



NFU Yearbook

2016





Introduction

NFU HIGHLIGHTS IN 2016

2016 will be remembered as the year that the UK voted to leave the European Union, but it is also the year that the National Farmers' Union showed that it truly is the voice of British Farming. Before the vote, we poured our energies into assessing the impacts of each decision. Following the decision, we have worked to ensure that our organisation is match-fit for the challenges ahead.

We have undertaken the biggest consultation in the organisation's history to get members' views on how we can build a better and more productive industry. Thousands of you attended meetings and sent in forms.

The NFU has established an EU Exit and International Trade Unit, and has created a new external affairs team at Westminster to help us professionalise our lobbying and campaigns work.

Our Comms team has worked hard to get media coverage of the many wins our Policy, Food and Farming, Legal and Regional teams have achieved over the year. The NFU has worked hard to take the messages of Britain's farmers and growers to the corridors of power.

Holding the RPA to account for late payments; putting in place further wildlife culls to halt the spread of bovine TB and campaigning for the reauthorisation of glyphosate, are just some of the ways that we have worked on your behalf.

This Yearbook is just a snapshot of the varied work the NFU does for its members every day. We hope it gives you an idea of the breadth and depth of our experience, and shows you the value of membership.



Brexit

BREXIT

FARMING AND BREXIT: THE STORY SO FAR

On 23 June 2016 the nation voted to leave the EU. The NFU has been there for its members every steps of the way, listening to your views, presenting the farming facts and galvanising the industry for the benefit of British farming

MAY 2015

The Conservatives win the General Election. David Cameron pledges to hold an EU Referendum before the end of 2017.

OCTOBER

NFU The NFU hosts scores of branch meetings, debates and events across England and Wales

FEBRUARY

David Cameron strikes deal with EU leaders. He claims it will give the UK a 'special status' but his opponents say the deal is 'hollow'. He announces the date of the EU Referendum as 23 June.

NFU The NFU hosts an in/out EU debate at its annual conference. More than 1,300 conference delegates get the chance to put their questions to the panel of campaigners.

APRIL

NFU The results of the Wageningen report are presented at 28 NFU member meetings. Thousands of NFU members view the findings and debate the way forward.

2015

2016

SEPTEMBER

NFU The NFU produces its UK Farming's Relationship with the EU report, setting out the big agricultural issues and identifying the questions which demand answers from both sides of the debate

JANUARY 2016

NFU The NFU commissions the world-leading agricultural research institute at Wageningen University to investigate the impact on farming of possible trade and farm support scenarios if the UK leaves the EU.

23 JUNE 2016

The UK votes to leave the EU in landmark referendum. The NFU acts quickly to:

NFU Contact Phil Hogan to call for reassurances that schemes currently available to UK farmers will remain open and in place until 2020

NFU Meet Elizabeth Truss, then Secretary of State for Defra, and calls on her to help deliver a new domestic agricultural policy that works for farmers, consumers and the economy

NFU Produce a series of Q&As, updates and commentary pieces in a special edition of British Farmer & Grower magazine which is sent to all members

NFU Secure coverage in over 200 news outlets in the first 36 hours post-vote

JULY

NFU Following an NFU Policy Board meeting an extraordinary meeting of NFU Council, the NFU agrees the principles on which it will base its policy vision. This includes trade, access to labour and domestic agricultural policy.

NFU The NFU launches the biggest member consultation in its 108 year history. 55,000 NFU members are sent a copy of the consultation document and questionnaire.

NFU Officeholders secure commitment to British farming from Defra and the new Department for Exiting the EU, ensuring farming is at the forefront of post-referendum decision-making

NFU Following calls from the NFU, European Commissioner for Agriculture Phil Hogan confirms that the UK 'would remain a full member of the EU with all rights and obligations' until Article 50 discussions are completed.

NFU The NFU stresses the importance of food security and backing British farming to more than 50 MPs and Lords at a reception in Westminster

NFU The NFU writes to the Cabinet Office to seek clarity on the continuation of the Rural Development Programme for England.

NOVEMBER

NFU The NFU horticulture team meets officials from the Home Office to make the case for a substantial trial of a Seasonal Agricultural Permit Scheme for non-EU workers in the 2017 season

The High Court rules that MPs must be consulted before triggering Brexit. The Government appeals

OCTOBER

NFU Following feedback from members as part of the NFU's historic consultation, the NFU's policy board sets out its support for a bold, ambitious vision for British food and farming post-Brexit. It says the future must be one that ensures farm businesses are central to a dynamic food chain and deliver a countryside that works for everyone.

DECEMBER

NFU The largest-ever coalition of UK food producers join forces to call for tariff-free access to the single market and continued access to a competent and reliable workforce, in order for British food and farming to flourish post-Brexit

NFU In a letter to the Prime Minister coordinated by the UK's farming unions, 75 organisations pledge their support for a positive, bold and ambitious vision for the sector post-Brexit

NFU NFU Deputy President Minette Batters gives evidence on the UK-EU movement of people at the House of Lords EU Home Affairs Committee.

2017

AUGUST

NFU The NFU welcomes the Treasury's decision to guarantee agricultural spending through to 2020. The NFU, NFU Cymru, NFUS and UFU call for all governments to guarantee that this commitment is seen through.

NFU Back British Farming Day: more than 100 MPs pledge to back British farming as the NFU takes three Massey Ferguson tractors to Westminster to highlight the importance of British farming

SEPTEMBER

NFU The NFU announces Nick von Westenholz as the director to lead its newly-created Brexit unit, as the organisation moves to strengthen and extend its political reach. Recruitment begins for a new NFU external affairs team based in London.

NFU All 55,000 members are sent options papers as part of the NFU's Brexit consultation as the organisation holds a total of 50 Brexit member meetings with thousands of members

JANUARY 2017

NFU Nick von Westenholz takes up new role as director of EU exit and international trade at the NFU

NFU NFU Council due to agree future policy strategy for 2017

Supreme Court due to rule on the Government's Brexit appeal

MARCH 2017

UK Government set to trigger Article 50 and formally begin Brexit negotiations

Brexit

NFU commissions trade report on Brexit implications

In order to help members make an informed choice in the EU Referendum, the NFU commissioned world-leading agricultural research institute - the LEI at Wageningen University - to consider the impact of a number of possible trade and farm support scenarios that would be open to the UK Government, post-Brexit.

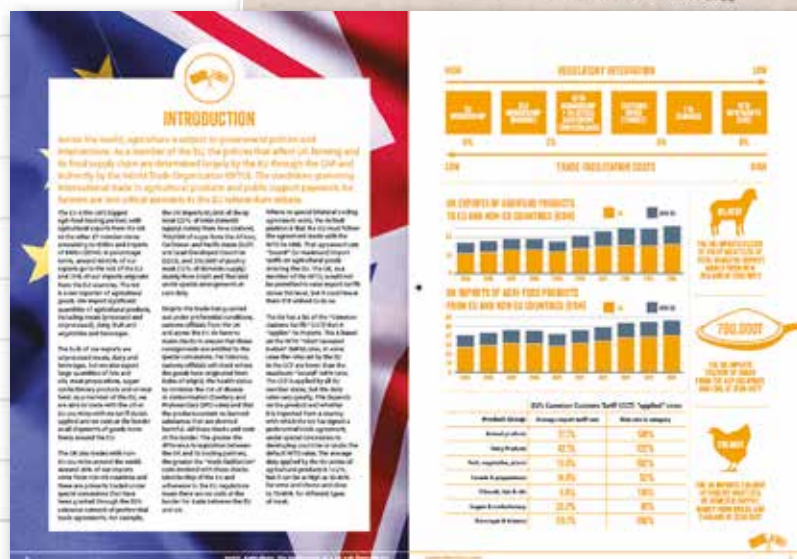
Before the results were announced, NFU Deputy Director General Martin Haworth said: "Feedback from our members has been clear; further information is needed to consider more fully the potential implications for British agriculture if the UK votes to leave the EU. As a result, the NFU commissioned Wageningen University to carry out an impact assessment on behalf of members."

As part of the report, three trade scenarios were modelled:

- A Free Trade Agreement between the UK and the EU;
- The World Trade Organisation (WTO) default position; and
- UK Trade Liberalisation.

Outside of the EU, and therefore outside of its CAP, the UK Government would need to consider what, if any, direct income support to provide to British farmers. In addition to the trade scenarios, three different approaches to UK farm support payments were modelled:

- Retention of 100% of the current level of direct payments;
- Reduction by 50%; and
- Total abolition of direct payments.





PRESIDENT CALLS FOR UNITED FRONT

The UK's vote to leave the European Union in June took most of the country by surprise. Following months of fractious campaigning on both sides, 52% of the population voted to go it alone.

The NFU's response was to call for a united front and a strong domestic food policy that would protect agriculture – the bedrock of the UK's largest manufacturing industry, food and drink. This sector is worth £108 billion to the UK economy and employs 3.9 million people, and farmers are at the heart of it.

President Meurig Raymond told members that the NFU's leading role in ensuring policies were in place for a profitable, productive and competitive farming industry, was more important than ever.

He said: "The EU Referendum campaign proved to be very divisive in the country as a whole, and farming was no different. Now that voters have decided the issue, it is vital that we all come together to work to this common goal.

"There is a job to be done and the NFU will play a leading and constructive role in that.

"If there was one message which came over loud and clear in all our farmer meetings it was frustration with European regulation and its handling of product approvals, due to an over-politicised approach and excessive use of the precautionary principle. We now have a golden opportunity to ensure our arrangements are in future proportionate and decisions are based on sound science.

"I said before the EU Referendum that, in or out, the NFU would continue to do its utmost to create the conditions in which our farmers and growers can prosper. You have my promise that we will do just that."

NFU Council's bold vision for post-Brexit farming

NFU Council backs a bold, ambitious vision for British food and farming post-Brexit; one that ensures farm businesses are central to a dynamic food chain and deliver a countryside that works for everyone.



Following the eight-week consultation, views of thousands of members on the future of farming were gathered through questionnaires and a series of meetings nationwide. NFU Council reviewed the results and supported the next steps to develop a comprehensive framework, which formed the basis of government talks.

NFU President Meurig Raymond said after the October meeting: "The overwhelming view from our membership is that we need a bold and ambitious vision for the industry shared by government that delivers improved health, wealth and environment for the British people. This vision will be vital in helping to produce the raw ingredients for a dynamic food and drink industry, one that underpins the £108bn contribution to the UK economy and the 3.9 million jobs for people working in food and farming.

"What's at stake here clearly needs to remain at the front of this debate – protecting the environment alongside having access to safe, affordable, traceable home-grown food and for that we need to have competitive, profitable and progressive farming.

"The sentiment of consultation responses was that Brexit is not about burning bridges, but building them; to that end we'll be looking at what allegiances we can form to ensure the voice for British food and farming is as strong as possible.

"It is now up to us to put forward credible policies in the very important months ahead. The NFU's task is to achieve long-term confidence and, crucially, short-term certainty. It's a challenge and an opportunity that the NFU is in a position to grab with both hands."

NFU LEADS AGRICULTURE'S RESPONSE TO FUTURE DOMESTIC FARMING POLICY

Thousands of farmers from up and down the country turned out to have their say on what they think is needed from a future domestic agricultural policy for the British farming sector post-Brexit, after the NFU organised a series of meetings to spearhead agriculture's response to EU Referendum result. The NFU held 50 member meetings and launched a postal and online survey, as part of one of the largest consultations in its 108-year history.

Thousands of farmers attended the meetings, 50,000 received a copy of the consultation document and questionnaire, which helped the NFU formulate a vision for a future domestic farming policy in this once-in-a-generation event.

NFU President Meurig Raymond said: "We were expecting thousands of our members to engage with us during the consultation. Despite it being a busy time for farmers I'm pleased at how many turned out, showing that we were right to hold this consultation now. It really shows that there is an appetite from NFU members to help shape the future of their great industry."

"During our meetings, we've already covered a wide variety of topics, such as future trade policy, domestic agricultural policy and access to labour. These have been some of the big issues central to the policy framework farming needs for a certain future."

