



Yearbook 2018-2019





ONE YEAR ON

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT, MINETTE BATTERS

As I read through this record of the work done for farming by the NFU and its members over the past 12 months, I cannot help but feel immensely proud.

And it is hugely encouraging to hear that the general public feels the same way about British farming.

This is no happy accident. Thanks to your efforts as the positive face of British farming on local and national news, your work showcasing farming at schools and shows across the country, and your passionate campaigning on social media, we know we have the support of the nation as we head into another crucial year.

The number of people looking to buy British food is at an all-time high, with two out of three now saying they often or always look for home-grown produce when out shopping. And, for the first time, we can now confidently say that children are excited and interested in where their food comes from and how it is grown.

The NFU's landmark education work engaged more than 115 schools this year with hundreds of children experiencing life on the farm as you threw open your gates to the finalists of our Farmvention competition. The winning school, in London, was turned into a farm for the day, creating an unforgettable experience. With more than 1,000 entries, the competition was so successful that it will be run again next year alongside our free school resources, which are putting farming firmly at the heart of the national curriculum in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

If we are to maintain this shared feeling of pride, we know we will need to continue to have strong farmer representation as decisions are made about the future shape of our industry. As well as promoting farming, we must defend it from the threats that could negatively impact our future. This is where your network of group secretaries and county advisers comes to the fore, working with you to organise more than 120 MP visits to your farms to tackle the issues that affect your businesses.

That could be rural crime. This year, we have created the first dedicated Crimestoppers hotline for people to report crime happening in the countryside.

It might be through our professional lobbying teams in Brussels and Westminster. This year we have been campaigning for farmers on issues such as access to plant protection products, while championing policies that will allow us to reach

our net-zero ambitions by boosting our ability to compete and be more productive. All of this against the backdrop of a noisy green lobby.

Or it could be through the increasingly important use of the national media to influence policy at the highest levels in Westminster.

We are incredibly fortunate to have a dedicated press office, backed up by regional specialists, that works 365 days a year to help farmers like you and me champion our sector while rebutting falsehoods, myths and blatant bias.

All of this is done so you can get on with the day job of running a successful farm business. We're proud to be here for you every step of the way, whether that is by pushing the RPA to pay you accurately and quickly, by giving you legal support when you need it most or by offering you the best energy deals through NFU Energy. And, remarkably, our dedicated Specialist Advice Team has helped more than 10,000 members during the past 12 months.

But this year has been unlike any other I have ever known. The reason for that is, of course, because of the topic that has dominated the NFU agenda, and every area of our national consciousness: Brexit.

You will notice how Brexit punctuates every month through this Yearbook... and for very good reason. No matter where you stand on this issue, the NFU has represented UK farming via close alliances with NFU Scotland, NFU Cymru and the Ulster Farmers' Union to ensure UK farming speaks with one voice and those in power understand why our withdrawal from the EU must be an orderly one.

On a personal note, I have been involved in 18 bi-lateral discussions with European counterparts to make sure we have the best relationship possible with our future trading partners. And I have taken every opportunity to underline why our great British food standards must not be undermined by imported food produced to standards that would be illegal here.

We have some potentially seismic challenges ahead but no matter what happens in the coming year, I can guarantee that with our professional staff working with expert farmers, we will continue to offer the best support for our members.

Farming's voice will be heard loud and clear across government and we will work steadfastly, and together, with you, to ensure our future is profitable, competitive and full of opportunity.

WHAT'S INSIDE?

The past 12 months

NFU by numbers

Around the regions

Member benefits

Key



Brexit



Horticulture



Combinable Crops



Livestock



Dairy



Poultry



Sugar



Cymru

SEPTEMBER 2018



NFU OFFICEHOLDERS WERE JOINED BY MORE THAN 140 MPS IN WEARING A BRITISH WHEAT PIN BADGE ON BACK BRITISH FARMING DAY. WRAPPED IN BRITISH WOOL, THE BADGE IS A SYMBOL OF SUPPORT FOR ENGLISH AND WELSH AGRICULTURE.



2018/19: YOUR BENEFITS

**NFU CALLFIRST
ANSWERED
MORE THAN
65,000
CALLS**

DIAL 0370 845 8458 FOR SUPPORT

Westminster backs farming industry

The NFU put agriculture at the top of the political agenda when more than 100 MPs wore their Back British Farming wheatsheaf pin badges during Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs).

Those marking the NFU's Back British Farming Day, on 12 September, included the whole Shadow Cabinet (pictured, right). Dozens more MPs from all political parties made their support clear by wearing badges as politicians discussed the importance of an ambitious and competitive food and farming industry.

The debate was prompted by the NFU report *UK: A Nation United By Food*.

Former Prime Minister Theresa May said the NFU gives "excellent service, promotes the areas of interest that they represent and is a body with which this government interacts and listens".

She was responding to Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, who namechecked the NFU during PMQs.



Mrs May said: "When we leave the EU, we are looking to ensure we have trade deals that enable our farmers to continue to export their very important products."

Top class! NFU launches Farmvention

The NFU launched its first-ever Farmvention competition for schools in September.

The aim was to get primary school children interested in farming by teaching them about where food comes from, while developing science, technology, engineering and maths skills.

Children were tasked with creating the tractors of the future and designing dishes using British produce and the perfect environment for 100 laying hens.

Prizes included having their school turned into a farm for the day. The idea proved a roaring success – read more in the March pages of this Yearbook.



POSITIVE STEP ON SEASONAL WORKERS



Following months of discussions and evidence from the NFU and its members, the government announced a two-year pilot scheme to allow fruit and vegetable growers to recruit non-EU seasonal workers after Brexit.

The NFU called it a "big step in the right direction".

Ministers said the initiative would help tackle shortages during Spring 2019 and December 2020. Up to 2,500 workers each year will be allowed to stay for six months.

NFU Horticulture and Potatoes Board Chairman Ali Capper (pictured) said: "This is a major victory for all of us, and follows over five years of hard work collecting evidence, shaping our arguments, and presenting them to government in a convincing manner."

The NFU pushed for pilot permit numbers to increase to 10,000 and for it to become a full scheme. Food and farming was the only sector to win such arrangements.

NFU pushed to increase seasonal workers from

2,500 to 10,000

NFU calls for Ag Bill changes

The NFU's Back British Farming Day was timed to coincide with the introduction of Defra's Agriculture Bill to Parliament.

The Bill will provide the framework for legislation that ensures, among other things, that farmers are supported after Brexit. NFU President Minette Batters said: "The NFU has been absolutely clear about the essential ingredients for a progressive, profitable, and sustainable food and farming sector after Brexit.

"These include comprehensive measures to improve the environment and productivity, and to tackle volatility, alongside free and frictionless trade and access to a competent and reliable workforce.

"The Bill as described in the announcement falls short of our aspirations in these regards."

The NFU generated significant media interest, ensuring members had the chance to air their thoughts and the public understood what was at stake.

9.6 MILLION:

The potential audience for media coverage on the Agriculture Bill featuring NFU officeholders, staff and members. They appeared on Sky, ITV and in the press.



**OCTOBER
2018**

"ON THE END OF THE LINE, THERE IS A FANTASTIC SERVICE IN NFU CALLFIRST WHO HAVE BEEN SO HELPFUL IN THE PAST. THEY'RE A BRILLIANT TEAM."

Duncan Hawley, livestock in Warwickshire



Parliament hears the importance of food



Parliament heard a united call from the NFU, farming and environmental groups for the government to commit to long-term funding in the new Agriculture Bill.

NFU President Minette Batters said: "The NFU believes the Agriculture Bill offers the government a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape the future of farming policy. It is crucial that this piece of legislation has food production at its heart, which will ensure farmers continue to deliver safe, traceable and affordable food

while maintaining our high environmental and animal welfare standards.

"Farming is a long-term business and farmers need clarity on what their regulatory environment will look like now for the years ahead. A commitment from government in the Agriculture Bill, that they will provide this certainty through clear long-term funding, is essential."

LABOUR NEEDS HIGHLIGHTED AT FRUIT SHOW

NFU President Minette Batters reiterated the importance of access to a competent and flexible workforce for the horticulture sector.

At the National Fruit Show in Kent, she also called for a government commitment that all imported food will be produced to equivalent standards to those required of UK producers.

She said: "Our ability to employ the necessary amount of people for permanent and seasonal work is a top priority for the horticulture sector.

"The UK currently imports six million tonnes of fruit and veg a year, and it is essential that this food meets our high standards.

"But none of this will matter if we do not have the people needed for production. Uncertainty is crippling businesses and we have experienced another year of significant labour shortages."

6 MILLION TONNES OF FOOD IMPORTS MUST MEET BRITISH STANDARDS

DEFRA OUT ON FARM



Policymakers in Defra headed to the farm of member John Torrance (left) at the Crown Estate, near Romford, Essex. The NFU-organised visit focused on the need for labour on dairy farms and highlighted that, irrespective of farm size or systems, the key to a productive farm is skilled and dedicated staff.

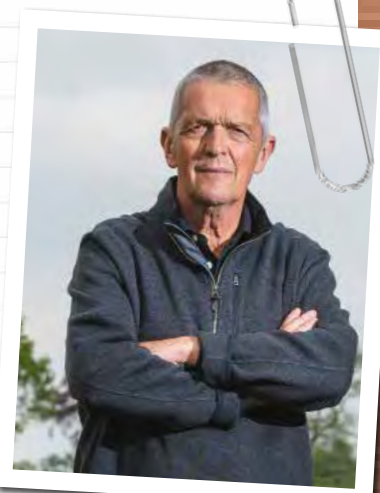
JOINING FORCES

Lincolnshire MPs and senior officers from the county's police force met NFU staff and representatives at the high-level gathering in Westminster.

The meeting, chaired by Boston and Skegness MP Matt Warman, looked at rural crime across Lincolnshire, the police approach to tackling it and how all involved can work better together to rid the region of hare coursers, thieves and fly-tippers.

NFU Deputy President Guy Smith, who also attended the talks, said: "Rural crime devastates farmers, their families and their communities.

"THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS BLIGHT ON OUR COUNTRYSIDE ARE SUSPECTED OF HAVING LINKS TO ORGANISED CRIME. IT IS VITAL WE BRING THEM TO JUSTICE."



RED TRACTOR

The NFU and Red Tractor recruited a broiler farmer to increase farmer representation on the Red Tractor Poultry Sector Board. NFU member Jonty Hay will ensure good communication between the NFU and Red Tractor.





Securing funding for producer orgs

When Defra announced that producer organisations would continue to be funded until the end of the current parliament, regardless of the outcome of negotiations with the EU, it was clear that continual NFU pressure had helped win the reassurance. The confirmation provided much needed clarity and certainty for growers who are members of producer organisations, which sell 50% of all British fruit and veg.

The government had committed to retaining the same cash total in funds for farm support, but producer organisations had not received the same confirmation. The NFU, alongside the British Growers Association and other stakeholders, repeatedly raised the issue with ministers to ensure these schemes were treated equally alongside other funding.

NFU Horticulture and Potatoes Board



Chairman Ali Capper (above) said: "I raised the issue personally with Defra Secretary of State Michael Gove, [who] promised to make this a priority."

Top stories

1. The NFU put forward multiple spokespeople for interviews with food writer Jay Rayner for a four-page feature in *The Observer*, which investigated how the UK food supply chain would cope with Brexit.
2. NFU South East Regional Board Chairman David Exwood spoke to Channel 4 News about the prospects of rewilding the countryside and needing a balance between food production and caring for the environment.
3. After the NFU's Beyond Brexit: Farming for our Future conference, coverage was achieved in *The Guardian*. NFU President Minette Batters was quoted extensively and stressed the need for government to put food production at the heart of the Bill.

205 MEDIA QUOTES FROM THE NFU IN THE MONTH OF OCTOBER



BEYOND BREXIT

The NFU jointly organised the 'Beyond Brexit: Farming for our Future' conference with

AHDB, the Danish Agriculture and Food Council, the Irish Farmers Association and the French, German and Dutch Farming Unions (pictured) to urge certainty and clarity from our respective governments.

18

THE NUMBER OF ASKS FROM THE NFU ON SHEEP CARCASS CLASSIFICATION. ALL OF THEM WERE ACCEPTED BY DEFRA.



NFU Livestock Board Chairman Richard Findlay

WATER RESOURCES

PUMPING STATIONS OPENED

NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts opened two large storm water pumping stations on the banks of the River Ouse and Humber Estuary that will help areas at risk of flooding.

CASTLE WATER TAKES NOTE

The water retailer Castle produced billing guidance for NFU members after the organisation presented the company with a file of member complaints about billing issues.



Growing horticulture

The Ornamentals Roundtable, which includes NFU representation, published a report that set out the value to the UK economy and consumer health of the ornamentals and landscaping industries. The GDP footprint of those industries in 2017 was £24.2 billion. The group called on the government backing for the sector, to boost investment.

ORNAMENTALS AND LANDSCAPING WORTH £24.2BN

NFU ADVISING ON TRADE

Few industry players were invited to a roundtable with the then International Trade Secretary of State Liam Fox MP, but the NFU was part of the discussion. Ministers, DIT, Defra, BEIS and DfID were present as the NFU advised Mr Fox about the significant contribution the UK Agritech Sector can make to global food security, the importance of investment and development of agricultural businesses, the need for science-based regulation, and the value of productivity measures in domestic agriculture policy after Brexit.

