape an immigration system that recognises the specific needs and challenges of agriculture and horticulture.

The key to presenting agriculture and horticulture as a progressive, dynamic career choice is ensuring the innovative nature of the industry is presented at school and college level.

As new technologies become available, it is also crucial the skills, training and development needs of the sector and its workforce are recognised and addressed to take advantage of new innovations and improve business management.

AGRICULTURE OFFERS A HUGE VARIETY OF ROLES FROM FARMERS, VETS AND MACHINE ENGINEERS TO AGRONOMISTS, CONSERVATION ADVISERS AND RESEARCH SCIENTISTS.

FARMING FOR... **LEARNING**

FARMING IS A GREAT WAY TO ENGAGE CHILDREN WITH **SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHS (STEM) SUBJECTS.**

"The food and drink British farmers produce is some of the best in the world and we have a fantastic story to tell the public. Where better to start than with shoppers and the next generation of potential agricultural workers? Just like every other industry, we should be talking to people about what we produce.

"Inspired by a similar idea I'd heard about from the US, I thought 'what is the best way to engage with young people about agriculture', through the power of digital communications? That's where Farmer Time was born. Starting with a message on Facebook asking if my contacts would be interested in 'FaceTiming' school children to speak about what they do on their farms, I got over 200 responses from teachers or parents wanting to link up with me.

"We now have over 800 farmers on board that video call their matched school, somewhere in the UK, every two weeks. The students discuss ideas, have an opportunity to ask questions, speak about where their food comes from, and gain an understanding of the issues farmers are facing every day.

"So much of the school curriculum is directly linked to farming through Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM), and agriculture is a great way to get the next generation to engage in these, and many other, subjects.

"I'd encourage all farmers to connect with their local schools and show them how exciting an industry agriculture is. After all, we are our best marketing tool."

TOM MARTIN

arable farmer, Cambridgeshire

Engaging children at an early age will benefit high-tech industries that will need STEM professionals to help them innovate and thrive, including agriculture. But it can have significant wider ranging, and longer term, benefits too.



Learning about British food and farming from a young age will also ultimately help our future generations make informed choices about buying, preparing and enjoying food as they grow older.



The government has the opportunity to recognise and promote the role that farming can play in teaching vital STEM subjects in an exciting and innovative way that benefits the next generation.



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