"Ultimately, what we need from this far-reaching exercise is to provide a strong and united voice for the food and farming industry, to ensure that agriculture is seen as strategically and politically important in all future trade negotiations. These talks are just the beginning and I, along with the rest of the officeholder team, am looking forward to the days and weeks ahead."







NFU APPOINTS DIRECTOR FOR NEW BREXIT UNIT

The NFU has appointed a director to lead its newly-created Brexit Unit as the organisation moves to strengthen and extend its political reach in the wake of the EU Referendum.

Nick von Westenholz will join the NFU as Director of EU Exit and International Trade to ensure the NFU has a co-ordinated and constant presence in its Brexit conversations with government in the crucial months ahead.

The new Brexit team is part of the NFU's strategy to refocus and strengthen both its government and external affairs teams in London, to ensure it continues to have the impact needed on behalf of its 55,000 farmer and grower members as all-important Brexit negotiations get underway.

NFU Director General Terry Jones said: "We have made no secret of our determination to seize the opportunities offered by the forthcoming Brexit deals to ensure that British farming has a profitable and productive future and is able to seize and capitalise on new opportunities."

Mr von Westenholz rejoins from his post as chief executive of the Crop Protection Association. He is a trained barrister and previously worked with the NFU as its head of government affairs.

NFU President Meurig Raymond said: "With Nick at the helm of the new Brexit team the NFU will directly mirror the Government's set up when it comes to negotiating future arrangements for our industry.

"As Brexit deals are made the NFU will be in the right place at the right time to make sure we get the best possible access to the single market and a competent and reliable workforce, as well as domestic agricultural policy that meets the needs of our members."



TALKING TOUGH WITH DEFRA

NFU President Meurig Raymond had constructive and robust discussions with Defra Secretary Andrea Leadsom on the NFU's vision for post-Brexit farming and Defra's plans for BPS 2016 payments.

Mr Raymond majored on the importance of unfettered access to the EU market free of tariffs and non-tariff barriers for agricultural commodities, and urging government to place equal priority on food and farming as well as other economic sectors.

He said: "We set out firmly that high standards of UK farm production must not be sacrificed in a free trade deal and I was pleased to hear that Mrs Leadsom was agreed with us on that. British food cannot withstand a market flooded with imports produced to lower standards – there was universal understanding of this in the meeting.."

Mr Raymond discussed BPS delivery, urging Mrs Leadsom to ensure claimants paid late in the payment window last time, such as graziers on commons, are the first to be paid this time.

NFU online

EU REFERENDUM 24 June 2016:

26,714 PAGES VIEWED

27 web articles in 24 hours

POLLS
VOTE LIKELY TO SPARK
FOR INDYREF2
FOR BREXIT



REPORTS & ANALYSIS P4-11

MEG
DRIVE

#CHEWINGTHECUD TWITTER CHAT

You've got some of the loudest voices and brightest brains – and you didn't disappoint when #studentfarmer hosted a Brexit chat, trending at #9 in the UK, propelling farming into the social media spotlight

Next generation's response

#studentfarmer hosted a Twitter chat for agriculture's next generation, which trended at number 9.

- TANT using a science-based approach and efficient food production.
- EU?
- Harriet Wilson @HarrietWilson12
British customers can make informed choices on what goes into their basket but we need to educate.
- environment will look after yield and therefore food – so they are both important on balance!
- Harriet Wilson @HarrietWilson12
Farmers are custodians of the countryside and we should take great pride in looking after our environment.
- Chris Manley @ChrisManley777
Good strong trading relationship with the EU is essential.
- QUESTION 3: WOULD BRITISH FARMING FUNCTION WITHOUT ACCESS TO MIGRANT LABOUR?
- Sam Dilcock @sam_dilcock
It will be important to maintain free trade. We don't want to isolate ourselves from any market opportunity.
- Edward Ford @Ed_Farmer_Ford
Migrant labour is key to making sure fruit and veg lands on the supermarket shelves.
- James Hutchinson @jimbohutch81
A healthy, balanced countryside will be a productive environment. In the end we need food to survive.
- Will Wilson @willwilson100
Agriculture is in line for some serious evolution, but its current model encourages the opposite.
- John Royle @JDRoyle
Access to non-UK labour is also really important for the meat processing sector.
- Chris Manley @ChrisManley777
We need to tell everyone about how great British food and farming is, and that is all of our job to do.
- QUESTION 2: WHAT FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES ARE THERE?
- Chris Manley @ChrisManley777
Ethically sourced migrant labour through providers like @HopsIs is vital to food and farming.
- QUESTION 5: WHAT THREE THINGS ARE YOU MOST EXCITED FOR ABOUT THE FUTURE OF FARMING?
- Co-op @CoopAgriMatters
To map our future we need to ensure young farmers work with @NFUtweets to understand and have their say on future policy.
- QUESTION 4: WHAT'S THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN THE ENVIRONMENT AND FOOD PRODUCTION?
- Chris Manley @ChrisManley777
Opportunities for young farmers, investment in business and practical training and the chance to promote the British brand.
- Edward Ford @Ed_Farmer_Ford
An opportunity to try different things, challenge the norm, move away from the "always done it that way" attitude.
- Sam Dilcock @sam_dilcock
Maintain or improve the environment, while better integrating our food production into it rather than the other way around.
- Ally Hunter Blair @Wyefarm
Providing safe and nutritious food, advances in improving precision and positive public engagement to change the farming stigma.
- Katie Anderson @muddybootsfarm
I still believe a huge problem is getting young people into the industry. Farming should be seen as a career option for all.
- Katie @muddybootsfarm
If we don't look after the environment we won't have a planet to eat on.
- Harriet Wilson @HarrietWilson12
Changes in food habits, strength of our British food brand and efficiency technologies.
- Sam Dilcock @sam_dilcock
Sustainable agricultural practice, Looking after the soil
- Emily Davis @GreenWelliesEm
Looking after the soil

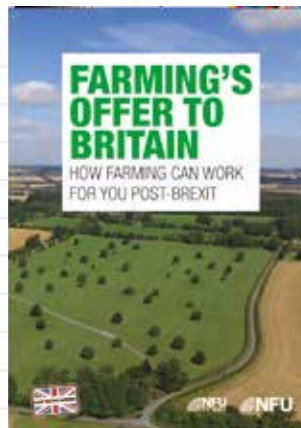
SIGNING THE PLEDGE



In October, the NFU invited MPs to sign our post-Referendum farming pledge, to back British farming in the wake of Brexit.

The full list of signatories are online, but many of those who signed wanted to underline their support for our sector.

Farming Minister George Eustice said: "Food and farming is our largest industry in this country, it is worth over £108bn a year – bigger than aerospace and automotives put together. It is a huge industry. It employs millions of people and the truth is that a lot of our highly successful processing industry also depends on having a supply chain, and profitable, successful primary producers. So yes, agriculture being at the start of that food supply chain, part of a vitally important and very large industry, It is clearly going to feature very prominently in future policy."



Farming's future

The NFU created an online document, entitled *Farming's Offer to Britain*, based on the NFU's policy statements, which sets the tone for how agriculture can deliver for the country, post Brexit.

NFU Cymru grows

NFU Cymru announced a restructure of its policy, communications and county adviser operations in October as the organisation looked to enhance its value to members and ensure it is ready for the challenges posed by Brexit.

Labour is the point

The NFU has impressed upon the Home Office the urgent need for a substantial trial of a Seasonal Agricultural Permit Scheme for non-EU workers in the 2017 season.

In November, NFU horticulture board chairman Ali Capper told Robert Goodwill, Minister of State for Immigration, that this trial is essential in mitigating the shortfall in EU workers on British farms.

After the meeting Mrs Capper said: "The industry has very specific needs for labour in agriculture and horticulture and the NFU is already in discussions with government on this. Horticulture alone needs around 80,000 seasonal workers to pick and pack fruit, vegetable and plant crops across the country. This is expected to rise to 95,000 by 2021 based on today's growth projections.

"Our message to the Home Office is simple: without workers to produce iconic British crops the industry will contract and imports will increase."



Deputy President gives evidence to Lords inquiry

NFU Deputy President Minette Batters gave evidence at a House of Lords EU Home Affairs inquiry into the UK-EU movement of people.

During the evidence session, Ms Batters reinforced how critical EU workers are to agricultural and horticultural businesses, but also for the wider supply chain. She will also raise the importance of access to a reliable and competent workforce for agriculture and workers across the skills spectrum are needed throughout the sector.

Ms Batters said: "There is a serious prospect of aspects of food production moving abroad due to a lack of workers available for these businesses. With unemployment figures extremely low, there is simply a lack of people available for businesses to employ and that is why we are grateful to the inquiry inviting us to give evidence today."

UK UNIONS AND PROCESSORS UNITE ON POST-BREXIT TRADE AND LABOUR



The presidents of the four UK farming unions joined forces to call for full, unfettered access to the single market, while maintaining access to a flexible, competent and reliable workforce.

The presidents insisted these factors were vital to the future success of the industry, following a meeting with 22 of agriculture's largest processing customers in November. During the meeting at NFU HQ, they unveiled their post-Brexit thinking and discussed how the agri-food industry can come together to speak with one voice on trade and access to labour.

They outlined a bold and ambitious vision for the industry, one where competitive, profitable and progressive farming and food businesses deliver an increasing proportion of the nation's needs for high quality, safe, affordable food to British people, as well as to new export markets.

FOOD AND FARMING UNITES

The largest coalition of food producers in the UK's history has called for tariff-free access to the single market and continued access to a competent and reliable workforce in order for British food and farming to flourish post-Brexit.

In a letter to the Prime Minister coordinated by the UK's farming unions, 75 organisations pledged support for a positive, bold and ambitious vision for the sector post-Brexit. But they also signalled that food security, food safety and hygiene, stewardship of the countryside and affordable food is at risk if ministers fail to deliver continued access to labour and the best possible single market access.

NFU President Meurig Raymond said: "Brexit creates an enormous opportunity for farming, food production and for Britain. But to deliver this new future, we must secure the best possible access to the single market and continued access to a competent and reliable workforce. Getting this right will set the foundations for a successful new British agricultural policy."

Letters to the Editor



Sir, The result of the EU referendum presents particular challenges as well as opportunities for the UK food chain. A settlement that recognises the critical role of the UK food chain will demonstrate how Brexit can be beneficial not just for our sector but for the wider economy too. We represent the four UK farming unions and 71 leading food businesses, with a collective turnover of more than

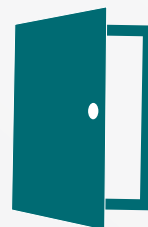
IN NUMBERS: BREXIT, FARMING AND THE NFU



55,000 members sent options papers as part of NFU consultation



50 meetings held with members as part of NFU consultation



2019 is the year the UK is expected to formally leave the EU



2020 is the year until which the Treasury has guaranteed BPS payments



122 MPs signed the NFU's post-EU Referendum farming pledge



3.9 million people employed in UK agri-food sector



95,000 extra seasonal workers needed by 2021 according to industry estimates



£108 billion value of UK food and farming sector



£8.9 billion of UK food and non-alcoholic drinks are exported into the single market



1,000 special edition lapel pins worn by MPs and supporters for Back British Farming Day



110,000 the number of times EU Referendum articles have been read on NFUOnline since June 23



300 - the number of pieces of media coverage secured by NFU immediately after EU Referendum result

January

DITCH IT

At the Oxford Farming Conference in January, the Secretary of State announced that, subject to Parliamentary approval, farmers across the country should be allowed to maintain their own ditches, from April 2016 onwards.

The NFU responded to this consultation and welcomed the news. This move covers ditches up to 1.5km long, and means that farmers can clear debris and manage the land.

This announcement followed on from the Defra consultation on integrating flood defence consents into the Environmental Permitting regime in England and Wales, held between December 2014 and February 2015.



In the wake of Storm Desmond our video case study of an affected farmer was viewed by 65,000 people on Facebook.

EU EMISSIONS AGREEMENT

Thanks to NFU lobbying through the Brussels Office, EU environment ministers agreed a common position on the National Emissions Ceilings Directive. This agreement, reached during the Environment Council meeting, will serve as a basis for talks with the European Parliament.