HARVESTING SUPPORT

Having found mixed results in its annual Harvest Survey, the NFU called on government to help build resilience in the farming industry.

Following a challenging year of extreme weather conditions and unpredictable prices, the varied results of the 2018 harvest demonstrated the need for measures to be put in place to better manage volatility.

NFU Crops Chairman Tom Bradshaw (right) said: "Farmers have experienced incredible variation in this year's harvest. It is essential that a new domestic agriculture policy is supportive of resilience in short-term localised shocks, while driving long-term competitiveness."



TORIES TOLD TO SUPPORT FARMS

A packed audience at the NFU and the Food & Drink Federation fringe event at the Conservative Party Conference heard farming leaders debate future UK food policy with the then-Defra Secretary of State Michael Gove (pictured below).

NFU President Minette Batters and FDF Chief Executive Ian Wright CBE were part of the panel, with the *Daily Telegraph's* chief political correspondent Christopher Hope.

A major theme was recognition of the UK's high standards of food production and animal welfare.

Mr Gove championed the Red Tractor. And, amid concerns from farmers that new trade deals could potentially lead to Britain's food values being undercut, Mr Gove said that "importing food of lower standards would damage all the work our farmers have done".

NFU PRESIDENT MINETTE BATTERS: "FOOD SECURITY IS A PUBLIC GOOD AND A PUBLIC RIGHT."



ADVICE OVER AUDIO

The NFU's new Bitesized Brexit podcast launched to offer a brand new way for members stay up to date with the latest developments on the Article 50 negotiations, progress on the Agriculture Bill, and other important issues relating to Brexit's impact on farming.



MORE GCA RETAILERS

The NFU has long called for more retailers to be governed by the Groceries Code Adjudicator, which enforces fair trading practices to the top 10 retailers. And after continued pressure, the Competition Markets Authority announced Ocado and B&M Homestores will now be included.

Among the decision makers

The NFU officially opened its new and improved base in the heart of Westminster to ensure the voice of British farming is heard where it matters.

The bigger, bespoke offices at 18 Smith Square give the NFU increased opportunities to meet policy makers to discuss important political developments and issues affecting its farming members.

NFU President Minette Batters said: "At this crucial time, when farming's future is being decided, it has never been more important for the NFU to have a high-profile presence in the heart of Westminster.

"As the largest agricultural trade association in the UK, the new space gives us more opportunities to meet with MPs and other policy-makers to help shape the food and farming debate and champion British agriculture.

"It will support our lobbying and campaigning priorities in the months and years ahead, giving our farmer and grower members a stronger voice."

NOVEMBER 2018

"AS AN INDUSTRY WE FACE UNPRECEDENTED UNCERTAINTY... LOOK AT THE VALUE OF THE MANY BENEFITS THAT MEMBERSHIP CAN BRING. VERY QUICKLY YOU'LL REALISE THAT THE MEMBERSHIP COST IS SMALL IN COMPARISON."

John Charles-Jones, combinable crops and solar power in Nottinghamshire



 **BREXIT**

NFU outlines role of food strategy ahead of Brexit

NFU President Minette Batters (pictured) stressed the need for a comprehensive strategy, which sets out a collaborative vision for the future of British food.

Speaking at the Egg and Poultry Industry Conference (EPIC), which was chaired by NFU Chief Poultry Adviser Gary Ford, Mrs Batters said: "The Agriculture Bill and a new policy offer a once-in-a-generation chance to influence our course for the future and we must seize it by setting out a clear vision of where we want to be post-Brexit.

"To do this we need a proactive plan that joins the dots between farmers and the wider food manufacturing industry, and builds a brand based on the integrity and standards of British food.

"Looking beyond Brexit, I see a progressive food and farming industry that focuses on four key areas and delivers for all corners of society while fulfilling our moral obligations in a global economy and a changing world."

FOUR KEY AREAS FOR A PROGRESSIVE FARMING INDUSTRY

- Moral imperative**
- Health**
- Standards**
- Nature**



WATER WORK HELPS SHAPE POLICY

Members were urged to review their access to water after Defra and the Environment Agency's National Drought Group, which includes the NFU as the voice of farming, met to review a year of extreme weather and look ahead to 2019.

The group agreed that although forecasts indicated there were no immediate risks, it was prudent to plan actions that preserve water and mitigate future drought.

A number of farmers benefited from the agency's flexible licensing approach in 2018, which came following close liaison with NFU experts. At the meeting, they again stressed the importance of measures such as allowing reservoirs to be filled outside the normal 'winter calendar months' as long as sufficient flow is available in rivers.



 **BREXIT**

LEADING INDUSTRY THINKING

The NFU gathered 130 industry leaders, stakeholders, government policy makers and members of the press for the second Henry Plumb Lecture, in London.

Lord Mark Price, former minister for trade and managing director of Waitrose (pictured), shared his thoughts on Brexit and the future of food, farming and retail.

Concluding his presentation, Lord Price said: "Better collective buying and selling to my mind are now key requirements. And here I think the NFU has a vital role to play in bringing farmers together to look outwards, to understand the threats and embrace the opportunities.

"Everything we have become used to is about to change. I would suggest there is no time to waste in developing a new globally-minded approach."

Public side with farming on Channel 4

The NFU seized the power of the media and hammered home the importance of a reliable source of workers and an agriculture policy that put food production at its heart.

NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts received a round of applause for his comments during Channel 4's live programme *Brexit: What The Nation Really Thinks*.

The debate was hosted by Krishnan Guru-Murthy, and centred around a Survation poll that revealed where the public stood on key aspects of Brexit, including immigration and the economy.

The NFU was also represented by Dairy Board Chairman Michael Oakes, and Mr Roberts highlighted the importance of immigration to farming, the food industry and the economy, and received the firm backing of the knowledgeable studio audience.

The NFU shared a stage with the likes of Justice Secretary David Gauke, Shadow Trade Secretary Barry Gardiner, Green Party MP Caroline Lucas, and former UKIP leader Nigel Farage to ensure decision makers kept British farming as a political priority in Brexit negotiations.

600,000 watched



NFU urges industry to open up about mental health

The NFU urged the farming industry to reverse the stigma around mental wellbeing as statistics released by the Health and Safety Executive identified stress, depression and anxiety as some of the main causes of work-related ill health.

The report said the overall illness rate for agricultural workers is 46% higher than the average across all industries. And it highlighted that stress, depression and anxiety are significant causes of ill health in the sector.

NFU Vice-President and Chairman of the Farm Safety Partnership (FSP) Stuart Roberts said: "We all know that agriculture has a poor track record when it comes to physical injuries in the workplace, and the FSP is working with the industry to reverse this. But what we have often overlooked is our mental wellbeing. The environment farmers work in can often leave them feeling isolated, and financial pressures, outbreaks of disease, volatile weather, and Brexit uncertainties can leave farmers feeling vulnerable."



Farmers are

46%

more likely to suffer from a work-related illness

NFU WIN ON SHEEP SPLITTING COULD SAVE £24M



After years of NFU and industry campaigning, Defra confirmed plans to use a fixed cut-off date of 30 June to age lambs instead of checking teeth, in a move that could save producers and the supply chain an estimated £24 million.

The new cut-off date was due to be implemented by June 2019 and would have provided a much simpler and more accurate way for farmers, market operators and abattoir operators to determine whether a lamb is over 12 months old, and whether the carcass needs to be split to remove the spinal cord.

While the introduction has since been delayed, with Defra blaming Brexit complications, the NFU is working hard to ensure the switch is made in 2020.

NFU Livestock Board Chairman Richard Findlay said: "We welcome the news of a cut-off date as it will mean no mousing of sheep and no splitting of carcasses – which can unnecessarily devalue carcasses by as much as 40% – before 30 June."

The NFU has campaigned over many years with the National Sheep Association.

"THIS CHANGE WILL ENABLE THE INDUSTRY TO CEASE DENTITION CHECKS ENTIRELY, PROVIDING A MORE PRECISE WAY TO AGE LAMBS AT SLAUGHTER AND POTENTIALLY ADDING MILLIONS OF POUNDS OF VALUE TO THE INDUSTRY" – RICHARD FINDLAY

GETTING THE MOST FROM THE AHDB

Feedback from NFU members played an important role when the NFU set out its views on the future work of the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB).

The NFU said it wanted to see the core functions of the AHDB continue. However, its submission said the time was right to move to a levy board that is less bureaucratic and more dynamic, responsive and better attuned to its levy payers, so that they in turn are better prepared for a post-Brexit world.

#BACKBRITISHFARMING PARADES THE STREETS OF LONDON

A band of eight passionate young NFU farmers took our industry's inspirational story to the streets of London, proudly showcasing the best of British agriculture to an audience of millions.

They joined the Worshipful Company of Farmers, Massey Ferguson, Red Tractor and Surrey Docks Farm to parade the famous streets in the 803rd Lord Mayor's Show.

This was the fifth year that the NFU has supported the Worshipful Company of Farmers in this annual event. And with an estimated 600,000 people lining the route, and a BBC audience of four million, it was a prime opportunity to tell the public that British farmers are proud to produce their food.

During the parade, Katie Anderson was interviewed by the BBC's Chris Hollins and said: "I trained as a teacher, but when I was teaching my students about where their food comes from, I was really passionate about it and started working on farms."

Massey Ferguson provided machinery for the parade and the tractor bucket was brimming with hampers of British produce to help the public connect food with farming.



4 MILLION WATCHED AS FARMING TOOK THE SPOTLIGHT AT THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW



SLAUGHTER COURSE STREAMLINES CHRISTMAS TURKEY PRODUCTION

The NFU organised a course to ensure turkey producers were qualified to use a hand-held electrical stunner.

Producers slaughtering poultry on farm for commercial sale are required by law to hold a certificate of competence. Those without the qualification need someone who does to supervise operations. And that can add costs and inconvenience, particularly for smaller-scale seasonal producers.

"The assessment course enabled turkey producers to gain their qualification ahead of the main processing period," said NFU Poultry Board Chairman Thomas Wornham.

70 TURKEY PRODUCERS TRAINED SINCE THE COURSE BEGAN

ELMS must deliver for arable

The NFU stressed the need for the future Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) to provide certainty and resilience for the arable sector, especially in periods of volatile prices and low crop yield.

Speaking on the prospects for the combinable crops sector, NFU Combinable Crops Chairman Tom Bradshaw (pictured) said if government is to deliver a 'green Brexit', new schemes must encourage productivity and build resilience in businesses: "The new ELM schemes are an opportunity to refine the payments system to ensure that farmers are paid for fair reward," he said.

Chief Combinable Crops Adviser Jack Watts said: "With Brexit meaning direct payments will be phased out from 2021, the NFU is urging government to ensure the ELM schemes are straightforward, compatible with food production and build financial resilience so the arable sector can continue to produce quality, affordable food for the British public while delivering important environmental benefits."



DECEMBER 2018

"AS A BUSINESS, WE'VE RECEIVED INVALUABLE, EXPERT ADVICE ABOUT OUR BPS PAYMENT AND THE YOUNG FARMER TOP-UP. THE NFU TALKED US THROUGH THE PROCESS AND IN TURN HELPED US TO MANAGE OUR FUTURE SUCCESSION PLAN."

Richard Bower, cattle, crops and strawberries in Staffordshire



2018/19: YOUR BENEFITS

OVER

£5 MILLION

**SAVED BY NFU MEMBERS ON
NEW VEHICLES**



NFU Council sets Brexit priorities

There may have been turmoil in Westminster after the vote on the Prime Minister's Brexit deal was postponed until January – but there was a clear roadmap from NFU Council when it convened for an emergency meeting in December. It agreed six principles to guide the NFU as it works for the best Brexit outcome for British farmers:

- 1** Ensure any outcome avoids a no-deal Brexit and any short-term political and economic turmoil
- 2** Ensure trade in agri-food goods with our principal market, the European Union, is as free as possible
- 3** Gain greater regulatory control and discretion over UK farming practice

4 Maintain access to the seasonal and permanent workforce required by the UK food chain

5 Ensure our international trade respects domestic production standards

6 Implement a new agricultural policy framework that supports farmers as food producers, improves productivity and resilience and properly rewards the delivery of public good.



Showcasing the farmed environment

The NFU launched the *United by our Environment, Our Food, Our Future* report in front of more than 130 delegates attended, including MPs, the national media, retailers and environmental organisations joined NFU and President Minette Batters to highlight the vital role farming plays in protecting and enhancing the environment.



TURKEYS ON TABLES

NFU members' turkeys were promoted to the public via the 2019 #BuyMyTurkey campaign and the postcode Turkey Finder, which listed 275 NFU members producing farm fresh birds. Visits to the web page were up four times on 2018.

One user tweeted: "Today i have googled #buymyturkey with @NFUtweets . I've ordered my turkey from a local farmer six miles up the road. How cools that?! (sic)"

Member Jade Stock participated in #BuyMyTurkey Day and sold out of all turkeys within four days.

275 MEMBERS LISTED ON THE TURKEY FINDER

CLIMATE: NFU TAKES TO WORLD STAGE

NFU Climate Change Adviser Dr Ceris Jones delivered the Farmers' Constituency statement at the United Nation's COP24 climate talks in Poland, on behalf of the World Farmers Organisation. She said farmers worldwide needed access to innovation and technology transfer to boost productivity and resilience and to increase food security.

Labour: members help make the case

An NFUonline survey made it quick and easy for members to make their voices heard on labour shortages, after the government published its long-awaited immigration White Paper proposals.

The results would later help the NFU make a strong case to the Migration Advisory Committee Seasonal Agricultural Workers scheme. It was one of many strands of work to drive home the importance of access to skilled temporary and permanent workers.

FIGHT WITH FACTS

Agriculture's greenhouse gas emissions are lower than transport, energy supply, residential and business industries?

This powerful stat is part of a selection of infographics available to NFU members so they can push back against inaccuracies and negative media coverage. The Livestock Hub is a one-stop-shop at NFUonline that includes social media advice and practical guidance from NFU legal experts.



JANUARY 2019

**"WE WERE
INTRODUCED TO
THE EMPLOYMENT
SERVICE AND RISK
MANAGEMENT
SERVICE BY OUR
LOCAL OFFICE AND
THEY HAVE BEEN
INVALUABLE."**

Richard Corbett, poultry, arable crops, top fruit
and apples in Herefordshire



BREXIT

We will set agenda on food policy – NFU

NFU President Minette Batters used her New Year message to outline farming priorities for 2019.

She stressed the importance of spearheading a national debate about future food policy in the UK, to ensure government recognises the strategic importance of British food and farming to the economy, the environment and the wellbeing of the nation at an unprecedented time.

Appealing to farmers and growers, food processors, retailers, policy makers and the British public alike, Mrs Batters urged everyone with an interest in home-grown food to join the conversation – and called for urgent clarity on future domestic agriculture policy as the (original) Brexit deadline of 31 March loomed.



“AS AN INDUSTRY, WE ARE READY AND ABLE TO TACKLE THE CHALLENGES AHEAD AS WELL AS MAKING THE MOST OF NEW OPPORTUNITIES, BUT WE NEED EVERYONE TO BACK BRITISH FARMING LIKE NEVER BEFORE.”

HUNDREDS OF MEMBERS USE MP TOOL

More than 400 NFU members used the NFU's online 'Email your MP' tool to ask their representatives to speak up for British food and farming as the Agriculture Bill reached the report stage.

The bespoke tool was created in-house at NFU HQ and provided members with a quick and easy way to generate an email pre-populated with all the NFU's key asks. It was also fully editable, so that each member could personalise it to their requirements.

400
emails sent to MPs

PRESSURE ON BPS PAYMENTS

As the RPA released BPS figures showing 93% of eligible claims were paid in December, the NFU insisted on bridging payments for the 5,000-plus farmers still left waiting.



UNITED ON NO DEAL

The four UK farming unions wrote to all MPs ahead of what was to be the first in a series of 'meaningful' votes on the Prime Minister's Withdrawal Agreement, urging them to take all steps necessary to avoid a no-deal Brexit.

The letter drew attention to the impacts that leaving without a deal would have for farming, particularly for sectors that would face high tariffs on exports.



BREXIT

Stats back clarity call

A business confidence survey carried out by the NFU showed the effect ongoing Brexit uncertainties were having on members and their business outlook.

Responses from across the country showed that mid-term confidence had hit an all-time low since the survey began in 2010. The NFU used the statistics to strengthen its calls for clarity on Brexit and the UK's future trading environment.

21% OF FARMERS SAID THEY WOULD CUT INVESTMENT OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

Advice for members on Settlement Scheme

When the government's EU Settlement Scheme opened for applications, enabling EU citizens and their family members to apply for UK immigration status, the NFU provided guidance for members on what information EU workers needed to provide and where to go for more information.



NFU holds government to account at OFC

NFU President Minette Batters called for government to “live up to its responsibilities” with swift decisions to ensure that Britain has a robust supply of safe, traceable and affordable food after Brexit.

Mrs Batters used her address to the Oxford Farming Conference to illustrate the catastrophic impacts that a no-deal Brexit would have across the farming sectors. She urged the government to engage with the industry to ensure that Agriculture Bill provides the means to deliver a sustainable, competitive and profitable British farming sector for generations to come.



115 MILLION:

The combined audience for NFU messages from the Oxford Farming Conference on the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and in the *Guardian*.

“FOOD IS ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTALS OF LIFE. ITS IMPORTANCE CANNOT BE UNDERSTATED. A GOVERNMENT THAT FAILS TO DELIVER A BREXIT THAT GETS THIS RIGHT WILL FAIL US ALL.”
MINETTE BATTERS

ENVIRONMENT BILL: NFU MAKES FOOD LINK

NFU experts scrutinised the government’s first draft Environment Bill.

The Bill set out to cover air quality, waste, water quality and wildlife protection. The NFU made it clear that these principles must be considered alongside the UK’s future food policy, so that measures for protecting and enhancing the environment are joined up with policies to improve productivity and manage volatility, to ensure farm businesses can remain viable, after Brexit.



WATER WIN

Farmers looking to carry out vital work to cut flood risks got a faster, cheaper route, when the Environment Agency added three new ‘standard rules’ and agreed to make other, existing, standard rules more user-friendly.

The move followed extensive NFU lobbying and provided an alternative to bespoke permits. The NFU also voiced the need for a user-friendly web-based platform and for more local, on-the-ground help.

Strong NFU case wins clean air amends

Defra’s Clean Air Strategy reflected crucial amends following a comprehensive submission from the NFU. The final version dropped a proposal to make covering muck heaps a legal requirement and included an exemption for no-till systems.

The NFU submitted **39** pages of evidence

ADVICE FLOWS ON CULVERTS AND SEWERS

The NFU worked with Water UK to help members meet new requirements for water companies to ensure the correct classification of culverted watercourses and sewers. Our experts also provided advice on what to do if members were approached by a water company about the legal ownership or status of a sewer or watercourse, or in the case of a dispute to the statutory sewers map.

TAX SUPPORT

When HMRC said it would mandate Making Tax Digital for VAT from April 2019, for businesses with a VAT turnover exceeding £85,000, the NFU wrote to the Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP, chair of the Commons Treasury Committee, with a series of questions about areas with poor broadband.

Meanwhile, the NFU negotiated exclusive discounts of up to 50% for members on farm accountancy software to help with the switch to digital, and kept them up to date with a series of print and online articles.



BACKING WASTE CRIME STRATEGY

A joint unit for Waste Crime that could help to tackle fly-tipping was backed by the NFU when it responded to the government's Resources and Waste Strategy.

NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts said the proposed unit must be fit for purpose, but that it represented good news – as did suggestions that the Agriculture Bill could protect farmers and growers from practices that cause food waste, like changes to product specifications.

Fly-tipping has been a key strand of the NFU's Love Your Countryside and rural crime campaigning work.



INVESTMENT NEEDED AT CRUCIAL TIME

The NFU continued its constructive dialogue with the finance sector at the January meeting of its Banking Forum.

With Brexit looming, the NFU stressed the importance of continued investment to drive productivity, resilience and technical innovation on farm.

THE NFU ENGAGED WITH THE FOLLOWING BANKS:

- BARCLAYS
- CLYDESDALE BANK
- HSBC
- LLOYDS
- NATWEST

ADVICE ON ACTIVISTS

The NFU worked quickly to provide advice and support for dairy farming members dealing with animal rights activists, including practical advice on what to do in different scenarios and how to reduce the chance of being targeted.

The NFU legal team's briefing also included tips for protecting your business online and on social media, as well as information to report illegal activity or threatening behaviour to the police.

There are also downloadable infographics available on NFUonline to help make a compelling case on social media.

NFU LAUNCHES MAJOR SAFETY CAMPAIGN

The NFU launched its 2019 farm safety campaign at LAMMA on 8 January with a focus on transport and machinery.

Run in conjunction with the Farm Safety Partnership, the campaign is designed to put four of the main causes of farm fatalities and injuries under the spotlight through the year, with the focus moving to livestock handling in April, child safety on farm in July, and working at height in October.

The NFU and its partners are working to reduce farm workplace fatal accidents by 50% by 2023. The campaign demonstrates the changes that can be made, at minimal cost, which can significantly improve agriculture's safety record and help save lives.

"I WOULD URGE ALL FARMERS TO SUPPORT THIS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT CAMPAIGN. I GENUINELY BELIEVE WE ARE STARTING TO SEE CHANGE AND IT IS NOW TIME TO REDOUBLE OUR EFFORTS."

Farm Safety Partnership chairman and NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts



Pictured: NFU Hertfordshire member Will Dickinson. His transport safety 'top three' were PTO guards, checking wheel nut indicators and using bagging hooks.

Keep ELMS simple, Defra

As Defra commissioned the first tests for its new Environmental Land Management Scheme, the NFU was involved in many of the proposals at a local level.

The NFU's key message remained that the new farm payments scheme must be kept simple, so farmers are able to apply and deliver agreements without external advisers.

The NFU also kept members up to date on the scheme's timescales and the new payment methodology, which will move away from income forgone and towards payments for 'natural capital' and 'public goods'.



**FEBRUARY
2019**

"AT NFU CONFERENCE, I WAS SO PROUD TO SEE POLITICIANS HELD TO ACCOUNT, ESPECIALLY OVER THE MATTER OF TB – A HUGE ISSUE FOR OUR COUNTRY IN TERMS OF OUR STOCK AND BUSINESS."

Victoria Walmsley, dairy in Lancashire

President challenges Gove



Face to face with then Defra Secretary Michael Gove at NFU Conference 2019, President Minette Batters urged the government to convene a new commission of food and farming experts to establish the principles that will ensure government upholds the high standards of British food production post-Brexit.

Mrs Batters' vision for the commission will make clear recommendations on the UK's future food trade policy, including food imports are held to the same high standards as British farmers and how future trade deals ought to be scrutinised by parliament and industry.

Stressing that a strong farming industry goes hand-in-hand with a strong environment, Mrs Batters gave more detail about the NFU's ambitious plans to tackle greenhouse gas emissions and British farming's aspiration to achieve net zero by 2040.

Mrs Batters said: "I have asked the Secretary of State to commit to ensuring that any future new trade agreements will not undermine British food standards."

"MR GOVE HAS SAID THAT OVER HIS 'DEAD BODY' WOULD BRITISH STANDARDS BE UNDERMINED. I DON'T WANT IT WRITTEN IN BLOOD. I WANT IT WRITTEN IN INK."

FUTURE OF FOOD 2040

The NFU's Future of Food 2040 was unveiled at NFU Conference 2019. It highlighted the importance of establishing a future domestic agricultural policy that enables the farming industry to increase its productivity, profitability and resilience in the future.

The report also looked 20 years beyond Brexit to how Britain will evolve socially, technologically and environmentally.

Report author NFU Head Of Policy Services Dr Andrea Graham said: "This report is a catalyst to encourage us all to start the debate about our food and our future so we can start to plan ahead."



BREXIT

BREXIT TECHNICAL NOTICES ANALYSED WITH FARMING IN MIND

After the government published a series of technical notices setting out what would happen in the event the UK leaves the EU without reaching a deal, the NFU's policy experts examined each of the notices related to the food and farming sector in order to provide members with insight into what this would mean and how farmers can prepare.



HILL FARMING APPG LAUNCHED



The NFU marked the relaunch of the Hill Farming All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) with a drop-in event in London, hosted by the NFU and Tim Farron MP, and George Eustice (Defra minister) spoke at the event. MPs heard about the significant contributions of hill farming in producing food for the nation, enhancing the environment and driving the rural community. NFU Uplands Forum Chairman Thomas Binns (pictured) said:

"UPLAND FARMING IS AT THE CORE OF RURAL COMMUNITIES IN BRITAIN AND PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE IN PRODUCING HIGH QUALITY, SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD."

BREXIT

NFU BOLD ON BREXIT EXTENSION

NFU President Minette Batters responded strongly to the announcement that there could be an extension of Article 50 in February. She said: "The NFU has always maintained that leaving the EU without a deal would be a catastrophe for British farming.

"It is vital that, if there is to be an extension, that time is spent productively by parliament in delivering a deal that will work for Britain. "Simply delaying Article 50 and the associated uncertainty is not going to help British farmers and food producers – and wider British business – by itself."



BREXIT

Warning to politicians

NFU President Minette Batters kept up the pressure on politicians by warning a no-deal Brexit would be devastating for the UK farming industry. In a speech to the Norfolk Farming Conference, Mrs Batters outlined the need to recognise the strategic importance of food production to the nation.

She said: "Ever since the Brexit process started the NFU has been absolutely clear that no-deal would be catastrophic for our industry. It really is the worst possible outcome for UK farmers."

"Crashing out could lead to an effective trade embargo on the export of animals and animal products to the EU, causing huge disruption. The government could choose to unilaterally lower import tariffs on food leading to our market being open to imports of food produced to much lower standards than those upheld by our own farmers here.

"Any deal that is finally ratified by parliament will be assessed against our six key principles agreed by NFU Council."

Farming in the classroom

There were more than 1,000 entries in the first NFU Farmvention competition and the regional winners were announced in February.