The key issues for agriculture on the revised Directive are proposals for unrealistic ammonia reduction targets for 2030 and the inclusion of methane targets. The Council's position text agrees to exclude methane and sets out new ammonia reduction targets.

The NFU ensured that ministers recognised the need for realistic ammonia reduction targets that would be affordable for the agricultural sector, and would allow for growth while protecting the environment.

In addition, the NFU has always been clear that the revised Directive should not include methane – this just duplicates other EU and national legislative measures that are already in place to address these emissions.



NFU RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED IN DEFRA'S WATER ABSTRACTION REFORM PROPOSALS

Defra set out its proposals for abstraction reform in England in response to its 2014 consultation, 'Making the most of every drop'. These proposals focused on the management of surface water at the catchment scale.

The NFU submitted detailed comments to Defra's consultation and many of our recommendations were adopted, particularly those concerning the recognition of the erratic use patterns common in irrigated cropping, and the

need to accommodate them.

As a result of NFU lobbying, volumes of water transferred from existing licences to new permits will be based on "peak volumes of water used in the last 10 years", a significant improvement on original plans to transfer average volumes of historic water use that would have constrained irrigation in dry years.



NFU FLOODING SUPPORT

In January, NFU put pressure on government for the swift launch of the Farming Recovery Fund following the northern flooding over Christmas and New Year. In addition, the NFU lobbied government to extend the fund to a wider area and provided support both locally and nationally, getting advice, guidance and practical assistance out to affected members.

NFU advisers called for BPS payments to be prioritised for those in flooded areas and secured agreement with the Environment Agency that gravel deposited on fields does not require a waste permit or exemption. We ensured with the RPA that land would not be rendered ineligible for BPS, and worked with Natural England to ensure a pragmatic view was taken on stocking densities for those members affected by the flooding who are in agri-environment schemes. The union also worked closely with other organisations to produce a flood damage survey and promoted organisations such as the Farm Crisis Network who were able to provide further aid to affected members.

After the lobbying for its implementation, many members in the North of England were able to submit applications for the Farming Recovery Fund. Through continued conversations with the RPA, the NFU ensured information was sent from the RPA to all farmers who had not yet had their farming recovery fund processed.

National Living Wage

The NFU commissioned an independent report from farm business consultants Andersons, which exposed the danger of crop production moving abroad if unplanned and unprecedented wage rises are imposed on UK grower businesses over the next four years.

Although the move was implemented, the report provided valuable lobbying evidence. NFU advisers continue to press the case of horticultural businesses in Westminster.

LONG REACH OF NFU JOBS PAGES

Adventurous farmers looking for a change in scenery were sought for a job on the world's most isolated island through the NFU's jobs pages.

The government of Tristan da Cunha – a tiny isolated island in the South Atlantic – was looking for an agricultural adviser to help raise productivity on its 1,000-acres of communal land, which has 300 cattle and 500 sheep grazing it. And when we put the story on our website, the story made national headlines.

This story showed the reach of the NFU online jobs pages, where Farmer and Grower members can advertise their

farming, agricultural and rural vacancies for free. to advertise, log in at <https://jobs.nfuonline.com/home/>.



PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT

The NFU's climate change team attended the Paris International Climate Change Conference in December to ensure that NFU's members' interests were at the heart of international decision-making. The efforts of the NFU and its international colleagues in the World Farmers' Organisation were worthwhile, as 'food security' and 'food production' were included in the final Paris Agreement text.

ACCELERATING BPS PAYMENTS

Following NFU pressure, the RPA agreed to make weekly runs of payments at weekends as a payment run impacts on the full system being available for those processing forms.

ES/ CS LIVESTOCK RECORDS

Following NFU lobbying, Defra ensured that the record-keeping requirements would not apply to pre-2013 agreements. This has been signed off by ministers and the Commission – an NFU success.

Improved tacographs rules confirmed

NFU lobbying paved the way for an increased exemption radius for vehicles carrying livestock to be adopted as policy.

EU rules allow member states to exempt vehicles carrying live animals from farm to market or market to slaughter from EU driver's hours/tachograph rules to a maximum radius of 100km. However, the UK has not used this exemption to its maximum extent and has

previously limited the exemption to a radius of 50km only. The exemption radius was increased to 100km and the Department for Transport carried out consultations.

The NFU made the case to the DfT for the benefits gained from the increased exemption radius. The DfT confirmed that the exemption for vehicles carrying out livestock would be fully utilised and kept at a radius of 100km.



NORTHERN BEEF AND SHEEP CONFERENCE

Against a backdrop of retail price wars, difficult trading conditions and a cash flow crisis caused by low farm gate returns and delayed BPS and agri-environment payments, the North East and North West regions joined forces in January to stage the first Northern Beef and Sheep Conference for more than a decade.

With an impressive line-up of top speakers including NFU Deputy President Minette Batters, Ed Garner from Kantar World Panel and Dave Harrison from Beef and Sheep New Zealand, the conference attracted more than 180 farmers and industry representatives who met to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing the red meat sector.

RELIEF AS BEAK TRIMMING BAN IS POSTPONED

Following years of lobbying from the NFU, Farming minister George Eustice announced a ban on beak trimming would not be introduced from January.

NFU Chief Poultry Adviser Gary Ford said: "The NFU has always said that January 2016 would have been too early to introduce a ban on beak trimming. We believe that a continuation is in the best welfare interests of laying hens so we are pleased that the Minister has listened to the industry's concerns and ours.

"The NFU supports and is actively involved in on-going industry work to better understand what the trigger points are that cause injurious feather pecking."

Welsh food summit

A delegation of NFU Cymru members met with then Welsh Government Deputy Minister for Farming and Food, Rebecca Evans AM in Cardiff Bay. The group discussed a number of hot topics including the Wales Rural Development Plan and late Basic Payment Scheme payments.

Terry Jones to return to NFU as its new DG

Terry Jones is returning to the NFU, having been appointed the union's new director general.

Jones, who is currently director general of the PTF and previously worked for the FDF as communications



Jones worked for NFU between 2002 and 2011

director, joins the NFU in April. He replaces former DG Andy Robertson, who retired in October.

Jones worked for the NFU between 2002 and 2011 in roles ranging from head of food chain, head of government affairs and acting head of communications before moving to the FDF.

He told The Grocer leaving the PTF would be tinged with sadness after a successful 16-month stint. However, rejoining the NFU was "too good an opportunity to turn down".

NFU TEACHING PACKS IN ACTION

Former Defra Secretary of State Elizabeth Truss visited a school in her South West Norfolk constituency to find out how it was putting food and farming firmly on the curriculum.

St Martin at Shouldham Primary School near Downham Market use the Why Farming Matters education packs developed by the NFU and FACE (Farming And Countryside Education) to ensure all 230 pupils discover more about where their food comes from and the countryside around them.

Pupils took part in a range of activities, from creating a food and farming collage to looking at future energy needs and finding out about the crops grown in Norfolk. Farmers Ed Lankfer and Ben Hipperson brought a tractor into the school and talked to pupils about the farming year.

TRITON KNOLL

RWE gained permission to build six underground cable trenches across prime Lincolnshire arable land from Anderby to Bicker Fen, affecting almost 100 farmers and growers.

The NFU led the Land Managers Group at the public inquiry, where the examining panel accepted our arguments that RWE should take more account of farmers' land drainage systems and devise proper plans to allow for these when constructing the cable network. At a series of meetings with RWE the organisation raised landowner engagement, field drainage, soils aftercare, link boxes, cable depth, easement width and decommissioning, and achieved important changes to RWE's original proposed procedure.

The NFU, together with the Lincolnshire Association of Agricultural Valuers, negotiated with RWE over the Heads of Terms and we held meetings to discuss these offers with members along the route.



COMPENSATION FOR FLOODED FARMER

Following support from the NFU and NFU Mutual, Yorkshire farmer Robert Lindley has received thousands of pounds of compensation after his local authority pumped flood water into a nearby watercourse, badly damaging his carrot crop.

NFU member Mr Lindley suffered the damage on his farm in Burton Fleming, Yorkshire, when the area was flooded between December 2012 and January 2013.

After a three-day hearing, a tribunal awarded Mr Lindley compensation in the first case under the Land Drainage Act 1991.

NFU Director of Policy Andrew Clark said: "We are very pleased it was decided that the authority should compensate Mr Lindley. It demonstrates the need for the flood authorities to be aware of the consequences of actively flooding farmland when carrying out flood risk management.

"It's really vital to consider that many fields are used for food production and are the most important part of a farm business. The NFU is committed to supporting members affected by flooding issues."

February

NFU'S TOP THREE ARE RE-ELECTED

There was no change in the top team as Meurig Raymond was re-elected as NFU President at the 2016 AGM.

Meurig Raymond, a mixed farmer from Pembrokeshire, will now lead the NFU until 2018. Minette Batters, a livestock farmer from Wiltshire, was re-elected Deputy President and Guy Smith, a farmer from Essex, was re-elected Vice President. After his re-election, Mr Raymond said: "I'm extremely proud to be re-elected as President of the NFU and I'm grateful that the membership and NFU Council have supported me in the way they have.

"We need to build on what has been achieved over the past two years and convince the policy makers, retailers, consumers and society of the importance of food production and British farming and that we, as farmers, can help to grow the rural economy.

The biggest ever member conference, which was once again held at Birmingham's ICC, focused on Backing the Future of British Farming. delegates heard spirited debate on topics as diverse as 'Will the markets ever pay for green credentials?'; BPS delays; the future for dairy and what Brexit could mean for UK agriculture.



SINCE 2014
AVIAN
INFLUENZA
HAS COST THE
UK POULTRY
INDUSTRY
£100M



New bird flu guide

The NFU and BFERPA have put together a guide for poultry farmers with advice from the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) on how to deal with a case of avian influenza (AI).

The guide has information that will help farmers put together a contingency plan for their farm. This may be simple plans for vehicle washing areas and PPE, how to deal with waste litter and secondary cleanse and disinfection. It also helps farmers prepare a contingency plan for their farm, in the event of an AI breakout.



FARMS AT HEART OF WELSH RURAL BUSINESSES

NFU Cymru organised a special event to highlight the important role that farms play in supporting rural businesses.

The event, held at Huw Davies' farm in Newcastle Emlyn, was attended by more than 60 local businesses that benefit from the money that farmers receive and then cascade through the wider rural economy. Companies represented at the farm included: the local vet, feed merchants, contractors to do fencing, cut silage and hedging; as well as the NFU Mutual, NFU Cymru, a solicitor, an accountant, electricians and builders – to name but a few.

BOVINE TB

The NFU has worked with Defra, APHA, AHDB, BCVA and Landex to promote action and help farmers and vets protect herds from bovine TB.

All advice on bovine TB from government, farming experts, leading vets and agricultural colleges is available from one website, at TBhub.co.uk.

CITY CENTRE RURAL VIEW



We took the opportunity to spice up hoardings surrounding our former HQ in busy Belgravia with scenes of Britain's well-loved farming landscape as the building underwent an extensive refit.

NFU President Meurig Raymond said: "The NFU is bringing the countryside to the city and reminding millions of people where their food comes from and who produces it. It's a tremendous opportunity for us to bring a taste of the countryside to a predominantly urban area."

TRACTORS IN SCHOOLS

NFU joined forces with Lincolnshire Agricultural Society to run a week-long project in February, to encourage farmers to take a tractor into their local primary school and talk to pupils about where their food comes from.

Nearly 50 primary schools, ranging from large town-centre schools to small local village schools took part, with farmers from across the county driving their everyday working tractors into playgrounds to help tell the Lincolnshire farming story, armed with the NFU's

Why Farming Matters curriculum packs.

Thousands of excited children from across Lincolnshire were able to see a tractor at first hand and hear more about food and farming from a real farmer. The project was so successful that Tractors into Schools will be running again in Lincolnshire in 2017, when the East Midlands office of the NFU hopes to see more tractors in more school playgrounds and many more children finding out about British food and farming.