- Tractor Of The Future winners:
- Settle Church of England Primary
 - Afeefa Haroon of Ronald Ross Primary School in London
 - Tracticians of Armitage C of E Primary in Manchester

- Health Hens winners:
- Class 2H from Glascote Academy
 - Oscar Brownmoore from St Aidan's VC Primary School

- Emily Bailey of Bridgewater Primary School in Northampton

- Great British Snack winners:
- Dosbarth y Gleision in Ysgol Bro Idris from Dolgellau in Wales
 - Toby Barribel of Wonersh and Shamley Green Primary School
 - Team Fruity Flow from St John Fisher Catholic Primary School.



MORE THAN
1,000
FARMVENTION ENTRIES

PROVIDING ENERGY

Purchased by the NFU in 2017, FEC Energy officially rebranded as NFU Energy. The NFU has worked with FEC Energy for nearly 20 years.

NFU Energy operates the NFU CCL scheme and has offered access to renewable incentives through the range of RHI schemes available.

NFU ENERGY HAS MORE THAN 1,500 SITES BENEFITING FROM LOW PRICE ENERGY DEALS

NFU Director General Terry Jones said: "NFU Energy is owned by farmers, delivering for farmers.

"Since NFU Energy was purchased in 2017, it has been able to strike even better deals with suppliers and set up new and mutually beneficial trading relationships between the energy and agricultural sectors, which will ultimately benefit farmers and growers."



LANCASHIRE FARMER HONOURED

Lancashire farmer John Alpe Lancashire was honoured at the 2019 NFU Conference for his dedication and commitment to the NFU and to the farming industry. The livestock farmer from Clitheroe was selected for his outstanding work in engaging with schools to raise the profile of food and farming. Mr Alpe is an ambassador for the NFU's Farmvention initiative.

He said: "It's a complete shock to be presented with the award but I am thrilled as the NFU is a great organisation to be a part of. Whatever you get involved in as a member of the NFU there are plenty of opportunities if you're prepared to put the time in and you meet some fantastic people."



ENVIRONMENT CHAMPIONS

As a founding partner of CFE, the NFU co-hosted a showcase event in London with the CLA to celebrate the work being done by farmers already engaged with the project and to encourage more to get involved.

NFU Deputy President Guy Smith and representatives from the CLA and other CFE stakeholders marked 10 years of the project by officially announcing its rebrand from 'Campaign for the Farmed Environment' to 'Championing the Farmed Environment', reflecting the development of the partnership since its inception.

NFU LAUNCHES BIRD COUNT

NFU President Minette Batters was joined on day one of the NFU-sponsored Big Farmland Bird Count by Pete Thompson, biodiversity adviser at the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT).

Jim Egan, head of training and development at GWCT gave live interviews from the NFU's studio for local BBC radio stations, explaining the count's focus on recording farmers' efforts to reverse bird declines through conservation work.

Mrs Batters said: "I would encourage all farmers to take part, and also remember to submit your records to the GWCT, so we can pull together a vital national snapshot of the state of nation."



JOURNALISTS FROM THE BBC, GUARDIAN, COUNTRY LIFE MAGAZINE AND WESTERN DAILY PRESS ATTENDED THE LAUNCH

ISSUES WITH WATER, LOGGED

NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts called on the government to start taking water-related issues seriously to protect productive farmland in the future. He highlighted how farming has been impacted by volatile weather events, the importance of internal drainage boards (IDBs) and why policies must be in place to protect a future supply of water.

Mr Roberts said: "Farmers can be part of the solution and through internal drainage boards. There must also be adequate funding to ensure that the great work farmers and IDBs are doing to protect people, property and livelihoods is not lost."



'FUND NEW TECHNOLOGY TO ACHIEVE NET-ZERO'

The NFU called on government to support investment in new technologies to help farmers in the fight against climate change. Speaking at the Energy and Rural Business Show in Telford, NFU Deputy President Guy Smith emphasised that innovation and technology will be key to increasing efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and that farmers are ready to play their part in the climate challenge.

"THE NFU ANNOUNCED ITS AMBITION FOR THE INDUSTRY TO BECOME NET ZERO BY 2040, AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES ARE GOING TO BE CRUCIAL."



FARMING'S VOICE HEARD

Ahead of NFU Conference and the launch of its Future of Food report, the NFU landed several features across the Sunday papers, achieving coverage showcasing innovative use of tech in farming in the *Observer*, the *i* paper, the *Sunday Telegraph* and the *Sunday Mirror*.

Kicking off NFU Conference 2019, the NFU capitalised on its media profile and secured interviews for NFU President Minette Batters on Sky News, BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme and BBC Lunchtime News, in which she called for the government to convene a commission that is responsible for upholding British farming's high standards post-Brexit.

NFU achieved at least 297 pieces of coverage across print, broadcast and online platforms.

FUTURE OF FOOD 2040 COVERAGE HAD A DAILY REACH OF 14.7 MILLION



NFU: A YEAR IN NUMBERS



Representing **55,000**

farming members across England and Wales

With our help members held more than

120

MP meetings out on farm to discuss key issues affecting their businesses and local area

NFU pressure ensured that **22,500** eligible farmers in agri-environment schemes received their outstanding payments in July



NFU Cymru members sent 17,000 emails to Assembly Members across wales

encouraging them to make farmers' views heard when new policies are debated in the Senedd chamber

More than **2,000** youngsters took part in Farmvention, the NFU's national primary school competition



BREXIT TOOLBOX

Preparing for Brexit



November 2018-April 2019: **We produced 70 pieces of expert Brexit insight** to prepare members' farming businesses for life outside the EU



1,500

members saw NFU President Minette Batters challenge Defra SoS to establish food standards commission at Conference



885 members collectively saved

£22,125

with the NFU's exclusive Cereals ticket offer

We hosted 29 BPS roadshow meetings to help members with their BPS applications, saving members **thousands** on professional fees

Student & Young Farmer members got to see Westminster lobbying in action



Members saved more than

£19,000

while buying agricultural tyres



More than

380

NFU Group Secretaries across England and Wales helping farmers in their local area

More than

60

parliamentary meetings and events were held

on topics such as the Agriculture Bill, marketing British produce overseas and business rates



We met with Government more than **80 times** to highlight what is needed in the best Brexit deal for farming

Our experts reviewed and challenged more than **400 pages** of BPS guidance over the past year to ensure members' interests are represented

More than **2,800 NFU Cymru** members views were heard loud and clear on future Welsh policy via the organisation's 'Brexit & Our Land' online consultation hub



MARCH 2019

"WE ARE ALWAYS IMPRESSED BY THE APPEARANCES OF NFU OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS IN THE MEDIA. THEY SPEAK SO WELL – WITH AUTHORITY AND KNOWLEDGE – AND ARE EXCELLENT AT PROMOTING FARMING IN THE COMMUNITY."

Gwilym Jones, sheep farmer in Wales

The media coverage achieved during the period covered by this Yearbook would be an equivalent of £55 million in paid-for advertising

COUNTRYSIDE FLIES THE FLAG

NFU Countryside magazine continues to fly the flag for British food and farming with food trails, celebrity interviews, British food recipes and much more. It was relaunched for the March 2019 edition and its most recent survey in spring 2019 (of nearly 1,000 Countryside readers) showed awareness of the Back British Farming campaign stood at an impressive 92%.





Deal vital, say NFU and united UK unions

MPs must take “whatever measures are necessary to remove the possibility of leaving the EU without an agreement”.

That was the message from the NFU and its UK farming union counterparts as they showed a united front following the defeat of the Prime Minister’s renegotiated Brexit deal in the Commons.

Rallied by the NFU, the presidents underlined the real-world consequences the continued uncertainty was having on farming businesses.

They said: “It is critical that the government and MPs identify a clear strategy to secure Parliament’s support



for a negotiated Brexit deal between the UK and the EU – a deal that finally brings to an end the damaging uncertainty already undermining our food and farming sectors.

“A no-deal exit from the EU would be a catastrophe for UK farming and food production.”

STANDARDS MUST BE UPHOLD

NFU President Minette Batters was clear when the USA published its negotiating objectives for a potential US/UK trade deal.

She said: “It is imperative that any future trade deals, including a possible deal with the USA, do not allow the imports of food produced to lower standards than those required of British farmers.

“BRITISH PEOPLE VALUE AND DEMAND THE HIGH STANDARDS OF ANIMAL WELFARE, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND FOOD SAFETY THAT OUR FARMERS ADHERE TO.

“We should not accept trade deals that allow food to be imported into this country produced in ways which would be illegal here.”

Ag water scarcity prep

An NFU drought impact survey revealed how members are preparing for long-term reductions

in water use, after the 2018 agricultural drought.

The organisation feeds into Defra’s National Drought Group, and NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts said:

“Farmers bear the brunt of the impacts of extreme weather, and climate change predictions indicate that events like last summer are likely to become more frequent.”

BPS TEAM HITS ROAD

The NFU BPS team hit the road in March at the start of a sequence of 29 member meetings across the length and breadth of the country. The experts provided free advice on the 2019 application process, as well as covering greening requirements, future farm support and the current situation with payments. For those that couldn’t make a meeting, the team produced a series of online guides.

1,350 MEMBERS GAINED FREE ADVICE WORTH AROUND £125PH

Records smashed in 2019 bird count

A fantastic effort from farmers across England and Wales helped to secure a best-ever year for the Big Farmland Bird Count, which was sponsored for the first time by the NFU. The results saw a 40% increase in the number of participants, recording 140 species and driving home the good work farmers do to create and protect habitat.

“Farmers and birders have worked together and inspired each other, showing the power of sharing our skills and knowledge,” said organisers, the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust.

“A huge congratulations to everyone involved.”

30 RED-LISTED SPECIES SPOTTED

Yellowhammers were among the red-listed species spotted



Our top farmventors are named

Afeefa Haroon, of Ronald Ross Primary School, in London, was named the winner of the NFU's inaugural Farmvention competition, for her 'tractor of the future' design.

Schoolchildren from across the country congregated at the House of Commons to present their farming inventions to MPs and a judging panel led by NFU President Minette Batters.

The prize-giving was the final stage of a competition that saw more than 2,000 young people sharpen their science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) skills and learn where their food comes from. Their teachers used NFU-produced content, which ties in with the National Curriculum.

Adding farming to STEM subjects proved a winning idea, and there were more than 1,000 entries.



Above: Afeefa is named Farmvention winner
Elsewhere: Fun from Farmvention 2018/19



NFU pushes back on parks in media

NFU Deputy President Guy Smith wrote to *The Sunday Times* following its article suggesting farming was one of the main causes of wildlife decline in National Parks.

Mr Smith's letter highlighted the integral role farmers play in shaping these iconic landscapes and the habitats they help to provide, all while providing the nation with superb food.

BREXIT ORGANICS THREAT

The NFU warned in March that UK organic farmers faced a possible trade embargo on products destined for the EU in a no-deal Brexit. In a letter to then-Defra Secretary Michael Gove, NFU Organic Forum Chairman John Pawsey (pictured) said the issue was "another example of how no deal would be catastrophic for UK agriculture".

Mr Pawsey explained that the EU would need formally recognise UK organic production as equivalent to allow trade. Urging action, he added: "We must gain recognition as quickly as possible."



FIGHTING FOR PPPS

After the NFU raised the critical importance of the fungicide chlorothalonil for cereal crops, the UK was one of the few EU Member States to vote against the Commission's proposal to ban it at the March Standing Committee. While it did not change the outcome, it showed that the UK Government could be prepared to take a different, evidence-based position. The NFU's battle to maintain access to plant protection products continues at home and in the EU.

Highlighting volatility

The NFU said a drop in Defra's official Farm Business Income forecasts for 2018/19 showed just how exposed agriculture is to market volatility – and how important measures to help manage big shifts in farm gate returns will be as the UK develops its own agricultural policy.

BREXIT

NFU inspires move towards lantern ban

Sky lanterns should be banned across the UK as part of the forthcoming Environment Bill – if not before – an MP told the Commons in March.

Following a detailed briefing from the NFU, the Labour member for High Peak, Ruth George, tabled a Ten-Minute Rule Bill.

“Sky lanterns are airborne flames. You cannot predict where they will land and they have caused several major fires,” she said, adding the lights could cause animals “a long and painful death”.

Her proposed legislation would make their use an offence.

While legislation introduced under the ten-minute rule is unlikely to become law, Ms George said the demonstration of cross-party support made the issue a strong candidate to be addressed in the Environment Bill.

The move was the latest step in a



long-running NFU Love Your Countryside campaign, which has seen scores of councils in England – and all of them in Wales – ban releases on their land.

HORMONE BEEF? NO THANKS!

The NFU seized hold of an opportunity for NFU Deputy President Guy Smith to appear on BBC News, after the US ambassador, Woody Johnson, suggested future UK trade should embrace US farming methods.

Mr Smith said UK shoppers would not accept post-Brexit food that would be illegal to produce here. The high animal welfare standards of British farmers must not be undermined, he said.



GUY SMITH
Deputy President, NFU

BREXIT

52M HEAR NFU ON NO-DEAL

Just two weeks to the 29 March Brexit deadline, the government published the import tariffs that would come into effect if there was a no-deal EU exit.

That prompted an intense period of activity in which NFU experts and officeholders were heard across the national media by an combined audience of up to 52 million people. Your representatives hammered home that no deal would be disastrous for British farming – and that the proposed tariffs could lead to a tide of imports produced to lower standards. Brexit Director Nick von Westenholz, Deputy President Guy Smith and Vice-President Stuart Roberts all appeared in high-profile interviews across the BBC, ITV and Sky News, while NFU President Minette Batters took part in a BBC Two Brexit Special.

She said: “Even those sectors that are treated sensitively will, in most instances, see worrying and large reductions in the tariff rates currently charged on imports.”

To ease the telling of the complex tariffs story, the NFU also created the graphic, top right, which was shared extensively online and on social media.



Top tractor

MPs, Peers and representatives from across the supply chain turned out in force at the House of Lords to hear that the Red Tractor has world-leading standards.



Independent research looked at arrangements across the globe, and said the breadth and depth of the Red Tractor requirements meant it was second to none overall.

The NFU said: “The logo means products meet world-leading levels of animal welfare, food safety and environmental standards. Red Tractor food is safe, traceable and farmed with care.”

£13BN
OF BRITISH FOOD CARRIES
THE RED TRACTOR LOGO

“THIS SCHEDULE IS YET ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF HOW BRITISH FARMING WILL BE DAMAGED BY A NO-DEAL BREXIT.”

Minette Batters

APRIL 2019

"NOW IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER TO JOIN THE NFU BECAUSE THE DISCUSSIONS BEING HAD ON THE FUTURE OF OUR INDUSTRY ARE SO CRUCIAL. BY BEING A MEMBER OF THE NFU, YOU HAVE ACCESS TO LIKEMINDED PEOPLE WHO ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT THE INDUSTRY – I DON'T KNOW WHAT OTHER BODY WOULD SPEAK FOR US."

Oliver Collingham, sugar and crops in Nottinghamshire



BREXIT: NFU CONTACTS EVERY MP

The NFU led a group of UK farming organisations to co-sign a letter sent to all MPs, requesting a further extension to Article 50 "of significant length to allow government and MPs to agree a way forward that ensures a stable operating environment for farm businesses".

It said: "Government and parliament must ensure our departure from the EU is an orderly one. The farming sector is clear that leaving without a deal would cause huge damage."

BEET FEAT

The NFU and NFU Sugar worked with the British Beet Research Organisation to secure an emergency authorisation for the foliar insecticide Biscaya, to control aphids that spread the devastating virus yellows disease.

NFU leads fight for bird control after licences removed

Campaigning work by the NFU kicked into overdrive after Natural England revoked three general licences for controlling certain wild birds, at just 48 hours' notice.

The change was caused by the threat of a legal challenge to Natural England and it limited farmers' ability to control several members of the crow family, Canada geese, pigeons and some gulls. The NFU immediately contacted Natural England and Defra, urging them to ensure new general licences were issued as a matter of urgency, prioritising those that help protect livestock and crops.

The speedy introduction of a new general licence to control carrion crows was welcome. However, the NFU pressed for further action, writing to then-Defra Secretary Michael Gove to highlight concerns. Pressure from farmers led to Defra taking over responsibility for the regime – and NFU members' evidence would finally play a leading role in the issuing of new licences.



"THE NFU RECEIVED HUNDREDS OF RESPONSES TO ITS CALL FOR EVIDENCE, WHICH ILLUSTRATED THE STRENGTH OF FEELING ACROSS OUR MEMBERSHIP."

NFU Deputy President Guy Smith

Successful push for bridging payments

The NFU was successful in lobbying for bridging payments for delayed 2018 BPS and Countryside Stewardship payments in April. However, the clear message was 'there's still work to be done', as 4,000 farmers had still not received agri-environment money from 2017.

2,790

The number of NFU mentions in the media in April.

EASY-TO-ACCESS NFU

The launch of the NFU App put the latest news and information at members' fingertips.

Free to download from Google Play and the Apple App store, it offers members a new way of accessing exclusive business insights, advice and notifications of breaking stories.



GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Team NFU raised more than £40,000 for Farm Africa when they took part in the London Marathon.

NFU President Minette Batters, Vice-President Stuart Roberts, Regional Director Adam Bedford, former NFU staff member Martin Rodgers and farmer Will Evans raised funds for the charity's 'Coffee is Life' appeal, which gives farmers in eastern Africa the tools to help grow better futures.

**MORE THAN
£40,000
RAISED FOR FARM AFRICA**



Wayleaves win

A close working relationship with the Energy Network Association (ENA) paid off when its input led to new electricity advisory wayleave payments. Last reviewed in 1994, the payments cover a variety of losses incurred by farmers due to pylons and infrastructure. "We worked long and hard with the ENA to ensure farmers are paid more accurately," said NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts.



BREXIT: NFU CONTACTS EVERY MP

The NFU led a group of UK farming organisations to co-sign a letter sent to all MPs, requesting a further extension to Article 50 "of significant length to allow government and MPs to agree a way forward that ensures a stable operating environment for farm businesses".

It said: "Government and parliament must ensure our departure from the EU is an orderly one. The farming sector is clear that leaving without a deal would cause huge damage."

BEET FEAT

The NFU and NFU Sugar worked with the British Beet Research Organisation to secure an emergency authorisation for the foliar insecticide Biscaya, to control aphids that spread the devastating virus yellows disease.

NFU leads fight for bird control after licences removed

Campaigning work by the NFU kicked into overdrive after Natural England revoked three general licences for controlling certain wild birds, at just 48 hours' notice.

The change was caused by the threat of a legal challenge to Natural England and it limited farmers' ability to control several members of the crow family, Canada geese, pigeons and some gulls. The NFU immediately contacted Natural England and Defra, urging them to ensure new general licences were issued as a matter of urgency, prioritising those that help protect livestock and crops.

The speedy introduction of a new general licence to control carrion crows was welcome. However, the NFU pressed for further action, writing to then-Defra Secretary Michael Gove to highlight concerns. Pressure from farmers led to Defra taking over responsibility for the regime – and NFU members' evidence would finally play a leading role in the issuing of new licences.



"THE NFU RECEIVED HUNDREDS OF RESPONSES TO ITS CALL FOR EVIDENCE, WHICH ILLUSTRATED THE STRENGTH OF FEELING ACROSS OUR MEMBERSHIP."

NFU Deputy President Guy Smith

Successful push for bridging payments

The NFU was successful in lobbying for bridging payments for delayed 2018 BPS and Countryside Stewardship payments in April. However, the clear message was 'there's still work to be done', as 4,000 farmers had still not received agri-environment money from 2017.

2,790

The number of NFU mentions in the media in April.

EASY-TO-ACCESS NFU

The launch of the NFU App put the latest news and information at members' fingertips.

Free to download from Google Play and the Apple App store, it offers members a new way of accessing exclusive business insights, advice and notifications of breaking stories.



GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Team NFU raised more than £40,000 for Farm Africa when they took part in the London Marathon.

NFU President Minette Batters, Vice-President Stuart Roberts, Regional Director Adam Bedford, former NFU staff member Martin Rodgers and farmer Will Evans raised funds for the charity's 'Coffee is Life' appeal, which gives farmers in eastern Africa the tools to help grow better futures.

**MORE THAN
£40,000
RAISED FOR FARM AFRICA**



Wayleaves win

A close working relationship with the Energy Network Association (ENA) paid off when its input led to new electricity advisory wayleave payments. Last reviewed in 1994, the payments cover a variety of losses incurred by farmers due to pylons and infrastructure. "We worked long and hard with the ENA to ensure farmers are paid more accurately," said NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts.

NFU sets out the route to 'net zero'

Improved productivity, carbon capture and renewable energy will help farming reach 'net zero' on greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 – ten years ahead of a key target.

That was the message from the NFU in May when the government's climate advisors set out how the UK as a whole could reach the milestone by 2050.

The Committee on Climate Change made a range of recommendations.

NFU Deputy President Guy Smith said members were "aligned" with its ambitions. But he pushed back on ideas that included turning a fifth of farmland to emission-busting uses, eating less beef, lamb and dairy, and using the Agriculture Bill to spark a "major transition in land use".

"British farmers have an important role in tackling climate change," he said.

"Our members are committed to this challenge, alongside providing high-quality, sustainable food."



"WE WILL NOT HALT CLIMATE CHANGE BY CURBING BRITISH PRODUCTION AND EXPORTING IT TO COUNTRIES THAT MAY NOT HAVE THE SAME ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIENCE."

SHAPING FARMING'S FUTURE

The NFU has a superb track record of helping the next generation put its stamp on the industry. And that was front and centre in May with the launch of the Student & Young Farmer Ambassador Programme.

Aimed at passionate farming 18–26 year-olds, 10 successful applicants will represent the NFU for a year, benefiting from a host of insights and special events.

Next Generation Forum Chairman Simon Gadd (below) said: "The programme is a fantastic opportunity for young people to get stuck in to an industry that is incredibly challenging and rewarding."

This young, positive face of British farming will speak to 10,000 of their counterparts through the NFU's #StudentFarmer magazine.



US regulators echo NFU campaigning

The NFU has led calls for an evidence-based approach to crop protection products.

That drive saw hundreds of members take part in the award-winning #glyphosateisvital campaign. And it was echoed when the Environmental Protection Agency in the US said it continued to find glyphosate posed "no risks to public health when used in accordance with its current label" and that the active "is not a carcinogen".

GLYPHOSATE WAS REAUTHORISED UNTIL THANKS TO MEMBER-LED CAMPAIGNING 2022

ROAD, AIR, RAIL: BIG PROJECTS

The NFU represented members on projects affecting their businesses, including the A14 in Cambridgeshire, the A303 at Stonehenge, the A30 in Cornwall, the Heathrow expansion, and on railway line fencing issues.

The organisation made the case for fair rental payments for mobile phone mast sites and spoke out in Westminster for those facing disruption from HS2.

4.9m viewers hear importance of food standards

The massive audience of Sky News' flagship business programme, *Ian King Live*, heard about the importance of food standards during USA President Donald Trump's state visit

Even before President Trump landed, NFU President Minette Batters appeared on the show to land messages about UK farming standards and why they must not be sacrificed in any trade deals struck between the UK and the United States.



NFU MAKES FARMERS HEARD AS SUPERMARKETS MEGA-MERGER BLOCKED

Right through the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) investigation into a proposed merger of Sainsbury's and Asda, the NFU made sure its members' concerns were heard.

In May, the watchdog blocked the deal, saying it would increase prices, reduce product choice and result in a "poorer shopping experience".

NFU Director General Terry Jones said: "Our key concern has always been the potential impact on members, with the possibility for abusive market power, as well as the impact on consumer choice and the quality of products on the market.

The NFU had fed member feedback into two stages of the CMA investigation.



The tie-up would have created a business taking £1 of every £3 spent on groceries in the UK.

NFU SEEKS CLARITY ON OPEN FARMS

The NFU immediately contacted Defra when it emerged that members taking part in Open Farm Sunday might need to have a licence under new rules on 'keeping or training animals for exhibition'.

Defra looked into it and said those throwing back the gates for the annual event were highly unlikely to be affected, as they were not doing so as a commercial operation. The legal team said it would work with Defra for further clarification, and began to consult with members to find out if there were activities on farms that might come under the legislation.



"IT IS CLEAR FROM THE CMA FINDINGS THAT THEY RECOGNISE THE IMPACT FURTHER CONSOLIDATION COULD HAVE ON THE SUPPLY CHAIN AND ULTIMATELY SHOPPERS."

ADVICE ON ABATTOIRS WINS APPG ROLE

When the Livestock Board shared insights on abattoirs with the Animal Welfare All-Party Parliamentary Group it stood up for standards at larger processors, highlighted how smaller, local sites could help farmers add value to their businesses – and got an invitation for the NFU to become one of the new group's advisers.



SOURCES FOR COURSES

The NFU launched a new digital guide to encourage transparency on sourcing in the food service sector.

It promotes the benefits of backing British farmers and growers, with 12 major brands, including McDonald's, Wetherspoons and Greggs, among the first to set out their stalls.



BREXIT PREPARATION



To help members prepare for Brexit, the NFU identified five areas – contract checking, insurance, understanding price calculation, insolvency and credit checking, and break and termination clauses – where they might be able to better manage contract and business risks.

396 million

The potential audience for media coverage on climate change and net zero featuring NFU members, staff and officeholders in May.

The NFU Environment Forum's Richard Bramley is pictured on Sky News.



Better notice for irrigators

The NFU helped haul an Environment Agency process into the 21st century when it got them to text irrigation restriction notices to farmers in the Cambridgeshire Fens. The previous, postal-only system meant notices were often out of date by the time letters were received. The NFU also set up the transition arrangements and encouraged 80% of affected members to make the change.



NFU SECURES GRAZING AFU APPROVAL

After the NFU made a compelling case, Defra agreed that applications should be accepted for enhanced approved finishing units (AFUEs) with grazing.

It will allow farmers under TB restrictions to set up facilities to graze calves on their own land, in a bio-secure environment.

NFU Livestock Board Chairman Richard Findlay said: "Based on the NFU consultation, Defra also agreed to raise the age limit for calves entering the AFUE to under 60 days old and to allow calves under 12 months old to enter a AFUE from a housed AFU, providing they entered the AFU when they were less than 60 days old."



NFU PROMOTES FARM PLASTICS INNOVATORS

The government should exclude bioplastics from a proposed tax to encourage solutions to waste problems from farming innovators.

The NFU responded to a Treasury consultation on plans to charge businesses using plastic packaging with less than 30% recycled material from 2022. Environment Adviser Anna Simpson told how NFU members were part of the solution.