NFU CONFERENCE

The NFU's annual conference had record media attendance with national journalists from all major outlets quizzing officeholders on what the future of farming could be post-Brexit. We secured nearly 400 pieces of media coverage mentioning the NFU. This included Newsnight, which broadcast an interview with NFU President Meurig Raymond to 2.7 million people.



BIOFUELS CAP PRESSURE

The NFU ups the pressure on the Department for Transport as reported in the *Farmers Weekly* ahead of a high-level meeting on the biofuels cap.

NFU urges govt to keep 7% biofuels cap

★ The NFU is urging the Department for Transport (DfT) not to reduce the cap on the level of biofuels made from crops.

Union president Meurig Raymond has agreed to a high level meeting on 10 February with MP Andrew Jones to explain that there are farmers with a good market for biofuels crops who will be adversely affected if the cap is reduced.

Minister helps launch teaching packs

The then Environment Secretary Liz Truss helps to launch the NFU's Why Farming Matters teaching packs - encouraging teachers to educate their pupils on food and the environment - securing headlines in national and regional media.



Countryfile

Robin Milton, chairman of the NFU Uplands Forum, speaks to Countryfile presenter Tom Heap about flood alleviation - the impact on farm businesses and what government needs to do to protect urban and rural areas from flooding damage.

March

Meurig in Downing Street

RURAL CRIME MANIFESTO

The Police and Crime Commissioner elections presented the NFU and its members with an opportunity to challenge candidates to commit to rural policing.

COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP

Following NFU lobbying, government announced a longer application window for mid and higher tier Countryside Stewardship applicants, to help them avoid completing the form during harvest.

SOLAR WIN

In an unexpected Easter gift to the solar industry (and a modest NFU policy win), a proposed hike in VAT on solar panels was dropped.

SUCCESSION PLANNING PACK

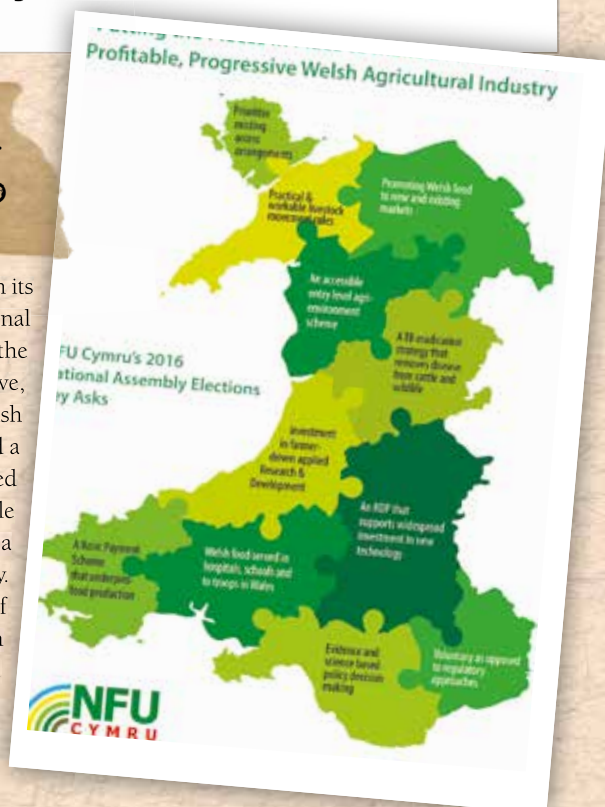
A new specific Business Guide on succession planning was written and published to bring all the other related guides together. It provides a one-stop information shop for members making their succession plans.



NFU President Meurig Raymond meets Prime Minister David Cameron and Environment Secretary Liz Truss on restructuring farm debt.

NFU Cymru manifesto

March saw NFU Cymru launch its manifesto ahead of the National Assembly elections. 'Putting the Pieces in Places for a Productive, Profitable and Progressive Welsh Agricultural Industry' adopted a jigsaw theme and was designed to highlight the important role that agriculture plays in a thriving future rural economy. Representatives from each of the main political parties in Wales received a copy of the 28-page manifesto, along with a bilingual jigsaw illustrating each of the union's key asks.





SUPERMARKET SOURCING GUIDE

The Guardian online featured our new supermarket sourcing guide, with quotes from NFU Chief Food Chain Adviser Ruth Mason.

Our most comprehensive ever shoppers' sourcing guide aims to help customers compare rival supermarkets' policies when they want to buy British food. The guide looks at each major food category, and lists which retailers are sourcing British for their own-brand products so consumers can choose to Back British Farming with their shopping choices.

NFU Tesco under fire

The NFU questions new fictional farm names being used on imported produce at Tesco – this sparked a series of articles and broadcasted interviews on this topic on a national level.



Climate Change Agreement challenge

The NFU challenged the Environment Agency on a Climate Change Agreement reporting issue. With the support of the NFU's Legal Assistance Scheme, Legal team and Farm Energy Centre colleagues, the NFU worked with the EA to negotiate a position where four grower businesses are saving £131,000 in charges and are being credited with a bankable carbon surplus worth a further £131,000.

BBC Sunday Politics

Chief Horticulture Adviser Chris Hartfield appears on the BBC's *Sunday Politics* to talk about how the National Living Wage will impact horticultural farms.



COWS ON TOUR

The enthusiastic 'Cows on Tour' team from Glamorgan NFU Cymru and Glamorgan YFC travelled to inner-city London to tell the farming story to more than 300 school children.

The team, led by Glamorgan NFU Cymru County Chairman Abi Reader, visited Pakeman Primary School to speak to pupils about where their food comes from.



April



CELEBRATING GREAT BRITISH FOOD

Organisations from across the farming industry joined forces to celebrate everything that's great about quality British food. In a concerted effort, the NFU, Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board, Red Tractor and Love British Food united to coordinate a calendar of events for the autumn of 2016, which has been designated the 'Year of British Food' by the government.

The plans were unveiled at a special great British breakfast launch event at Farmers and Fletchers in The City, in the presence of the Environment Secretary, Elizabeth Truss. The event was attended by 65 guests from the farming industry, food chain, retailers, stakeholder groups and trade press.

Basic Payment Scheme issues

NFU Cymru met with Rural Payments Agency England's Chief Executive, Mark Grimshaw, to explain the desperate financial situation the majority of cross-border farmers found themselves in as a result of not receiving their Basic Payment Scheme payment.

GLYPHOSATE VICTORY AT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The NFU was pleased with the result of the European Parliament vote on glyphosate, following intense talks on the importance of the herbicide between the NFU President and MEPs in Strasbourg and letters to MEPs from the farming community.

Last-minute amendments to the resolution, lobbied for by the NFU and adopted in the European Parliament, provided a clear mandate for the European Commission and member states to proceed with the re-authorisation of the active substance glyphosate in June.

NFU President Meurig Raymond said: "The result of this vote is very welcome news. It's fundamental that the agricultural sector is able to use glyphosate responsibly in order to produce healthy products across the sector entering the food chain, reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and continue to farm sustainably."

While the vote resulted in a generally favourable outcome, there remained areas of concern within the resolution that demonstrate the extent of misinformation and misunderstanding of the use of glyphosate on farm that could have influenced the re-authorisation process.



Rodenticide requirements

From April 2016, stewardship requirements have been attached to the use of professional rodenticide products. Thanks to persistent NFU negotiating, farmers will have until end of 2017 to comply, through demonstrating their competence as members of an assurance scheme. NFU has also worked with AHDB, which is delivering online training modules.



HS2 PETITION

The NFU petition to the House of Lords on the Phase 1, London to West Midlands, HS2 railway was deposited in April. It followed our petition to the House of Commons in May 2014 and evidence to the Select Committee in November 2014.

The petition emphasised the concerns we have with the Hybrid Bill as it stands and outlined recommendations we would like to see included to improve the compensation and mitigation available to agricultural landowners and occupiers.

NFU LOBBIES FOR SIMPLIFIED PLANNING RULES

The NFU made ten headline recommendations in its response to a government review of rural planning rules. We welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the joint Defra/Department for Communities and Local Government call for evidence, and to continue to lobby on behalf of our members in an area that impacts directly on their businesses.

In our 2015 Manifesto, we called for "planning rules that enable farmers and farm enterprises to compete and grow with expanding potential market and conform to regulatory requirements".

NFU members need a simplified planning system that promotes the rural economy, reduces risk and allows them to react to the external challenges faced by their businesses. It should support them in maintaining sustainable rural businesses and deliver new efficient buildings, operations and homes. Renewable energy installations also have a key role to play within modern farming businesses with planning policy that recognises this. An announcement is expected early in 2017.



Farmers spot 130 species on third Big Farmland Bird Count

By Philip Case

Farmers are making steady progress to help reverse the long-term decline in farmland birds, the findings of the third Big Farmland Bird Count (BFBC) suggest.

The 2015 "health check" on the number of farmland birds found

took a walk around their farms to record the birds and then sent in their results to the GWCT. Together they recorded 130 species - the best results since the count began in 2014. Last year, 117 different bird types were spotted.

OPPORTUNITY Every farmer and NFU vice-president who took part in the

Bird Indicator.

"Most farmers are proud and surprised by the numbers, with some farmers reporting more than 50 species."

Ahead of this year's event, experts from the GWCT and other conservation charities helped some 300 farmers to spot today's species by sight and sound by holding 17

practical measures under agreed stewardship schemes.

Conservationists have attributed a decline in some of our most cherished farmland birds to the intensification of farming around the mid-1950s, a period which saw an increase in the use of pesticides and fertilisers.

But in recent years, the decline has slowed and some farmers

Farmers Weekly report on the how British farmers are helping to reverse to decline of farmland birds

Countryside, Common agricultural policy

NFU claims many farms not viable without EU support

Importance of the funding under the common agricultural policy (CAP) to the viability of British farms.

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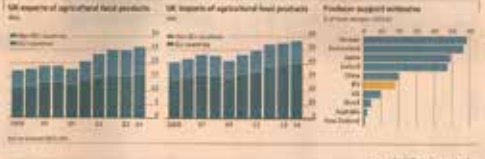
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WELSH RURAL COMMUNITY CHAMPION

Llyr Jones of Derwydd farm, Llanfihangel Glyn Myfyr, Corwen, was announced as the winner of the 2016 NFU Cymru/Principality Welsh Rural Community Champion Award.

The competition recognises the hard work farmers do off farm to help their community.

Llyr has run the family farm since he was 19 and on his own since the age of 23. He farms 1,200 Welsh mountain ewes and co-founded Blodyn Aur Welsh rapeseed oil in 2010. He was also a member of the Agri Academy and a Tesco Future Farmer.

Llyr has been on the Parish Council committee since 2004 and is a former Chairman. He organises an annual Farm Sports Day, a Bonfire night event and Christmas tree for the village every year, and has raised over £40,000 for charities.

As well as his local community work, Llyr started 'Cam wrth Gam' with a friend in 2006 to help various areas in Africa to build schools and homes for orphans.



SIMPLIFIED MOVEMENT RULES

Significant simplifications to movement rules for farm livestock, announced in April by the government, were a major step forward in the reduction of red tape affecting North East livestock farmers.

The NFU's regional livestock board chairman, Richard Findlay, welcomed the breakthrough as a "significant milestone", which he said came as a direct result of sustained work by the NFU in the corridors of Westminster and out on farms across England and Wales.

In 2015, the NFU raised concerns with Defra about the lack of urgency in implementing proposals to cut red tape, saying farmers and growers needed to focus on producing British food and not being professional form-fillers.

Under the revised rules, farmers can apply to register all the land they use on a permanent or temporary basis within a 10-mile radius under a single County Parish Holding number and are no longer required to report moves between those parcels of land.

At the same time, complex movement rules including Cattle Tracing System (CTS) links, Sole Occupancy Authorities (SOAs) and batch recording for certain batch recording exemptions for sheep movements have been removed.

NEWS |

Shopping guide launched to back British farming

By Johann Tasker



An online shopping guide reveals the retailers who back British farmers – and those who don't. Shoppers are being urged to use the guide to measure the performance of their regular supermarket.

Consumers who want to buy British lamb should look for the Red Tractor sign

let when it comes to supporting British agriculture.