To encourage innovation, she said bio-based, compostable or biodegradable plastic should be excluded from the tax.

"Farming is responsible for much innovation in this area," she added.

"For example, one NFU member is using tomato leaves in an AD plant to create a cellulose fibre that can be used to produce a punnet container. And they are developing a clear film from this material. Both are fully biodegradable."

NFU MAGAZINES BLAZED A TRAIL BY SWITCHING TO BIODEGRADABLE POTATO STARCH PACKAGING IN 2018

BREXIT

SWITCHED ON SAVINGS

Members' buying power as part of NFU Electricity Buying Groups was boosted in May, when the scheme moved to monthly, rather than quarterly, prices.

The groups help NFU members whose electricity contracts finish within the same timeframe to obtain a better price by acting together, rather than as individuals.

More than 1,200 members made use of the scheme in the 12 months to July 2019.



FIGHTING FOR YOUR WORKFORCE

There will be no let-up in the fight to ensure members can access the labour they need, both permanent and seasonal and across the skills levels.

That was the response from the NFU after key agricultural roles were left off a list of jobs for which non-UK staff will be needed after Brexit.

In its review of the Shortage Occupation List, the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) included choreographers, web designers and artists in its recommendations – but snubbed dairy herdsmen, poultry technicians and other vital farm roles. The NFU had provided strong evidence and was "staggered".

NFU Dairy Board Chairman Michael Oakes (pictured) said the government must look again at the MAC list. He said the NFU and its members would leave MPs in no doubt about the crucial importance of access to adequate agricultural workers, along with the need to improve plans set out in the Immigration White Paper.

"LABOUR AVAILABILITY IS HAVING AN IMPACT ON ALMOST A DAILY BASIS. THE NFU WILL CONTINUE ITS CAMPAIGN."

NFU Dairy Board Chairman Michael Oakes





**JUNE
2019**

"THE NFU WAS FANTASTIC WHEN STORM DESMOND HIT THE NORTH WEST. WE WERE SEVERELY FLOODED AND THE NFU WAS ONE OF THE FIRST ORGANISATIONS TO RESPOND. THEY HELPED FARMERS FINANCIALLY AND SET UP A FORAGE BANK, WHICH WAS INVALUABLE. YOU KNOW THAT THE NFU ALWAYS HAS YOUR BACK."

The Sedgley family, tenant livestock farmers in Lancashire

2018/19: YOUR BENEFITS

450

MEMBERS COMPLETED THE WELFARE OF ANIMALS IN TRANSPORT TEST AT A DISCOUNTED RATE

BREXIT

President puts farm standards in spotlight

When Donald Trump came to the UK for a state visit, the NFU took to the front foot on farm standards.

Backed by a strong social media push, NFU President Minette Batters appeared on Sky News, the BBC and LBC, asking the government if it thought the British public would accept chlorinated chicken masking lower farm welfare standards, or hormone-fed beef, for a US deal.

She said future imports must meet the high standards of UK producers.

"British farming is strategically important to the nation," she said.

"I urge government to remember what is at stake – our farming values must not be sacrificed in the pursuit of hurried trade deals."

The Farmer Favourability Survey by OnePoll found 86% of the public thought imported food should meet UK standards.



"Remember what is at stake"
– Minette Batters

86% OF PUBLIC WANT IMPORTED FOOD TO MEET UK STANDARDS

PM PLEDGES

The NFU urged Boris Johnson and Jeremy Hunt to commit to a positive future for British food production, as the race to become Conservative leader entered the final furlong.

An open letter set out areas where the future Prime Minister could future-proof the sector.

Those included ensuring future trade is as free and frictionless as possible, an immigration policy which maintains access to seasonal and permanent workers, and recognition of the vital role of farmers as food producers.

The response from eventual winner and Prime Minister, Mr Johnson, included on-the-record promises that the NFU pledged to revisit in the coming months.

"We are now at a crossroads," NFU President Minette Batters told the leadership contenders. "Get it right and the rewards can be huge; get it wrong and we could see the decimation of Britain's ability to feed itself."



£115 million...

The sum the Rural Payments Agency said 22,500 farmers left waiting for agri-environment scheme money would finally get – in full – by the end of July.

It came after sustained campaigning as the NFU ramped up the pressure by beginning to assist members with legal proceedings.

NFU Deputy President Guy Smith said: "We have been calling for the government to sort this out. At NFU Conference in February, Michael Gove admitted that the Countryside Stewardship scheme was 'still in a mess' and that the government must do better.

"We will continue to monitor the situation to make sure these overdue payments are made in full and at last hit farm bank accounts."

"THE NEWS COMES JUST AS THE NFU WAS INSTRUCTING SOLICITORS TO ASSIST INDIVIDUAL FARMER MEMBERS IN PURSUING THEIR DEBT CLAIMS AGAINST THE RPA."

NFU makes difference on bird control

Hundreds of members helped the NFU make the strongest of cases following the decision to remove general licences for crow and wood pigeon control. And the torrent of feedback and sustained NFU work at the highest levels fed into three new replacement licences in June. These were welcomed as far more "practical and fit for purpose" than the interim measures that had preceded them, but the NFU said it will monitor ongoing Defra work on the general licensing regime carefully.



PIP's record clutch

A best-ever total of 63 applied for the NFU/ABN 2019-20 Poultry Industry Programme (PIP), which aims to develop the sector's future leaders.

The PIP offers market insight into the British poultry meat and egg sectors and teaches new skills to help NFU members succeed in their careers.

"We were delighted to see such strong support for the programme, which is already proving to be an important stepping stone," said NFU Poultry Adviser Aimee Mahony.



Members shape policy via #YourHarvest



Farmers pledged to get their MPs out on farm and show them the value of UK grain production first-hand, as the NFU launched its #YourHarvest campaign at the Cereals Event.

Crops Board Chairman Tom Bradshaw said: "We want to see MPs working with farmers to develop a post-Brexit agriculture policy that enables us to capitalise on future opportunities, increase productivity, deliver more for the environment, contribute towards our net zero aspirations and grow in value to the economy."

"All arable growers have a role to play by inviting their local MP on farm



this harvest to show them why investing in the future of cereals is so important."

NFU SETS BBC R4 STRAIGHT

The BBC was left in no doubt about the importance of getting its facts straight when Radio 4 presenter Evan Davis told NFU President Minette Batters, live on air, that poor welfare meant she "wouldn't want people to see what goes on in a farm".

The statement prompted a strong reprimand. Mrs Batters told listeners it was "desperate", "offensive" and "untrue". She highlighted that thousands of people had attended Open Farm Sunday just days before.

She suggested the BBC had attacked the nation's livestock farmers and meat consumption.

A letter of complaint demanded

an apology and Mr Davis revisited the issue the next day after hundreds of NFU members flooded his Twitter timeline. He said it had been a "clumsy expression".



WISER WALKIES

An NFU poster promoting responsible dog walking in the countryside will appear in hundreds of surgery waiting rooms across the country after it ran as a free pull-out in *Vet Record* magazine, the official journal of the British Veterinary Association, in June. The NFU teamed up with the Kennel Club on the poster.



CO-OP PLANT PLEDGE



Growers supplying Co-op received a boost when the retailer signed up to the NFU's Plants and Flowers Pledge. The Co-op backed British growers by making a range of commitments on transparency and fairness in its supply chain, including greater price certainty and treatment in accordance with the Groceries Supply Code of Practice.

'Field to fork' review

The NFU made sure it was in on the ground floor as the government announced the first major review of the UK food system in nearly 75 years.

Henry Dimbleby, co-founder of restaurant chain Leon, was tasked with assessing how best to deliver safe, healthy and affordable food, "regardless of where people live or how much they earn". NFU President Minette Batters said: "The NFU has done some early work with Mr Dimbleby and I am delighted he included much of it in his framework."

Media messengers

171,000:

The anticipated Sky News audience as NFU President Minette Batters set out why a no-deal Brexit would be a catastrophe for UK farming on flagship politics show, *Sophy Ridge on Sunday*.

Meanwhile, Vice-President Stuart Roberts was seen by around 1.5 million people when he told ITV's *Tonight* programme that Britain's carbon footprint for its world-leading beef production is half the global average.

KEEPING HS2 ON TRACK

Farmers affected by the HS2 line from West Midlands to Crewe will get three months' notice when their land is taken for temporary possession for more than a week, will have agricultural liaison officers to help make their case to the company and, in some circumstances, will get interim payments for losses suffered.

June brought a series of concessions from HS2 and recommendations from the Select Committee in line with tenacious NFU campaigning.

BERRY BID RETURNS FRUIT

HMRC said it would 'zero rate' sales of 11 more plants for VAT purposes, after the NFU successfully argued that growers' innovation had outstripped the official list of food-producing varieties.

A dossier of evidence from the NFU and Horticultural Trades Association saw bushes producing aronia berries, goji berries, honeyberries, melon berries, sloes, jostaberries (pictured, right), lingonberries, apriplums, plumcots, pinkcurrants and kiwiberries all become eligible for the tax break.



ONE-CLICK CAMPAIGNING

The NFU made it easier to highlight the need for adequate seasonal labour to decision makers with a new 'email your MP' tool.

The pre-populated online form allowed members to send an email outlining why the current seasonal workers pilot scheme in the horticulture sector should be extended. The move came as the first workers arrived for the scheme, which the NFU was instrumental in winning.

495
EMAILS SENT TO MPS BY
NFU MEMBERS

A LIDL BIT MORE...

NFU work with Lidl NFU saw the supermarket extend its commitment to British farmers with a pledge to go home-grown on all of its breaded and ready-to-eat chicken by October.



BODY AND MIND

The all-round wellbeing of those in our industry has repeatedly been put into focus by the NFU this year. And in June both the physical and mental sides of health were highlighted. NFU expert Tom Price attended farm safety events for members in Cornwall, Bedfordshire and Lincolnshire, organised by the NFU's regional teams.

Meanwhile, NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts underlined that mental health support will become ever-more important as farming faces up to "momentous" change. He called for an end to stigma and emphasised the need for better NHS services in rural areas.

"I URGE FARMERS TO JOIN THE DIALOGUE ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AND HELP US BUILD A BETTER INDUSTRY"
STUART ROBERTS

TENANTS

Members shape vital reforms

Hundreds of members attended meetings across the country to shape the NFU response to a consultation on changes to tenancy law. The result was

strong backing for proposals which could remove stumbling blocks to investment and succession.

The NFU's work with the Tenancy Reform Industry Group had fed into the Defra plans.

"We made clear in our submission that the proposals will allow greater flexibility within the sector, removing restrictions and opening up rules on succession," said NFU Tenants' Forum Chairman Chris Cardell.

"This will allow both landlords and tenants to make investments in their farm holdings, which will help drive greater productivity.

"THE TENANTED SECTOR PRODUCES MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF AGRICULTURAL ENTREPRENEURS AND PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE FOR FARMING BUSINESSES. I AM CONVINCED IT NOW HAS AN EXCITING FUTURE."



"Our sector has an exciting future" – Chris Cardell

**JULY
2019**

"I CAN SEE NO REASON NOT TO BE A MEMBER; A FANTASTIC SUPPORT TO FARMERS, AND INDISPENSABLE SOURCE OF INFORMATION, AND A FANTASTIC COLLECTIVE VOICE TO GOVERNMENT AND DECISION-MAKERS. AT THE TIME WHEN WE NEED UNITY IN OUR INDUSTRY, I BELIEVE THE NFU IS EXACTLY THE RIGHT VEHICLE TO UNITE US."

Tom Martin, arable in Cambridgeshire



Prime Minister feels NFU pressure



NFU President Minette Batters wasted no time in laying out the challenges new Prime Minister Boris Johnson needs to address to protect British farming from a no-deal Brexit scenario.

She said: "British farming is one of the nation's most important assets, delivering safe, traceable and affordable food to millions, all while taking care of the beautiful countryside we have such great pride in."

Mr Johnson visited the farm of NFU Cymru Poultry Board Chairman Victoria Shervington-Jones on the Gwent Levels. The Prime Minister said: "I will always back Britain's farmers and as we leave the EU we need to make sure that Brexit works for them."

"Once we leave the EU on 31 October, we will have a historic opportunity

to introduce new schemes to support farming – and we will make sure that farmers get a better deal."

NFU Cymru President John Davies said: "I am pleased that less than a week on from being appointed Prime Minister, Mr Johnson has visited a Welsh family farming business.

"The Prime Minister has talked of the opportunities to sign new trade deals to help us sell more food around the world. Our ambition for growth is based on the ability to access the widest possible range of markets at home and abroad."



FOOD AND FARMING CONTRIBUTES £120BN TO THE ECONOMY AND EMPLOYS 4 MILLION PEOPLE

BEEF PRICE ACTION

The Presidents of the four UK farming unions – John Davies of NFU Cymru, Minette Batters from the NFU, NFU Scotland's Andrew McCornick, and Ivor Ferguson of the Ulster Farmers' Union – met at the 100th Royal Welsh Show to call for urgent action across the supply chain to support farmers affected by the ongoing beef price crisis:

"The UK beef sector is at crisis point: we've seen downward pressure on farmgate prices throughout the year and this dire situation cannot, and must not, be allowed to continue. While we accept that this is a complex situation and there are a number of factors affecting this drop in price, beef farmers cannot continue to sustain this decrease any longer. The sustainability of UK beef production is at stake here.

"We are calling for action across the whole supply chain in order to bring the UK beef industry back from the brink."

SECTORS SET OUT NET-ZERO PLANS



POULTRY – Tom Wornham

"A poultry farmer recently pointed out to me that every free range laying farm in the UK has to plant trees as part of its RSPCA assurance membership. Therefore, such farms are already positioned to comply with the 2030 reduction in ammonia of 16%, and these trees have multiple benefits as they store carbon."

LIVESTOCK – Richard Findlay

- "The NFU has been in discussions with Defra about a future productivity scheme that will drive more efficient, progressive and profitable businesses. We stand ready to work with government to pilot and trial a livestock productivity scheme that could deliver a step change for UK productivity while meeting our net zero goal."



DAIRY – Michael Oakes

"The dairy sector is ready to embrace the challenge and this stream of work has proved popular with membership. The NFU Dairy Board is currently setting out the roadmap for net zero in the sector, which sits right behind the NFU's vision. This area of work is crucial and resonates with members when we discuss productivity, efficiency and being better for less. The roadmap will be vital to win over public opinion of British dairy."

In schools

Afeefa Haroon's grand prize for winning the NFU's Farmvention competition this year saw her school's playground undergo a transformation from urban primary school to rural farm in July.

Children discovered what it takes to be a British farmer and a custodian of the countryside – and how farming could fit in with their science, technology, engineering and maths learning.

The competition attracted more than 1,000 entries from schools around the country. NFU President Minette Batters said: "It has been great to see so many children here today getting excited about food and farming, asking about where the food they love comes from and how farmers produce it.

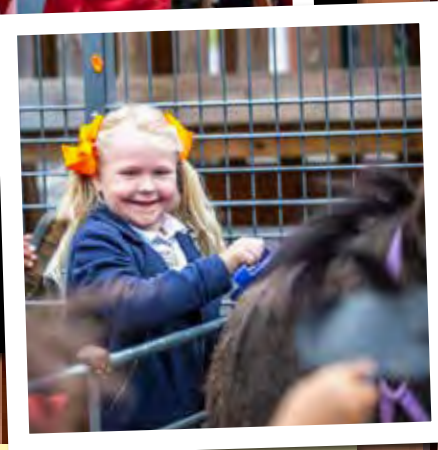
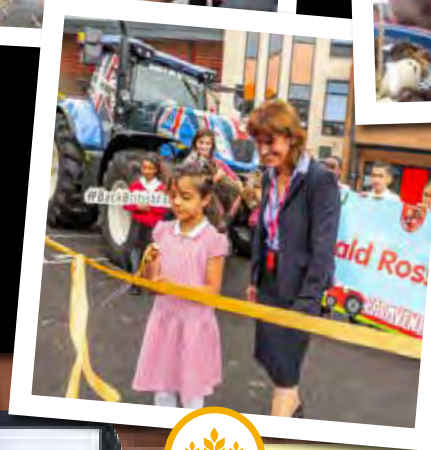
"That's what our Farmvention competition is all about – bridging the gap between the next generation, especially those in urban areas, and the food on their plates."

Ronald Ross Headteacher Abby Brady said: "Farmvention has shown our pupils that there are amazing opportunities awaiting them in Britain's countryside. It has really helped

1 TRACTOR
30 ANIMALS
240+ CHILDREN

broaden their horizons, especially as many of the children haven't been outside of London.

"As a headteacher there's nothing better than pupils who are enthusiastic about learning and it's been amazing to see them so excited to experience new things. I think it's safe to say that all the children have loved stepping into the shoes of our wonderful farmers."



E10 DELAY 'RIDICULOUS'

Adding more bioethanol to UK fuel is an "absolute no brainer" that would benefit the environment, support farmers and create thousands of green jobs, MPs and peers have told the government in an APPG inquiry.

"There has been a ridiculous amount of procrastination," said NFU Crops Board Chairman Tom Bradshaw (below).

As well as boosting demand, the introduction of E10 would build a secure market for wheat growers. He said: "Now is the time for legislative action. The government needs to step up with policy, especially if we are to hit their target of becoming a net-zero economy by 2050."

The inquiry supported evidence that the NFU had contributed, which backs a doubling of biofuel in petrol blends from the current 5%. The APPG members say the "fog of Brexit" has distracted government from making the move, putting the UK's £1 billion biofuel industry at risk, and farmers' livelihoods.

**MAKING THE CHANGE
WOULD BE EQUIVALENT
TO TAKING
700,000
CARS OFF THE ROADS**



'BE MORE AMBITIOUS' RPA TOLD



The NFU has told the RPA to be more ambitious, after the payments organisation made the decision to change its delivery mechanism for agri-environment scheme holders. Instead of the current system, the RPA will make one payment for the total value of the annual claim.

The move is intended to help the RPA deliver a full, timely payment for both ELS/HLS and Countryside Stewardship claims going forward.

The NFU welcomed the improvements but highlighted concerns, including the need for a suitable mechanism to ensure payments can be made to inspection cases. And it called for a more ambitious payment delivery target than the current commitment of everything by the end of June 2020.

NFU PRAISES GCA

Groceries Code Adjudicator (GCA) Christine Tacon will step down at the end of her term in June 2020, the GCA annual conference heard.

The NFU said Ms Tacon's clear interpretation of the Groceries Supply Code of Practice (GSCOP) had "played a major role in changing the culture and behaviours of the UK's biggest retailers".

"We would like to see this continued once her successor is appointed," NFU President Minette Batters added.

GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO GET SMART ON WATER

With some regions of the country threatened by an agricultural drought and others facing a deluge of rainwater, the NFU's Stuart Roberts called for more joined-up thinking, planning and action when it comes to the way we manage water.

He said: "Central government needs to use home-grown water resource specialists and flood risk hydrologists to develop a robust, ambitious and holistic plan that will safeguard water as a resource for the agricultural sector and for general consumption."

IN JULY, SOME AREAS SAW
113MM OF RAIN IN
3 HOURS

SAFETY FIRST

As harvest began, the NFU reiterated the importance of health and safety at several member-focused events. The organisation reminded growers of simple but effective ways they can stay safe this summer as more agricultural vehicles take to the roads and fields.

NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts (below) said: "It's easy to get caught up in a hectic harvest. It's an incredibly busy period for all arable farmers and quite often we're working long hours to get the job done."



£15m secured from Defra

The second round of funding for Defra's Countryside Productivity Small Grants scheme opened for applications, with a total of £15 million available.

Following input from the NFU, the list of eligible equipment for Round Two features 26 new items, including chlorophyll meters and a portable ammonia analyser, which can be used to check the levels of ammonia in farm buildings. Businesses can apply for grants of between £3,000 and £12,000 to help invest in equipment and achieve improvements in technical efficiency, animal health and welfare, resource efficiency or nutrient management.

NFU Deputy President Guy Smith (above right) said: "It has been a frustrating few months due to the delays in opening the application window for round two, which was promised in early 2019.

"We have been liaising closely with Defra and the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) to make improvements and are pleased that the list of equipment available for farmers to invest in, such as GPS systems for precision farming, has increased.

"Schemes like this are hugely valuable because they help boost productivity, while maintaining the same level of inputs. This then creates improved profitability enabling farmers to re-invest in their businesses."

NFU SUCCESSFULLY IDENTIFIES 26 NEW ITEMS FOR CPSG ROUND TWO

FARMING'S VOICE HEARD

NFU President Minette Batters explained why farming would be one of the most exposed sectors when it comes to a no-deal Brexit, when she appeared on the Sky News *Sophy Ridge on Sunday* programme. Mrs Batters highlighted how farmers could see a tide of imports produced to lower standards. The NFU also organised an interview with *BBC Breakfast* for NFU Horticulture and Potatoes Board Chairman Ali Capper (pictured below).

Mrs Capper outlined why the NFU is telling government that the seasonal agricultural workers' pilot scheme needs to be increased to at least

30,000 permits



AUGUST 2019

"AS WE'VE DIVERSIFIED INTO A WOODCHIP BUSINESS, WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO TAP INTO THE EXPERT ADVICE PROVIDED THROUGH THE NFU ENERGY SERVICE. THEY HAVE HELPED US COMPLETE A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF PAPERWORK AND APPLICATIONS."

Huw Owen, sheep and woodchip diversification, Llanwrst, Wales



2018/19: YOUR BENEFITS
Members saved more than
£19,000
on agricultural tyres

Protecting standards

The government must move quickly to protect the UK's food values in law, NFU President Minette Batters told BBC Radio 4's flagship *Today* programme.

She was responding to comments in August from Zippy Duvall, head of the NFU-equivalent US Farm Bureau, who said the UK would have to accept US food standards as part of any trade deal.

He said fears over practices banned in the EU, such as chlorine washing chicken, were ill-founded.

"The US is talking about food safety," Mrs Batters responded: "They are not talking about standards, animal welfare or environmental protection because they don't currently have that sort of national legislation in place.

"There's a judgement call here. Are we going to hold our nerve or sacrifice our food values?"

More than a million people tune in to *Today* each morning.



"BRITISH FARMERS MEET THE VALUES OF THE BRITISH PUBLIC IN HOW OUR FOOD IS PRODUCED. THOSE VALUES MUST NOT BE SACRIFICED IN THE PURSUIT OF TRADE DEALS."
NFU PRESIDENT MINETTE BATTERS

NFU issues food 'wake up call'

We must commit as a nation to keeping Britain's food self-sufficiency above the current 61%, the NFU said as 2019 passed an important milestone.

'Self-sufficiency Day', created by the NFU, is the notional date we would run out of food if we relied solely on British produce. This year it fell on 11 August.

NFU President Minette Batters said the date should act as a "wake-up call" during a pivotal period for British farming – and that message struck a chord with the media.

The *Sunday Times* ran a column from Minette and she was interviewed by Sky News. *Farming Today*, *BBC Breakfast*, *BBC Radio 4*, *BBC Radio 5 Live* and *LBC radio* also covered the story.



Beef: Match levy promo, says NFU

Red meat processors should match the AHDB's promotional investment pound for pound to help beat the beef crisis, the NFU said, as farmers continued to suffer prices at three-year lows.

NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts urged

the processors to work with the levy board to create effective marketing campaigns.

The NFU also helped thousands of farming advocates in the great British public to be heard by highlighting a range of shareable infographics available in the NFU Red Meat Hub, and through the AHDB's Simply Beef and Lamb website.



BREXIT

German backing on Brexit

Common ground was found when NFU President Minette Batters met her equivalent at the German farmers' union, DBV, in Berlin. In a joint statement afterwards, Mrs Batters and Joachim Rukwied agreed on the need for an orderly Brexit, frictionless trade, the protection of high farming standards and policy support for farming's climate change ambitions.

Flood funds

Following compelling NFU calls for urgent support, Defra announced it would make up to £2 million available to help farmers affected by flooding in Wainfleet, Lincolnshire (pictured), and in North Yorkshire.



1,926: THE NUMBER OF STORIES IN THE MEDIA FEATURING THE NFU IN AUGUST. IF THAT COVERAGE HAD BEEN ADVERTISING, IT WOULD HAVE COST

£3.8M

CRIME

Crime costs underline NFU campaigning

Police, government and local authorities must become as organised as the criminals behind a rising tide of rural crime, the NFU said in August.

The call came as figures from the 2019 NFU Mutual Rural Crime Report showed the cost of claims rose to £49.9 million in 2018. That was a 12% increase on 2017 and the biggest bill since 2011. Thefts of high-value tractors, quad bikes and other farm vehicles drove the findings, with claims there up 22% to total £10m in 2018.

NFU Deputy President Guy Smith (pictured) said: "The findings reinforce what we have been hearing from members and underline why the NFU has focused on this issue in 2019.

"There needs to be a co-ordinated, strategic approach between police, government and local authorities on rural crime. Serious, organised criminals are committing these offences and it needs a serious approach to tackle them."



£49.9M: THE CLAIMS COST FOR RURAL CRIME IN 2018

Aiming high

The NFU Discovery Barn showed thousands of British families where their food comes from when the crew touched down at the Bristol Balloon Festival.

The engaging educational exhibit joined an estimated 500,000 visitors.

While there was plenty of fun milking Annabelle the cow and taking part in activities and games, NFU President Minette Batters said appearances at large-scale events played a vital role.

"It's more important than ever to get the public behind the nation's food producers," she said.

"The NFU wants visitors to join more than 28,000 existing supporters in backing British farming, sending a clear message that food production must be

prioritised by the government as we grow closer to the Brexit deadline."



NFU IN EARLY WITH SOS



Just days after she took up her post, the NFU arranged for new Defra Secretary of State Theresa Villiers to tour NFU President Minette Batters' farm. A variety of current farming issues were discussed.

WORRIED ABOUT CLIMATE? BUY BRITISH BEEF



A "simplistic" decision by Goldsmiths, University of London, to ban beef from its food outlets demonstrated a lack of understanding about British farming, the NFU said.

The move was part of a series of measures aimed at helping to tackle climate change. Beef was the only foodstuff affected.

After meeting with Goldsmiths, NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts said: "Our farmers are among the most efficient in the world, with livestock grazing in extensive, grass-based systems with a greenhouse gas footprint some 2.5 times smaller than the global average.