The NFU has been working over the past 12 months to establish the sourcing policies of all the major retailers on their "own-brand" products.

The online guide shows that Aldi and Morrisons source all of their beef and lamb from British farmers on their standard and premium lines.

But Asda, the Co-operative and Sainsbury's source 100% British for their premium lines of beef and lamb only.

The Co-operative, Lidl, M&S and Waitrose said all of their standard-line beef came from British producers. However, they only source British lamb at certain times of the year.

NFU chief food chain adviser Ruth Mason said transparency was key in the battle to provide shoppers with the information that would enable them to buy British food. It would also enable farmers to produce for the domestic retail market, she added.

"We want to promote British food to the general public and support shoppers who want to buy British food by helping them find it at different retailers," said Ms Mason.

"If consumers know who is sourcing from British farmers and growers, it allows them to make an informed choice about which retailers they then want to buy from."

When it came to selling seasonal British fruit and vegetables, Aldi reported selling 14 lines, including potatoes, carrots, pumpkins, beetroots and parsnips.

This was followed by Waitrose, which reported selling 12 lines, Morrisons with 10, and Tesco and the Co-operative with six.

As sourcing policies constantly change, the guide will be updated, although the NFU is calling for retailers to build more transparent and sustainable supply chains.

The NFU also said labelling was still too difficult to understand, making it difficult for consumers to identify British produce, particularly in the dairy sector.

But it said consumers could ensure they bought British by looking out for the Red Tractor logo with the Union flag on it, which meant the food in question could be traced back to a British farm.



Livestock Board Chairman Charles Sercombe speaking to BBC Breakfast about dogs worrying livestock.



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Includes up to £2,000 priority call maintenance and parts of wear.

GENEROUS LOADER OFFERS

High working capacity, proven at the world's leading manufacturers of New Tractors.

3 YEARS INTEREST FREE FINANCE

Cash deals available - against first new finance contract including the starting equipment.

MGX SERIES

For a short while only you can take advantage of these 3 great offers. But hurry - only available while stocks last. For more information, visit www.kubota.co.uk

May

GOOD OUTCOME ON BUSINESS RATES

Over the course of the last two years, the NFU has participated in the government's review of the administration of business rates and the wide-ranging review of the business rates system. We are pleased with the conclusion of this review.

TENANT FARMING

The NFU has produced a flyer, 'Business Self Help Solutions', outlining suggestions for what a tenant farmer can do to help themselves to survive the current pressures on their business. This has been distributed to regional offices and is available for local shows and events.

NFU PROVIDES VITAL INPUT TO PENSIONS REGULATOR

The NFU worked with the Pensions Regulator to provide information on work-place pensions through a series of member events and meetings. The meetings also provided a chance for members and the NFU to ask questions and highlight concerns regarding the impact of certain elements of the legislation.

LORDS BACKS NFU

The report on responding to price volatility (which the NFU submitted evidence to earlier this year) supported many NFU asks, including the recommendation that the Government should increase its efforts to deliver broadband in rural area.



A TASTE OF FARM LIFE

During the Hay Festival, three farms opened their gates up to give visitors an insight into how their food is produced.

David and Catherine James opened their Trevithel Court farm up to show visitors the process of producing cider apples and view their beekeeping facilities.

Andrew and Rachel Giles welcomed visitors to their Maesllwch dairy farm for a hands-on experience milking the cows, as well as seeing the young calves.

Finally, Charlie and David Blanford provided a farm walk around their Brobury farm along the banks of the River Wye, which produces lamb and arable crops. The visit also included demonstrations of working sheepdogs, sheep shearing and wool spinning.

Results of NFU-instigated study published

An Environment Agency report on how miscanthus and short-rotation coppice willow can help manage flooding was finally published on the Government website in January.

The NFU instigated this modelling study in 2009 by petitioning EA Chair Lord Chris Smith and Chief Executive Paul Leinster, following the EA's risk-averse refusal to allow an NFU member to plant 120 hectares of miscanthus on floodplain land upstream of Gloucester.

TV APPEARANCES



Minette Batters appears on *BBC Newsnight* to talk about the upcoming EU Referendum and the importance of access to the single market

Ali Capper tells *Farmers Weekly* that a lack of access to seasonal labour with leave fruit and veg unpicked in the fields



NPA Chair Richard Lister tells *Panorama* about the high animal welfare standards found on British farms

HOW TECH HELPS FARMS

Scientific evidence on the safety of GM crops

Dr Helen Ferrier writes to *The Times* to explain how access to technology would allow British farmers to be more resilient, sustainable and competitive.

Gail Soutar features in *Farmers Guardian* telling government that falling farm income figures should be a wake-up call



Richard Wordsworth champions the needs of British farmers over extension BPS payment



The launch of our Instagram channel which reached

1,450

followers by the end of the year

June



SPECIALIST SHEEP TRAINING FOR POLICE

Specialist training for North East Police officers – spearheaded by the NFU following a pilot project in the North West – got underway in June. Two training days focused on the identification of sheep and movement regulations after it was revealed that an estimated 13,000 animals were stolen in the North East in 2014. This enables police to more effectively tackle livestock thefts estimated to cost more than £1.2m in the North East alone.

Designed to increase awareness of livestock theft among rural police officers, the training aims to provide them with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively question thieves stopped on the roads.

West Tynedale Neighbourhood Inspector Kevin Oates said: "It's essential our officers have the necessary skills to carry out sheep rustling investigations thoroughly. We know these types of crimes can hit our farmers hard, causing them real financial hardship. It makes good sense for us to learn from farmers themselves as they have a great deal of specialist knowledge that they can pass on, to help us help them."

BROADBAND REPORT

An NFU report found that government must prioritise the roll-out of complete mobile networks and reliable superfast access in rural areas, because only 4% of farmers have access to superfast broadband.

These are the findings in the report *Farm Broadband & Mobile Networks*, launched to MPs in London. It reflects the results of a comprehensive NFU survey of farmers and growers.

The NFU is concerned about the government's £1.7 billion broadband delivery programme, which will leave an estimated 1.2 million premises without superfast broadband.

That's the equivalent of 5% of all premises, the majority of which will be farm businesses and rural communities. At best, farmers within this last 5% could be offered far lower speeds of 10 mbps by 2020, whilst urban areas receive superfast speeds of 30mbps or ultrafast speeds of 100mbps+.

The NFU has set out ten ways we can promote an effective superfast broadband and mobile phone network. We need government to ensure the system designed will address the rural market and boost competition. We also need the telecommunications industry to get involved in creating a competitive digital market for our members and their rural communities.



FRUIT & VEG PLEDGE

Lidl commits to the NFU's Fruit & Veg pledge – national and trade coverage including *The Guardian* (Lidl makes Fruit & Veg pledge to British farmers) and *Farmers Guardian* (Lidl pledges commitment to fruit & veg growers)



SHOWCASING WELSH WARES

NFU Cymru celebrated Welsh food and farming during a special event at the Senedd with Assembly Members and stakeholders from across the supply chain.

The Cardiff Bay event aimed to engage with newly-appointed Assembly Members and highlight how important it is for Welsh Government and the food supply chain to work together to ensure the food and farming sector in Wales flourishes.

John Mercer, NFU Cymru Director, said: "This event presented a fantastic opportunity to meet the newly-elected members of the National Assembly of Wales and showcase all that is good about our industry."

Farming Recovery Fund
Through talks with the RPA, the NFU ensured information was sent to all farmers who had not yet had their Farming Recovery Fund payment processed. Further to this, the RPA confirmed they will send correspondence to all farmers who applied for the fund, informing them of realistic timeframes for receiving the funding.

HS2 Farmers' Pack

HS2 has released its first version of the Farmers' Pack, which gives information on its proposed approach towards agricultural property matters.

The production of this pack was one of NFU's petitioning points, and it covers farmers who are affected by Phase 1 of the route, between London and Birmingham.

This is a generalised guide, but each farmer affected by HS2 will eventually receive a bespoke version based on his or her own situation.

The Guide For Farmers and Growers is split into three parts: part one contains general information on key issues and policies and guidance for farmers, part two contains further information on land acquisition and temporary occupation, and part three is an example of an individual plan for a farm holding, which will be given to a farmer.



BPS top-up payments still due to 30,000 – Guy Smith

ABOUT £100 million in Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) money is still owed to farmers in England, according to NFU estimates, but much of this might be subject to dispute.

NFU vice president Guy Smith said information on BPS had been even more scant than usual in recent weeks as Defra and the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) had 'consciously' used election periods to put the situation down.

Issues

But with a 'huge number' of BPS 2015 issues still outstanding, he warned BPS 2016 could be a 'cat crash' if they were not resolved quickly.

He said the NFU understood £1.33 billion had been paid out so far, leaving £100 million still owed if the initial estimated total fund of £1.43bn was correct.

There were 'probably less

than 1,000' farmers still waiting for their bridging payment top up, with concerns, inspections and cross border claimants accounting for most of these.

The biggest unknown, however, appeared to be how much is owed to English BPS claimants in underpayments.

Underpaid

The NFU estimates as many as 30,000 people believe they have been underpaid but the RPA has indicated it believed the figure was nearer 10,000.

The RPA has said it will investigate any payment differences and make adjustments over summer through its routine reconciliation process.

But Mr Smith said: "We think there are up to 30,000 people out there who think they have been underpaid and the RPA does not agree."

We think there are up to 20,000 people out there who think they have been underpaid and the RPA does not agree
GUY SMITH

"There is a mountain of work which is still overhanging and it is inevitable they will take resources away from the RPA when they should be concentrating on their promises to pay 95 per cent of 2016 claims by the end of December."

BPS

NFU Vice President Guy Smith quoted in Farmers Guardian article on £100m BPS money still owed to farmers in England.



In a survey polling host farms, 100% of host farmers reported that the resources were valuable to the delivery of their Open Farm Sunday event.

Glyphosate
decision joy

However, we continue to push for the expected 15-year authorisation of the world's most widely used weed-killer on behalf of our farmer members.

"We appreciate this 18-month period is well below the 15-year re-approval expected and politics has played its part in interfering with this; members can be assured that our goals have not changed.

"We also welcome the fact that no additional conditions of use have been placed on the use of glyphosate - something the NFU has been pushing for."





SCIENCE BEHIND NATURAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT SEMINAR

A seminar organised by the NFU and held jointly with the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, debated the degree to which natural management can help mitigate the impacts of flood events.

'Science behind Natural Flood Management' brought together speakers from the farming community, Defra, the Environment Agency, several universities and other interested parties.

NFU Deputy President Minette Batters, chairing the seminar, said: "The flooding experienced at the end of last year was devastating for many communities, particularly in northern England. Many of our members were affected by the storm damage, as well as the floods, leaving gravel and debris deposits, as well as damage to land, property and buildings.

"The NFU believes that we need to have a plan for flood risk management at a catchment level and that we must use and fund all tools in our toolbox."

Professor Alan Jenkins, Deputy Director of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, said: "Scientists at the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology are currently working on a systematic review examining whether river floods are reduced by the use of natural flood management mechanisms. The outcomes will support decision and policy makers, including farmers, and help guide the UK's future research activity in this area."

EU REFERENDUM VOTE

Before the June 23 vote, NFU officeholders appeared on TV and radio to explain what Brexit would mean for the farming industry. Meurig Raymond on BBC *Sunday Politics* and Minette Batters on Radio 4's *Broadcasting House*.

Following the result, NFU President Meurig Raymond spends the day carrying out TV and radio interviews with national media including: BBC News, Radio 5 Live and BBC World News. Meurig also speaks to BBC Breakfast from the Great Yorkshire Show.

The EU Referendum result is one of the main headlines in the *Countryfile* magazine (British crops could remain un-harvested, warns NFU).



Our #HappyCows was trending on UK Twitter with

150,000 PEOPLE REACHED

by our overall World Milk Day Twitter campaign

NFU CYMRU PROMOTES WELSH FARMING

NFU Cymru President Stephen James and Deputy President John Davies travelled to Cardiff to meet with the new Environment and Rural Affairs Cabinet Secretary Lesley Griffiths AM.

Stephen James said: "We were pleased to meet Lesley Griffiths AM so soon after her appointment and we were delighted with the positive nature of our discussions and the enthusiasm the Cabinet Secretary has about her new portfolio. We have significant challenges ahead of us but also the opportunity to further increase our contribution to the economy of Wales and we look forward to discussing these in more detail in the coming weeks."

July

Royal Welsh Show

IT'S TIME TO BACK WELSH FARMING

NFU Cymru took the 'It's Time to Back Welsh Farming' message to the fields and shops of Wales with the launch of an innovative new campaign tool at the Royal Welsh Show.

Europe's biggest agricultural show provided the platform for NFU Cymru to roll out new, branded bale stickers to further highlight the importance of the public and retailers supporting Welsh agriculture during a challenging time for the industry.

The bale stickers – a first for Wales – were strategically positioned along the main routes to the Royal Welsh Showground in Llanelwedd, Builth Wells. NFU Cymru members, who positioned their branded bales near the roadside, made sure that visitors to the year's Royal Welsh Show saw a strong show of support for the campaign no matter which direction they were travelling from.

Such was the popularity of the branded bale stickers, NFU Cymru rolled the campaign out across Wales, with bales surrounding county show sites and other events over the course of the year.





FARMER OF THE YEAR AWARD FOR ABI READER

Dairy farmer Abi Reader, from Wenvoe, Cardiff, was announced as the winner of the NFU Cymru/Principality Building Society Wales Woman Farmer of the Year Award at the Royal Welsh Show.

The award, now in its 20th year, seeks to champion the contribution that women make to the agricultural industry and to raise the profile of women in farming.

Abi is a partner in the family farm, along with her father and uncle. The farm comprises of approximately 800 acres, with the main enterprise being the dairy herd, which Abi manages. Abi was successfully elected as the Glamorgan NFU Cymru County Chairman in 2014 and has seized this opportunity to meet with influential industry members and lobby for change.

Off farm, Abi hosts farm open days, charity events and more recently Cows on Tour, which is a roadshow that visits primary schools to tell the farming story. Abi is particularly keen to educate the next generation of consumers and strives to show children that Welsh farming is an industry worth backing.

AGRI TRAVEL GRANTS

Nine young farmers from across Wales will travel to locations around the world to continue their agricultural learning after being awarded scholarships through the Gareth Raw Rees Memorial Scholarship.

The awards, totalling £2,500 and supported by the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust, were presented during the Royal Welsh Show.

Alex Robinson, from Llanddewi Velfrey in Pembrokeshire, received £700 to travel to New Zealand for an eight-month trip to visit and work on farms.

Other award winners were brother and sister Bleddyn and Rhiannon Davies (Ceredigion), Carwyn Thomas (Anglesey), Mark Harries, Aled Wyn Davies, Jordan Davies and Frances Evans (all Carmarthenshire) and Dafydd Owen (Conwy).



Future of Welsh farming

NFU Cymru met with the Welsh Government First Minister and Rural Affairs Cabinet Secretary to discuss the next steps for Welsh farming, just days after the UK voted to leave the European Union.

NFU Cymru President Stephen James and Director John Mercer sat alongside First Minister Carwyn Jones for the roundtable meeting with key stakeholders at the iconic Pierhead Building in Cardiff Bay, where they stressed the importance of Welsh Government working in partnership with NFU Cymru and the Union's industry partners.

During the meeting, Stephen James and John Mercer called on the Welsh Government to be "ambitious, imaginative and brave in its thinking" to create a Welsh agricultural policy that will enable Welsh agriculture to lead on a national, European and world stage.

UK UNIONS BUY TIME ON NEW RODENTICIDES TRAINING

The UK farming unions have secured the option for farmers to use their farm assurance scheme membership as 'proof of competence', after the Health and Safety Executive announces new rules on the purchase and use of professional rodenticide bait, which will come into force next year.

Following an EU directive in 2011, the HSE is required to put into place a scheme to reduce the risk from rodenticide use in the wider environment.

All anticoagulant rodenticide authorisations are undergoing renewal and, by 31 March 2017, only 'stewardship conditions' labelled products will be available to buy, and only then to farmers with certified status.

There are estimated to be in excess of 90,000 agricultural users of rodenticides across the UK who would need to have been trained and certified by the June 1 2016 if they had wanted to continue to buy and use professional rodenticide bait on their premises. However, in these discussions, the farming unions successfully argued this would be hugely impractical.

We also underlined the fact that food quality, human and animal health, farm business profitability would all be at risk if essential rodent control were under threat.

The options announced in July will be an interim measure until at least December 31 2017, as a result of successful lobbying by the UK farming unions.

The farming unions said this would be vital in allowing farmers the time and flexibility to undertake this training.



PUTTING BRITISH ICE CREAM ON THE MAP

In July, the NFU Dairy Board launched a specially-created digital map, showing where some NFU members were producing ice cream with British dairy, across England and Wales. The message is to back British farming and to raise awareness about British-made ice cream.

The map was launched at the Great Yorkshire Show, and was covered by the Yorkshire Post. Fifty members are listed on the map so far. Over the summer months of 2016, the map was viewed over 3,500 times, reached 55,000 users on Facebook and made 78,000 impressions on Twitter.

Aldi TV ad

We made the cut in a national TV ad campaign when Aldi highlighted its commitment to British farmers in the run up to Rio 2016. The ad aired on ITV, ITV 2, Channel 4 and Channel 5, and opened with the line: "We were the first supermarket to sign up to the National Farmers' Union Fruit and Veg Pledge".

Fit for the Future

Following the launch of our report for retailers on how to encourage people to eat their five-a-day, we devised a 'What's in Season?' guide in the form of a fridge magnet – perfect for meal planning and ingredient inspiration.

More than 3,000 people picked up our guides, while over 2,000 people from around the country told us about their fruit and veg buying habits as part of a prize draw – which even featured on Money Saving Expert.



August



LET'S TALK FARMING ROADSHOW

The roadshow has visited 40 different venues this year, spending over 100 days at events, meaning that more than two million people have had the chance to see and visit the roadshow.

We have given out more than 65,000 activity and fun books to children, and have been telling them and their parents why they should look for the Red Tractor logo when they go shopping.

At the same time, we've spoken to around 250 teachers about our Why Farming Matters teaching guides, encouraging them to inspire young minds about the world of food and farming by including agriculture in their lessons.

NEWS OF A FARMING GOLD MEDAL AT THE RIO OLYMPICS SAW OUR POST ABOUT SHOOTER ED LING REACH 330,000 PEOPLE ON FACEBOOK



NFU Director General Terry Jones appeared on Channel 4 News to discuss the National Trust's vision of a post-Brexit farm subsidy with Helen Ghosh.

BROADBAND AND MOBILE PHONE SURVEY

In August, we launched a new, farmer-focused broadband and mobile phone survey.

The NFU continues to lobby for fast, affordable and reliable broadband and mobile phone coverage for farmers, growers and their rural communities.

Our survey helped build a true picture of provision in the countryside, to inform our lobbying work. Evidence was collected both online and through a telephone consultation of NFU members.



IDRIS DAVIES MEMORIAL AWARD

Patrick Edgington was announced as the winner of the Idris Davies Memorial Award for 2016 during a ceremony at Pembrokeshire County Show.

A well-known and hugely respected figure in agricultural circles throughout Pembrokeshire and beyond, Patrick (pictured above) worked for the NFU for over 32 years up to his retirement in 2012.

His achievements are numerous and varied, but perhaps among the most noteworthy being awarded an MBE in the Queen's 2016 Birthday Honours List for services to agriculture and the rural community.



NFU Vice President Guy Smith appeared on Channel 5's *The Wright Stuff*, also to talk about farming following the referendum. He also appeared on ITV News.





NFU ASKED WHAT FARMING POLICY SHOULD LOOK LIKE

In response to a report by the CPRE on what farming policy should look like post-referendum, the NFU took part in a series on TV interviews and with national press, including Deputy President Minette Batters on BBC Breakfast.



In his column, Daily Mail City Editor Alex Brummer covered the NFU's concerns over Muller holding prices paid to farmers, at a time of rising milk prices.



NFU Cymru President Stephen James was a guest on Sky News, also to talk about farming subsidies.

THE FINANCIAL TIMES GAVE SUBSTANTIAL COVERAGE TO THE NFU'S PLANS TO CONSULT WITH ITS MEMBERS TO HAVE THEIR SAY ON POST-BREXIT PRIORITIES.



In a Daily Telegraph leader, the NFU's emphasis over the importance of food security was highlighted; as the newspaper discussed CAP reform post-Brexit.

The Daily Telegraph Thursday 18 August 2016



A bright future when we leave the CAP

While arguments continue over the consequences of the Brexit vote – and especially whether the UK will stay in the European single market or simply trade with it – one thing is certain. Once we have left the EU, we will no longer be part of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). For the best part of four decades this has been one of the most controversial aspects of membership. In its early days, subsidies encouraged over-production leading to milk lakes and butter mountains. They also attracted fraudsters who continue to plunder the EU taxpayer to this day. At its peak, the CAP took up 70 per cent of the EU's annual budget. Latterly, reforms – many of them championed by the UK – have changed the way the subsidies are paid, no longer for producing particular crops but for supporting farm incomes through direct payments.

Despite this largesse, a majority of farmers voted to leave the EU; so they clearly see a good future beyond the CAP, albeit an uncertain one. To forestall anxieties, Philip Hammond, the Chancellor, has announced that current payments of around £3 billion annually will continue until 2020. But what happens then?

In a report yesterday, the Campaign to Protect Rural England said that leaving the CAP provided an opportunity for agriculture to become more diversified, less reliant on scale and a better custodian of the countryside. It suggested that a future based on a greater number of smaller farms would justify a continued public subsidy, most of which currently goes to the biggest agri-business concerns. For its part, the National Farmers' Union has emphasised the critical importance of food security. Its vision is to ensure efficient levels of production and deliver cheap food while protecting the environment at the same time.

These are not mutually exclusive ambitions. Farmers have made huge steps in the past two decades in bringing down prices while recreating habitats that some of their earlier practices destroyed. They maintain public footpaths and are the proprietors of a unique landscape.

Brexit is a massive challenge for farmers, more so perhaps than for any other industry. But because decision-making has been beyond national control, it is also the first chance we have had in 40 years to decide the proper balance between food security and environmental protection on our own terms.



September



BACK BRITISH FARMING DAY

126 MPs and peers showed their support for producers and growers when in Westminster when the NFU invited them to celebrate the contribution made by British food and farming to the nation.

Flanked by three shiny new red tractors crowned with our new Great British produce flag, mouth-watering fresh British produce, beautiful British flowers and dozens of NFU members, our landmark event opposite the Houses of Parliament resulted in over 100 of those MPs and peers signing our pledge to Back British Farming in the wake of the EU referendum.

Our special edition Back British Farming Day pin, crafted from British wheat and British wool to represent the corn and horn elements of farming, was spotted on the lapels of several MPs during Prime Minister's Questions, creating a show of support for our industry at one of government's most important institutions.

We secured attendance from the Secretary of State, Andrea Leadsom, and Minister of State George Eustice, as well as national and regional media coverage, including Radio 4's *Farming Today*, interviews with BBC political correspondent Matt Cole, and landmark pieces in the *Metro* and the *Western Morning News*.

We trended at number three on Twitter, and the NFU was tweeted by key opinion formers including ITV's political editor Robert Peston and *Good Morning Britain* presenter Richard Gaisford, with every conversation helping to raise awareness of British food and farming.

We also unveiled an animated film to help spread the word across online communities via social media. Launched on Facebook, it takes viewers on a journey across the farming landscape, highlighting the impact that British farmers and growers have on the UK economy and environment, and championing all the reasons why we should back British farming. Since its launch, it's had 1,000 shares (our best video yet) and 40,000 people watching it.