"We will not halt climate change by exporting production to countries which may not have the same environmental ambition.

"ANYONE WANTING TO PLAY THEIR PART IN HELPING OUR PLANET SHOULD BUY BRITISH BEEF, REARED TO SOME OF THE HIGHEST, MOST SUSTAINABLE STANDARDS IN THE WORLD."

Primetime farming

The NFU was instrumental in securing a week-long look at farming, with programming across the BBC. The Focus on Farming Week was a direct result of a meeting held with President Minette Batters, senior NFU staff and BBC executives, which came after a series of complaint letters and rebuttals to the corporation's coverage of livestock throughout 2019.

Working behind the scenes to shape and influence coverage, NFU staff and members ensured a positive portrayal of British farming and growing was heard as a series of reports delved deeper into climate change, Brexit, the agricultural environment, welfare and diversity, and the sector's next generation.

Pictured (from top): The *BBC Breakfast* sofa at Joe Stanley's Leicestershire farm; NFU expert Sam Durham talks about rural crime; and Michael Sly tells how farmers protect the environment.



NFU HITS BACK ON 'GO VEGGIE' BIAS ON BBC

The NFU wrote to the BBC to complain over its "misreporting" of an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) study into worldwide land use.

A succession of pieces on the BBC, and elsewhere, focused on switching to plant-based diets to tackle climate change, while ignoring the range of IPCC findings. NFU President Minette Batters said: "Having gone through the report in detail, it is clear the IPCC recognises the important role animal products play in a balanced diet.

"Changing to veganism or becoming vegetarian is not mentioned anywhere. The report authors said 'we're not talking about giving up meat in this report at all'."

The NFU appeared across the national press to set the record straight and our voice was heard, which resulted in a week of coverage dedicated to agriculture called Focus On Farming Week (see left).



NFU TARGETS MINISTERS ON E10 PETROL

Adding more bioethanol to UK fuel would benefit the environment, help protect farmers from volatile markets, create thousands of green jobs and could play a huge part in meeting government ambitions for a net zero economy.

That was the message from the NFU in letters to key ministers, as it maintained the pressure for the introduction of the 'E10' mix – a doubling of the 5% biofuel in current petrol blends (see July).

Defra Secretary Theresa Villiers, Andrea Leadsom (Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) and Grant Shapps (Transport) were among those contacted.

A PASSIONATE NFU PLEA: BE SAFE, ALL YEAR ROUND

There was passionate discussion focused on immediate action at NFU Council after the Health and Safety Executive released its 2018/19 figures for fatal injuries in agriculture.

The 39 deaths recorded last year was six higher than the five-year average, and included two children.

NFU Vice-President Stuart Roberts said: "The conversation around health and safety is changing, but the figures show that conversation isn't enough.

"All of us need to put words into action and commit to making real changes.

"Effective safety measures are a fundamental part of any successful business. They are not an add-on."

The NFU has held events around the country in 2019 to boost safe thinking, and has played a leading role in the Farm Safety Partnership drive to halve deaths in the industry by 2023.

More than 900 farmers attended NFU safety workshops this summer



AROUND THE REGIONS

NORTH WEST

CAMPAIGNING IN CHESHIRE TO MAKE PTO SHAFTS SAFER

The NFU in Cheshire campaigned alongside the YFC and machinery companies to help make power take-off (PTO) drive shafts safer.

In May alone, the first month of the campaign, 190 PTOs were repaired or replaced – an amazing achievement.

CUMBRIA PILOT SCHEME GAINS NFU 40 NEW ADVOCATES

The NFU launched its Cumbrian Farming Ambassador pilot in September 2018. Ambassador members have received training in chairmanship skills, presentation skills and media training as well as updates in various policy areas.

These farmers now speak up for

the industry in the media, in schools and with elected representatives.

LANCASHIRE FARMER HONoured FOR GRASSROOTS COMMITMENT TO NFU

Lancashire livestock farmer John Alpe was selected as the winner of this year's NFU Meurig Raymond Award for his outstanding work in engaging with schools to raise the profile of food and farming.

Mr Alpe, a passionate supporter of NFU Education, is an ambassador for the organisation's Farmvention initiative and does all he can to encourage NFU members nationwide to get behind the campaign, setting himself a target each year of visiting at least 25 schools to spread the word.



NORTH EAST

NFU HELPS SECURE LYNX RESULT

After years of NFU lobbying, Defra Secretary of State Michael Gove rejected the Lynx UK application to reintroduce lynx into Kielder Forest after it failed to demonstrate local 'buy-in' and address livestock welfare concerns.

NFU TRAINS POLICE CALL HANDLERS

The NFU has forged strong relationships with all police forces in the North East. Innovative approaches have included training officers to identify and handle sheep, helping 101 call handlers understand rural crime and join operations to combat border crime.

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

As part of a drive to highlight the importance of mental health and wellbeing in farming, a ground-breaking conference on the subject was staged by the NFU North East in 2018, followed by a whole raft of smaller meetings across the region that attracted more than 200 members.



EAST ANGLIA

NFU SECURES FUTURE FOR NORWICH LIVESTOCK MARKET

After NFU-backed legal action confirming Norwich City Council's obligation to maintain a livestock market within the city, the NFU is working with other parties to secure a new site. Maintaining the market, one of only two in East Anglia, is vital for local livestock farmers, the rural economy and the grazing landscape.

NFU HIGHLIGHTS PRE-HARVEST SAFETY MESSAGES

Ahead of the 2019 harvest, NFU East Anglia organised five health and safety events across the region (pictured right). More than 600 farmers and farm workers attended to find out more about vehicle safety, speed and weight legislation, the dangers of working under powerlines and advice on fire prevention.

NFU GAINS LOWLAND GRAZING SUPPORT FOR FARMERS

NFU East Anglia has led on developing a test and trial for Defra's new Environmental Land Management Scheme of lowland grazing options in the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads. If successful, it will provide lowland-grazing members nationwide with a scheme that is fit for purpose.



SOUTH EAST

NFU SOUTH EAST HELPS SHAPE RURAL POLICING ACROSS

NFU representation to police chiefs and police and crime commissioners has resulted in Kent Police appointing six extra officers to tackle rural crime. Surrey Police is training up police and support officers in its fight against rural crime (pictured below).

MODIFIED POLICIES WITHIN THE SOUTH DOWNS

In England's newest National Park, the South Downs, NFU South East has contributed to modified policies within the South Downs Local Plan in favour of farming— this plan was formally adopted in July.

WATER ON TAP FOR KENT FIREFIGHTERS

NFU South East has helped forged an innovative partnership between farmers and Kent Fire & Rescue Service. Spearheaded by NFU member Guy Eckley, it enables firefighters to tackle rural fires via an on-farm water project by allowing fire engines to tap into emergency water supplies. It is hoped this initiative could save valuable time in the initial phase of fighting rural fires.



EAST MIDLANDS

NFU ON THE GROUND HELPING FARMERS HIT BY WAINFLEET FLOODS

When the Steeping Relief Channel flood bank breached in south Lincolnshire in June 2019 and flooded thousands of acres of farmland, the NFU response swung into action (below). NFU East Midlands environment adviser Simon Fisher kept members informed with the latest developments, liaising with and advising the emergency services.

NFU TEAMWORK STAVES OFF FARMLAND FLOODING IN NORTH Lincs

Bottesford Beck near Scunthorpe was stuffed with silt, leading to extensive flooding on neighbouring farmland, and local members had been fighting for 20 years to get it sorted. But with NFU legal staff and successive East Midlands environment advisers Paul Tame and Simon Fisher working on the case, a group of farmers finally got permission to dig out the silt, meaning more than 100 acres of farmland is now back in production.

NFU EAST MIDLANDS BREXIT CONFERENCE

The NFU East Midlands brought together experts from the NFU, Defra and other organisations to give members the key facts about Brexit and its impact on farming at a conference, held at Newark Showground in Nottinghamshire in November 2018. It was chaired by NFU Deputy President Guy Smith, and helped members cut through the rhetoric and spin surrounding Brexit to give them as clear a picture as possible of proceedings.



SOUTH WEST

INCREASE TO BADGER CONTROL AREA

For the fifth year running, the number of areas licensed to control badgers as part of the government's TB eradication strategy has increased. The cull now covers thousands of farms across about 80% of the region and is leading to a drop in herds under restriction and the number of cattle removed due to TB.

NFU DRONE TO HELP TACKLE RURAL CRIME

Hundreds of farmers across Wiltshire (a particular target for hare coursers) are expected to benefit from the new NFU drone, which will be used by the local police rural crime team to help find criminals on farmland, gather evidence for prosecutions and capture the full extent of criminal damage.

DILUTING IMPACT OF POLLUTION REGULATIONS

The NFU is working with farmers in the catchment area of Poole Harbour to develop a pioneering management scheme to reduce the amount of nutrients going into the harbour, create opportunities for farming, open up new income streams and improve the environment. This is an alternative to the imposition of a Water Protection Zone, which would have a severe effect on many farm businesses.



WEST MIDLANDS

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION

West Midlands' next generation farmers joined the NFU for a tour of Aldi's head office and regional distribution centre and to PDM Salad Growers. The visits followed on from previous next generation events, organised by the NFU regional team, to nurture farming leaders and industry advocates of the future.

REGION GETS UP TO SPEED WITH NEW ABSTRACTION RULES

The NFU organised a series of meetings and drop-in sessions to help farmers and growers new to abstraction licensing or those who needed a licence, having previously been exempt. The sessions looked at the new regulations and provided a refresher on abstraction by taking the whole process back to basics.

NFU WEST MIDLANDS LAUNCHES HOME-GROWN HEARTLAND CAMPAIGN REPORT

The NFU Home-grown Heartland campaign (left) saw West Midlands' farmers make the case for the farming, food and drink industry's contribution to the economy, jobs, the environment and communities. MPs and their advisers met the NFU in the Jubilee Room, Westminster, and showcase a new report and raise the profile of the food and drink sector in the region.

Leading on 'Brexit & Our Land'

NFU Cymru engaged with over 2,500 members and ensured over 2,800 farmers and allied businesses submitted their own unique responses to the Welsh Government consultation (David Davies MP pictured below on a farm visit with NFU Cymru members).

Via a designated consultation hub at NFU-cymru.org.uk, 17,000 emails were sent to assembly members across Wales encouraging them to make farmers' views heard when new policies are debated in Senedd.



NFU CYMRU FUNDS LEGAL ADVICE ON WATER REGULATION

Thanks to legal advice secured by NFU Cymru the Welsh Government confirmed that any new regulation on agricultural pollution would be subject to full consideration of available evidence as well as the findings of a Regulatory Impact Analysis. NFU Cymru is also leading an industry-wide farmer led approach to Nutrient Management in Wales to show that a farmer led approach can deliver a better alternative than regulation.



£2 MILLION SECURED FOR RED MEAT BENCHMARKING



NFU Cymru lobbying secured £2 million that allowed 1,600 red meat farmers to receive a payment of £1,000 each to undertake benchmarking of their businesses.

NFU CYMRU SECURED BPS LOAN

NFU Cymru secured a BPS loan so that every Wales BPS claimant in 2018 had the opportunity to apply and receive 70% of their BPS in December.

IN 2019, CLAIMANTS WILL APPLY AND RECEIVE 90% OF BPS

NFU CYMRU PURSUES MEANINGFUL TB POLICY



NFU Cymru is working hard to maintain individual valuation for bovine Tb compulsory slaughtered cattle in Wales. The organisation has developed detailed protocols to assist with licence applications for badger control measures in Wales and is actively considering submitting applications for certain parts of Wales.

NOTES

REGIONAL CONTACT INFORMATION

NORTH EAST

Agriculture House,
207 Tadcaster Road, York YO24 1UD
Tel: 01904 451550
Fax: 01904 451560
On Twitter: @NFUNorthEast

NORTH WEST

Agriculture House,
1 Moss Lane View, Skelmersdale,
Lancashire WN8 9TL
Tel: 01695 554900
Fax: 01695 554901
On Twitter: @NFUNorthWest

EAST MIDLANDS

Agriculture House,
North Gate, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9NX
Tel: 01572 824250
Fax: 01572 824251
On Twitter: @NFUEastMidlands

WEST MIDLANDS

Agriculture House,
Southwater Way, Telford, Shropshire TF3 4NR
Tel: 01952 400500
Fax: 01952 409380
On Twitter: @NFUWestMids

NFU CYMRU

Agriculture House,
Royal Welsh Showground, Llanelwedd,
Powys LD2 3TU
Tel: 01982 554200
On Twitter: @NFUCymru

EAST ANGLIA

Agriculture House,
Willie Snaith Road, Newmarket,
Suffolk CB8 7SN
Tel: 01638 672100
On Twitter: @NFUEastAnglia

SOUTH EAST

Unit 8,
Rotherbrook Court, Bedford Road,
Petersfield, Hampshire GU32 3QG
Tel: 01730 711950
Fax: 01730 711951
On Twitter: @NFUSouthEast

SOUTH WEST

Agriculture House,
Pynes Hill, Rydon Lane, Exeter EX2 5ST
Tel: 01392 440700
Fax: 01392 440701
On Twitter: @NFUSouthWest



**National Farmers' Union, Agriculture House,
Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire CV8 2TZ**



024 7685 8500



NFUonline.com