ROBERT PESTON FROM ITV NEWS AND RICHARD GAISFORD FROM GOOD MORNING BRITAIN BOTH TWEETED ABOUT OUR #BACKBRITISHFARMING DAY

#BACKBRITISHFARMING WAS TRENDING IN THE UK AT NUMBER 3 AND OUR TWEETS THROUGHOUT THE DAY REACHED 450,000 PEOPLE



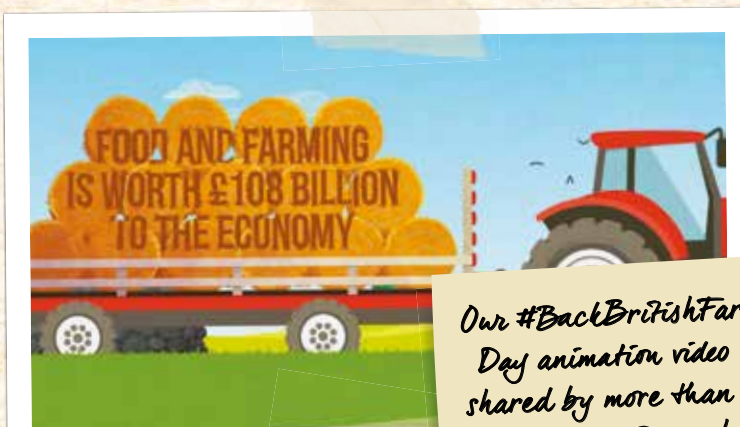


OPERATION GALILEO AND HARE COURSING

After working closely with the NFU, Lincolnshire Police put Operation Galileo into action to tackle the scourge of hare coursing in the county. Following close liaison with the NFU, the operation provided a whole-force approach to deterring hare coursers from coming to Lincolnshire to practice their "sport". Northamptonshire, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire forces co-operate with a similar emphasis to prevent these crimes taking place.

The NFU held meetings for members with the police to discuss the major issues, which were mainly concerned with getting police to respond to reports of hare coursing and briefing police officers so they gain a better understanding of the effects of the crimes associated with hare coursing.

The NFU funds a text alert system, "HARE 80800", so that intelligence can be gathered to help the police to tackle coursers. New tactics, including the seizure of coursers' dogs and the use of automatic number plate recognition, increased numbers of coursers stopped and arrested.



Our #BackBritishFarming Day animation video was shared by more than 1,000 people as it reached 145,000





SUNKEN BOATS FINALLY RAISED

Flooding in and around Hull has been made considerably worse and had a major impact on countless farming businesses over recent years due to 20 sunken and abandoned vessels reducing the flow of the River Hull. This is something the NFU and local members have been lobbying about for more than two decades.

Finally, in September, the first two boats were removed by East Riding of Yorkshire Council, after modelling carried out as part of the River Hull Integrated Catchment Strategy showed that removal of the boats, dredging and re-profiling the riverbed and banks back to a profile last seen since the 1950s would increase the river's capacity by 10% in flood conditions and reduce water levels by almost 1 metre.

The progress was a major win for the regional team, local group secretary and members who all played a part in highlighting the importance of watercourse maintenance in mitigating flood risk. The remainder of the boats will be removed in due course.

#Buy5 campaign

NFU Cymru launched its #Buy5 campaign in September to support 'real' farm businesses by buying Welsh produce. The initiative followed NFU Cymru's work to highlight retailers' use of 'fake farm' brands that can confuse or mislead shoppers about the origin of the food products they are buying.

The #Buy5 campaign asked shoppers to take a photo of five items of Welsh produce they have purchased from their local shops, market, farmers' market or butcher and to share their image on social media.

The local food drive was promoted at the annual Abergavenny Food Festival, while NFU Cymru member-owned farm shops also got on-board to encourage people to participate.

RED TRACTOR WEEK

During Red Tractor Week this September, our farmer members visited supermarkets across the country, meeting more than 2,500 locals and telling them why they should look for the Red Tractor logo when they shop.

Part of a series of events under the Celebrate Great British Food banner, the event coincided with Back British Farming Day in London, and gave another opportunity to promote the message that British produce is best.



Red Tractor at Newcastle's Metro Centre

For Red Tractor Week in September, North East farmers joined regional office staff and Ladies in Pigs at the Asda superstore at Newcastle's Metro Centre, armed with leaflets, a tractor and 10kg of sausages to hand out as bite-sized samples.

Building a colourful Back British Farming backdrop for the event, complete with two Jersey calves, the team saw more than 500 shoppers during the day, all of whom pledged to look for the Red Tractor logo while filling their trolleys.

LIVING WAGE DEBATE

After working with its members, the NFU responded to the Low Pay Commission consultation on future National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage rates, due to come into effect from April 2017.

In its response, the NFU outlined that the factors need to be taken into account when considering wage levels such as the economic landscape, the farming economy, the referendum and cost pressures being faced by farming businesses.

The NFU advised the LPC to not make any recommendations on changes to the NLW and NMW for 2017, and joined forces with other trade associations to write to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and urge caution on planned increases in the NLW over the next four years.

Keeping farming in the news

On BBC News, NFU Vice President Guy Smith was on to talk about the RSPB's State of Nature report; while North West regional communications adviser Carl Hudspith was a guest for its piece on farmers dyeing their sheep to deter thieves.



NFU horticulture chairman Ali Capper was interviewed on the BBC's Inside Out about our concerns over a potential shortage of labour, post-Brexit.



NFU Cymru Deputy President John Davies was a guest on BBC's Countryfile. He was talking about retailers and the use of fake farms.



Farms find a voice on Brexit and badgers

In rural Britain, the farmers' leader is taking soundings on politics and wildlife. Sharon Smith reports

For Mervyn Raymond, the leader of British farmers, the country's departure from the European Union presents an opportunity to shape a bold and ambitious future for rural communities.

While Raymond, who is president of the National Farmers' Union (NFU), has long been a vocal advocate for farmers, his reputation would have been further cemented by his role in the Brexit debate.

After Brexit, one of Raymond's major concerns is the impact on the rural economy. He believes that the exit from the EU will have a significant impact on the rural economy.

Raymond has been a vocal advocate for farmers, and his role in the Brexit debate has been a significant part of his work.

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IMPROVED WEATHER FORECASTING

The NFU is working with the Met Office to help it better understand the economic impacts of weather on agriculture and to ensure that additional computing power leads to improvements in forecasting for the benefit of farm businesses.

COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP

The NFU has secured Treasury commitment to fully fund existing agri-environment schemes, including those entered into by the Autumn Statement. The NFU will continue to work to ensure that current applicants to Countryside Stewardship benefit from the Treasury agreement.

SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

The NFU is working with other groups to produce statements and policy asks on why and how science should be supported in the UK after we leave the EU. NFU national commodity boards are also contributing to a review of the industry's research priorities.

October

BIOMASS-CHP LEGISLATION ENTERS TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

In the face of lobbying by a coalition of trade bodies and interests, including the NFU, the government announced a 'transitional period' until March 2017, easing the move towards a lower tariff for certain biomass combined heat and power (CHP) technologies.

BEIS (previously DECC) officials believed they were "closing a loophole" in the existing RHI rules for biomass-CHP plants, adding a new requirement from 1 August to achieve a minimum heat conversion efficiency to electricity of 20% in order to qualify for the higher biomass-CHP tariff for all eligible heat use.

We strongly contested these regulatory changes because they left no opportunity for heavily committed projects to complete commissioning and, therefore, severely disadvantaged these investments.

The changes also appeared to discourage low-carbon innovation such as the addition of Organic Rankine Cycle and other small CHP systems to biomass heating for livestock housing and horticulture, where the optimum balance of electricity and heat may be demonstrably less than 20%.

The matter was raised with Defra Secretary of State Andrea Leadsom and also the Energy Minister Baroness Neville-Rolfe, as well as being the subject of an Early Day Motion signed by prominent MPs including Jeremy Corbyn.

Industry and Energy Minister Jesse Norman MP announced that amending legislation on biomass-CHP will be introduced "as soon as is practicable".

The 20% 'power efficiency' requirement for a biomass CHP plant will be reduced to 10% for a transitional period until 31st March 2017 (i.e. plants with an efficiency of 10% or above will continue to receive the full biomass-CHP tariff), while those with a power efficiency of below 10% will see a proportionate reduction in the level of heat receiving the biomass-CHP tariff.

However, the NFU recognises that this concession does not necessarily resolve the problem for our members with biomass-CHP plants with power efficiencies of less than 10%.



SSSI PRE-CONSENT ADVICE CHARGES

Natural England (NE) introduced charging for some SSSI pre-consent advice from November 2016. The NFU discussed these proposals with NE to make sure normal farming activities are not affected by charging. The statutory assessment, which starts when NE receives a valid consent notice, cannot be charged for.

NE continues to provide a limited amount of free SSSI pre-consent advice, to help owners and occupiers understand whether they need consent, to discuss the proposals and work towards preparing a notice for NE's statutory assessment. The free advice will fully cover the majority of consent cases.

In addition, pre-consent advice will remain free where it supports nature conservation or is part of an agri-environment agreement. Together with the free advice offer, normal farming activities should not trigger the chargeable advice. Circumstances where NE will

charge for advice include:

- new activities requiring consent representing significant change and additional advice is sought
- fast-track consent, faster than 28 days, is required.





WHY FARMING MATTERS VIDEOS

In 2016, the NFU produced three more videos as part of the Why Farming Matters series, which accompany our teaching packs. The videos, showing children how we harvest, produce sugar and farm hens for eggs, were viewed more than 70,000 times on YouTube, not including viewing figures in the classroom.



Water on your farm events and workshops

The Campaign for the Farmed Environment started series events for 2016/2017 in October. The events, titled 'Water on your Farm', cover all aspect of water, soil and nutrient management.

There are 32 free farm events and workshops planned across the country, focusing on water quality. The events will cover many aspects of water, soil and nutrient management, with a specific focus on voluntary measures that protect water. The specific theme of each event has been tailored to the area by the local CFE advisers.

CFE is working with both the Farm Advice Service and Catchment Sensitive Farming, so the events will be useful for other updates and grant information.

Labour pains

The NFU begins to highlight the situation facing agricultural and horticultural business as they struggle to recruit seasonal workers, following the vote to leave the European Union in June. NFU horticulture and potatoes board chair

Ali Capper featured in *The Guardian*, as well as Reuters and the *Daily Mail*, discussing the pressures on her farm sourcing labour. Guy Poskitt, vice-chairman of the NFU horticulture and potatoes board, appeared on Sky News and the *Independent* warning that Brexit 'could mean end of fresh British fruit and vegetables' if there is no solution for the lack of seasonal workers available for farms.



British is best

NFU Deputy President Minette Batters sent a letter to the *Daily Mail* responding to a series of articles regarding animal welfare on British farms. Ms

Batters emphasised the high standards behind our world-class food, from farm to fork, which is emphasised by assurance schemes such as Red Tractor. Her letter to the paper says that when British people buy British food from British farms, they know they're getting a quality product.

LETTERS

British is best

TOM RAWSTORNE mixes standards and statistics from around the world to confuse the issue on British food and farming (*Mail*)

Standing up for dairy

The NFU's message that dairy farmers were being short-changed to the tune of £200 million appeared in national

media. Our message that buyers weren't passing on rising prices to farmers was picked up by the *Daily Express*, amongst others.



November

LORD MAYOR'S SHOW

The National Farmers' Union supported the Worshipful Company of Farmers by taking the Back British Farming message to the heart of London in November, to encourage more people to think about where their food comes from.

The parade was the culmination of the farming industry's push to Celebrate Great British Food this year, which has included Back British Farming Day, Red Tractor Week and British Food Fortnight.

In 2016, the entry celebrated the International Year of Pulses and saw 12 young farmers accompany a PMC pea harvester, supplied by the Green Pea Company, and a Massey Ferguson red tractor, both decoratively branded to reflect the Back British Farming messages, in front of around 450,000 spectators.

More than three million people watched the coverage live on the BBC, and will have seen our branded pea harvester as the parade passed the grandstand at Mansion House.

LORD MAYOR'S SHOW TWEETS REACH ALMOST 100,000 PEOPLE AS BBC GAVE A SHOUT OUT TO OUR PEA-VINER 



SEASONAL LABOUR

The NFU continued to land coverage in national media driving home the importance of seasonal labour to agricultural and horticultural businesses.

The Financial Times ran a story quoting NFU Deputy President Minette Batters warning that fruit and veg could be left to rot in the fields if nothing is done. NFU horticulture and potatoes board chair Ali Capper was also featured in a story in *The Times*.



NFU WANTS VISA SCHEME TO AVERT CRISIS



NATIONAL EMISSIONS CEILINGS DIRECTIVE

After almost three years of talks, including the NFU, the European Parliament voted this November on revisions to the National Emissions Ceilings Directive.

Following the vote in the European Parliament, the headline points were agreement on the UK's ammonia 2030 target, expected now to reduce emissions by 16%, and the deletion of the methane target.

The NFU's chief environment adviser Diane Mitchell said: "The target agreed today to reduce ammonia emissions by 16% by 2030 will still be challenging for the UK, but is an improvement on the 21% originally proposed by the European Commission.

"We have always been clear that the revised Directive should not include methane – this just duplicates other EU and national legislative measures that are already in place to address these emissions. So deletion of this target is welcomed."

Now that the National Emissions Ceilings Directive has been agreed, Member States must transpose the requirements within 18 months of its publication and draw up and adopt a National Pollution Control Programme within 24 months of publication.



Sky lanterns post record

Our facebook post calling for a ban on sky lanterns was a record-breaker, going to more than 650,000 people. In fact our four posts asking for this during 2016 reached a combined 1.2 million people.



BREXIT 'HOT TOPIC' AT NFU CYMRU CONFERENCE

Breaking Brexit news from the High Court in London meant the UK's departure from the European Union was at the top of the agenda at NFU Cymru's annual conference.

Around 200 NFU Cymru members, representatives from partner organisations and members of the media enjoyed a stellar line-up of speakers at the event -themed 'Shaping a New and Dynamic Future for Welsh Agriculture' - held at the Metropole Hotel in Llandrindod Wells in November.

Brexit, and in particular future access to the single market, was very much the hot topic for many of the speakers, as breaking news filtered through to the conference of the High Court's ruling that Parliament must vote on whether the UK can start the process of leaving the EU.

TV CHEF JOSH EGGLETON
RETWEETED OUR TWEET
CELEBRATING BRITISH
BEEF FARMERS



EDUCATION PACKS

Welsh Government Cabinet Secretary for Education, Kirsty Williams AM, joined NFU Cymru members and school children to launch a Welsh language teaching resource, educating children about the importance of food and farming.

Kirsty Williams AM visited Builth Wells CP School to help launch the 'Why Farming Matters/Pam Fod Ffermio'n Bwysig' education packs produced by NFU Cymru and Farming & Countryside Education (FACE).

The Welsh language resource, aimed at Key Stage 2 pupils, looks to weave the themes of food and farming through the curriculum areas of English, Welsh, maths, geography, science, art and design.

Drones

The first incident of sheep worrying by a drone occurred in November and NFU regional communications adviser Isobel Bretherton appeared on ITV News, alongside the farmer. She stressed that farmers need more protection around this issue and that current laws mean farmers are unable to protect their livestock from drones.



FARMING DAY AT COP22

In November, NFU Climate Change Adviser Ceris Jones coordinated the worldwide farmers' constituency at November's COP22 conference in Marrakech, Morocco, just three days after the momentous 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change came into force internationally.

In the main talks, negotiators agreed to finalise the rules of the Paris Agreement by 2018 and developed a clear roadmap to meet that deadline.

The rallying cry during Farmers Day at COP22 was that agriculture must be

embraced, as the industry has a unique role to play in implementing the historic Paris Agreement. Alongside this, the NFU ran a successful online and social media campaign, highlighting how on-farm renewables across the UK are helping to tackle the climate threat.

Next Generation Forum Chair Richard Bower also visited Morocco to speak at the talks, and both he and NFU Environment Forum Chair Mark Pope contributed to a succession of blogs about the agricultural response to a changing climate.



December

'Access to single market and labour are vital for UK food production'

The NFU co-ordinated the largest coalition of food producers in the UK's history to come together for the first time to call for tariff-free access to the Single Market and continued access to a competent and reliable workforce in order for British food and farming to flourish post-Brexit.

In a letter to the Prime Minister from the UK's farming unions, 75 organisations have pledged support for a positive, bold and ambitious vision for the sector post-Brexit. But they also signal that food security, food safety and hygiene, stewardship of the countryside and affordable food is at risk if Ministers fail to deliver continued access to labour and the best possible Single Market access.

The organisations represent some of the UK's best known companies, and are worth more than £92 billion employing almost a million people. Signatories include Sainsbury's, Marks & Spencer, Dairy Crest, Morrisons, Müller and Weetabix, and scores of other organisations representing food production from farm to fork.

Food production is the UK's largest manufacturing sector, bigger than the automotive and aerospace sectors combined. The letter argues that a Brexit settlement which recognises the critical role of the UK food chain will demonstrate how Brexit can be beneficial for the UK economy as well as UK food production.

The letter makes clear that Britain's farmers and food producers stand ready to work with the Government and calls on the Prime Minister to put Britain's food at the centre of Brexit negotiations.

Commenting on the letter, NFU President Meurig Raymond said:

"Brexit creates an enormous opportunity for farming, food production and for Britain. But to deliver this new future, we must secure the best possible access to the Single Market and continued access to a competent and reliable workforce. Getting this right will set the foundations for a successful new British agricultural policy."



Our LinkedIn account reached followers,

5,775

up from 4,600 in 2015

Back British Farming e-newsletter

British food lovers have signed up to back British farming, signing up to our monthly e-newsletter to give us a current community of more than 26,000.

Launched in February 2015, the newsletter makes a clear case for how and why shoppers can show their support. The digital format is cost-effective, but also offers us insights into reader behaviour and preferences.

After every issue, we analyse data which tells us how many readers opened the newsletter. The industry standard is around 1% – but more than 20% of our mailing list read our newsletter, giving us an extremely healthy open rate.



TWO TURTLE DOVES...

Turtle doves are vulnerable to global extinction (IUCN Red List of Endangered Species). They have suffered a 91% UK population decline since 1995. If we don't help this species, complete UK extinction is a real possibility. The gentle bird is under threat for a number of reasons, including a parasite, hunting on migratory routes and loss of habitat in wintering grounds, as well as shortage of nesting sites and sources of food.



CFE is encouraging farmers to do their bit to help conserve one of the iconic birds of UK farmland. Some CFE environmental measures that sit alongside productive agriculture can help to provide the nesting sites and food sources that they need whilst in the UK. By implementing certain CFE Voluntary Measures, farmers can help to protect the turtle dove. CFE will be running a series of events across the country in early 2017 to provide advice and guidance on managing the farm for birds. In certain key counties, CFE will focus specifically on good farmland management to benefit the turtle dove.

NFU mags bag print awards

At the industry leading PPA Independent Publishers' Awards, NFU came away with four of the 19 gongs on offer. *British Farmer & Grower* won business magazine of the year; *NFU Poultry* won business front page; *Victoria Wilkins* won writer of the year and *Jack Buchanan* won for best use of video.

A VERY BRITISH CHRISTMAS

The NFU's Back British Farming web hub has rounded up Christmas-themed content from across all our channels, to create a kind of one-stop shop that ensures the public discover how British farmers from all sectors are central to this festive time of year.

We visited members Lydiard Turkeys Open Farm Day, and got some great photos to promote turkey producers across the country. Then we used social media to promote the purchase of UK turkeys, including regular Instagram photos featuring turkeys/Christmas and the creation of two new videos to promote the Turkey Finder tool, which helps customers find a farm turkey near their postcode. The NFU have also been working with Red Tractor to promote logo awareness to consumers.



BBC News 21.12.16

As the CBI releases its report *Making a success of Brexit*, NFU Deputy President Minette Batters is interviewed on what this means for the farming sector on the BBC News Channel. The leading headline on the report was 'agriculture is as important as financial services' – a positive message to government that echoes with our own.

Turkey 'safe for Christmas' after bird flu outbreak

Avian influenza 8.12.16

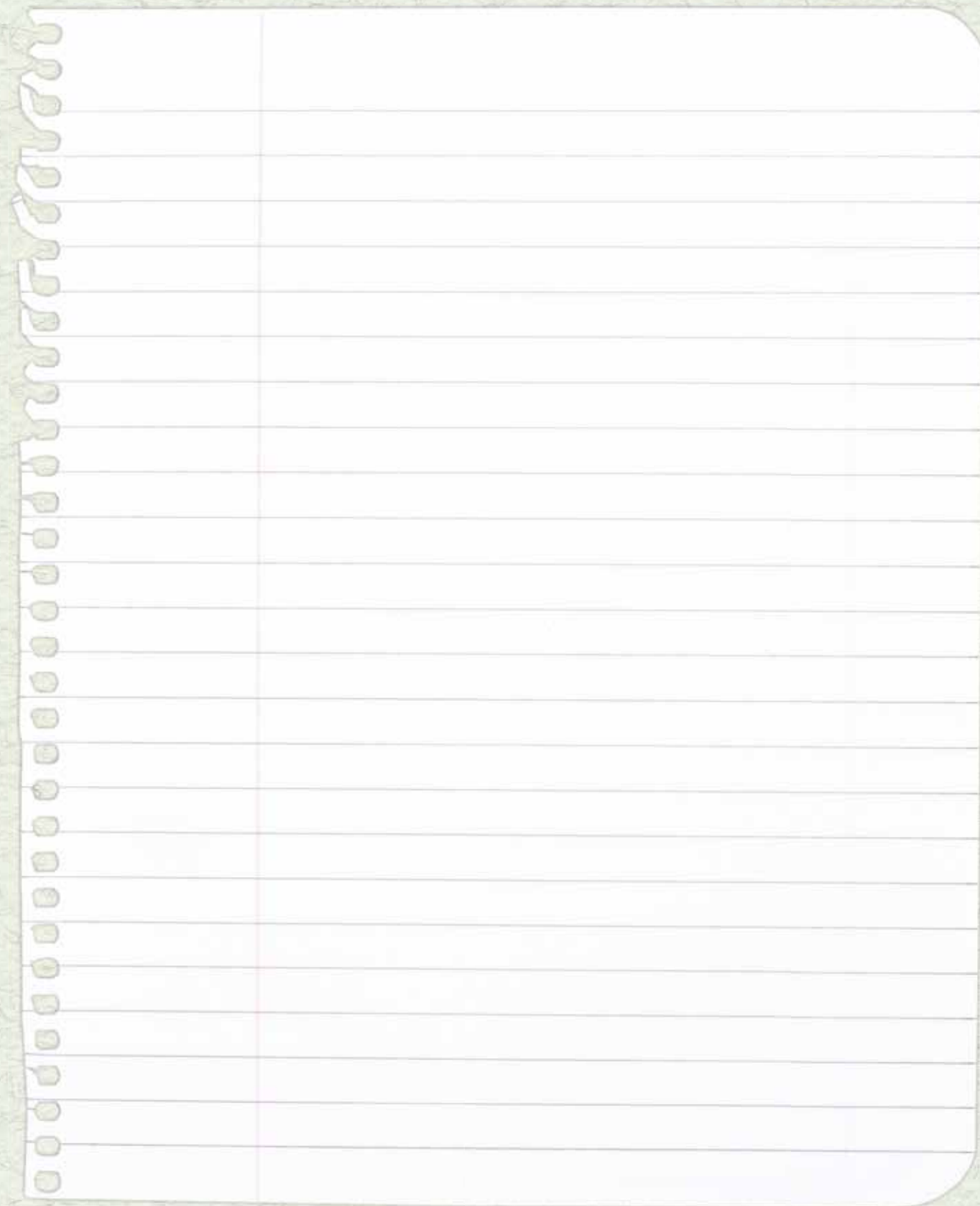
As the threat of Avian influenza heightens in the UK, NFU poultry board member Mark Gorton confronts fears that turkey supplies ahead of Christmas are under threat in the *i* newspaper.

The Times 07.12.16

This article in the *Times* was one of numerous interviews on the need for seasonal labour on horticultural farms. NFU Horticulture Board Chairman Ali Capper is quoted in this article, benefiting from the pictorial nature of farming.



Notes



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