



CHAVEREYS

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS & FINANCIAL ALCHEMISTS



Monthly Farming Update

July 2026

Policy issues

1. The Government has published 'Farming Roadmap 2050' and also its response to the Farming Profitability Review conducted by Baroness Minette Batters. Lots of fine words, must have cost a fortune. However, actions speak louder than words, it remains to be seen how matters will develop in practice – see comment below from the Review's author.
2. Giving evidence to the National Resilience Committee, Baroness Minette Batters has advised that food is 'not at the heart of Whitehall' and the government 'lacks a plan.' She also called for a 'radical reset' at Defra, criticising the lack of 'commercial experience' to deal with food security.
3. Science for Sustainable Agriculture has published UK Food Security – Outlook to 2050. Relevant points include:
 - Competing land use demands, including housing, solar infrastructure, tree planting and carbon offsetting could result in the potential loss of 23 per cent of currently farmed land.
 - Unless the current trend is mitigated, there could be a fall of 32 per cent in domestic food production.
 - The world population is expected to reach 9.5 billions by 2050, almost entirely due to people living longer. As a result, according to Jack Bobo of UCLA Rothman Family Institute for Food Studies, the world will not need more food but the food production system will need to ensure that food is produced by resilient systems which can survive global shocks.Three factors will influence the future of food production systems and emerging food trends:
 - Profit – more collaboration is needed between farmers and the supply chain as government is unlikely to incentivise food production.
 - Climate change – food production systems must adapt to a changing climate as it is expected to increase the cost of the UK food system by up to £2.6 billions by 2050.
 - Unlike in Scotland, there is no regulatory requirement underpinning food strategies in Wales or England, nor any explicit target for food production at a UK level. Will non-statutory approaches deliver the same level of focus, accountability and tangible impact as is planned in Scotland?
4. Defra has published the United Kingdom International Action Plan for Plant Health 2026-2030. The UK Plant Health Service has agreed 20 international ambitions to help protect our plants:
 - Support the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) objective of strengthening pest outbreak alert and response systems.
 - Collaborate with Botanic Gardens Conservation International to augment the International Plant Sentinel Network.
 - Notify plant health risks in the International Natural Hazard Forward Look.

- Support commodity and pathway specific standards, with accompanying diagnostic protocols, phytosanitary treatments and guidance.
- Develop guidance on the use of third-party entities to perform phytosanitary actions.
- Influence the development of European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation and IPPC standards.
- Support the harmonisation of electronic data exchange by implementing a global system for production and exchange of electronic phytosanitary certificate information by 2030.
- Support the establishment of a network of diagnostic laboratory services and diagnostic protocols.
- Support the management of e-commerce and postal and courier pathways.
- Advance the plant health systems of other countries.
- Establish markets and secure trade agreements with other countries.
- Support the assessment and management of climate change impacts on plant health.
- Support global phytosanitary research cooperation.
- Engage in global research initiatives.
- Second plant health professionals to other countries.
- Support the legacy of the International Year of Plant Health.
- Raise the profile of plant health in global One Health activities.
- Be represented on IPPC and EPPO and increase participation in WTO-SPS events.
- Strengthen the relationship with Canada, USA, Australia and New Zealand.
- Strengthen relations with Ireland.

Reform

1. Defra has advised that the budget for SFI26 will be £240 millions. Up to £60 millions has been allocated to Window 1. Any surplus from Window 1 will be added to Window 2. Updates will be published when 25 per cent, 50 per cent and 75 per cent of the budget has been taken up.
2. The Sustainable Farming Incentive 2026 has opened to small farms and farms without an existing Environmental Land Management revenue agreement. A cap of £100,000 per year will apply to all agreements and only one agreement can apply to each farming business.
3. The NFU has warned Defra that funding is inadequate to meet demand or cover the investment farm businesses are making in the public goods being delivered for the environment.
4. Defra has announced that at least £50 millions will be available this year for new Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier agreements.
5. AHDB has launched a Sustainable Farming Incentive cost/benefit tool to help farmers assess how SFI actions could affect their businesses.

Grants/regulations/legislation/environment

1. Richard Bailey, a retired gamekeeper now conservation adviser in the Peak District, has warned the House of Commons Environment Select Committee that the Government's ban on burning risks fuelling deadly fires in the countryside due to the increased amount of vegetation in uplands.
2. The Mid Cornwall Moors has been declared the 14th site in the King's Series of National Nature Reserves. It will comprise 1,100 hectares in central Cornwall and will be overseen by Natural England, Cornwall Wildlife Trust, Cornwall Heritage Trust, the Gaia Trust and Imerys, a mineral processing company.
3. Funding for larger farmer-led innovation projects through the latest round of the ADOPT fund has been increased to cover maximum eligible project costs of £200,000, previously £100,000.
4. The Environmental Baseline Pilot has been reported on by AHDB with support from Quality Meat Scotland and Hybu Cig Cymru. The study involves 178 farms across England, Wales and Scotland and covers all agricultural sectors. It is one of the most detailed assessments of carbon stocks ever undertaken. It involved taking 53,000 soil cores across over 5,000 fields using soil sampling to depths of up to one metre alongside LiDAR scanning of above-ground features. Early findings show:
 - 95 per cent of estimated carbon stocks on participating farms are held in soils with the remainder in hedges and trees.
 - 30 per cent or more of soil organic carbon stock sits below a depth of 30cm.
 - The average soil carbon stock is 128 tonnes per hectare, but some fields exceed 600 tonnes per hectare.
 - Farmland in the Cambridgeshire Fens and the Somerset Levels has returned the highest values.
5. Partly as a result of a fall in livestock numbers, Scottish greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture have been recorded at 7.5 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent in 2024/25, down overall by 0.4 per cent despite a 15.3 per cent increase in fuel consumption emissions.
6. £50 millions has been awarded to Somerset Council to fund a range of flood resilience measures including improved water management infrastructure, enhanced flood defence systems, nature-based solutions and better watercourse maintenance.
7. The Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust has published a report on the impact of the erratic weather conditions in 2025 on insect populations. Key points include:

- Non-crop habitats, such as field margins, flower-rich strips, hedgerows and semi-permanent habitats, produced Chick Food Indices 3-5 times higher than those in cropped areas, with over 50 per cent exceeding the index threshold to provide stable grey partridge numbers.
 - Non-crop habitats contained higher numbers of all key chick-feed groups such as caterpillars, spiders, harvestmen and flies whereas cropped areas were often dominated by a single species, such as aphids which provide limited ecological value.
 - Well-established habitat provided double the chick food index value of newly created ones.
 - Providing a diverse range of semi-natural habitats with good habitat management is crucial to support farmland insect and bird populations.
- 8.** Defra has announced that the Government Estate Nature Plan is to operate on a more co-ordinated, whole estate approach rather than on a fragmented site-by-site basis. The plan covers 577,000 hectares, 4 per cent of all of England's land, and the Government will apply the Land Use Framework to its own estate. The new plan will introduce a range of pilot projects on operational land including defence training areas, transport corridors and prison grounds which will inform future, larger-scale projects.
- 9.** The Welsh Government has committed £10 millions to the Nature Networks Fund to restore biodiversity, create jobs and strengthen connections between communities and their environment. Further, a Climate and Nature Plan is to be developed with the aim of delivering net zero by 2040 and substantive nature recovery by 2050.
- 10.** Defra has launched three schemes designed to address the deterioration in England's peat soils:
- The Lowland Peat Water Implementation Grant, with £36 millions available, will fund local water projects to install infrastructure that raises and manages water tables in lowland peat soils.
 - The Paludiculture and Wetter Farming Fund, will contribute up to £10 millions to fund research into growing and harvesting crops on wetter peat soils. Trials have seen wetland plants and bulrush used in building materials and insulation for jackets.
 - The Peatland Restoration Sector Capacity Grant will use £1.15 millions to fund training, apprenticeships, equipment and community engagement to grow the workforce and skills needed to deliver peatland restoration.
- 11.** RABI has opened applications for its Return to School Grant. It is open to children aged 4 to 16 with a maximum of 6 children per household. The grant is £200 per child, and a total of 4,000 grants will be available.

12. AgriSound has been awarded with UK Adopt funding to work with York St John University, Tasker Partnership and PJ Stirling to make strawberry pollination more measurable and increase yields. Sensors will monitor pollinator activity during flowering and evidence from the 2026 season will inform a replicated commercial-scale trial in 2027, where decisions will guide hive placement, replacement timing and targeted pollination interventions.
13. Up to £3.2 millions is being provided by the Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme to restore moorland and peatland in the North York Moors National Park following the Fylingdales wildfire last summer.
14. An outbreak of American Foulbrood has been confirmed in a single beehive in Kincardineshire.
15. The James Hutton Institute has been awarded £40,000 by the Macaulay Development Trust to create interactive 3D representations of Scottish landscapes using data and immersive technology.
16. The Scottish Government has allocated £1 million to the Clyde, Fife, Lothians and Forth 'Climate Forests' to fund more tree planting.

Other matters of farm finance and tenure

1. An estimate of Total Income from Farming (TIFF) in the UK in 2025 has been published:
 - TIFF increased by 20.5 per cent to £8.4 billions.
 - Livestock output increased by 10.2 per cent to £22.2billions.
 - Crop output fell by 3.1 per cent to £11.4 billions.
 - Agriculture's contribution to the economy grew by 10 per cent to £15.9 billions, 0.58 per cent of the total.
 - In terms of output, livestock contributed 54.3 per cent; crops 28 per cent; subsidies 8.2 per cent; diversification 5.5 per cent; and other activities 4 per cent.
 - Output of milk grew by 12 per cent to £7.049 billions; beef by 22.8 per cent to £5.084 billions; poultry by 0.5 per cent to £3.367 billions; mutton and lamb by 5.9 per cent to £1.867 billions; pigmeat by 0.7 per cent to £1.828 billions; and eggs by 7.1 per cent to £1.456 billions.
 - Output of wheat grew by 0.5 per cent to £2.132 billions; fresh vegetables by 0.4 per cent to £2.117 billions; fruit by 5 per cent to £1.137 billions; oilseed rape by 20.4 per cent to £408 millions; and forage plants by 2.1 per cent to £247 millions. However, there were falls of 5.4 per cent for potatoes to £1.463 billions; 16.7 per cent for barley to £957 millions; 4 per cent for other crop products to £665 millions; 19.7 per cent for other industrial crops to £445 millions; and 2 per cent for plants and flowers to £1.616 billions.
 - Of all outputs, general inputs fell by 0.5 per cent to 67.2 per cent; consumption of fixed capital rose by 0.5 per cent to 17.6 per cent; labour rose by 0.2 per cent to 11.4 per cent; and other costs fell by 0.2 per cent to 3.8 per cent.

- As regards inputs, there were increases in other goods and services, up 4.2 per cent to £4.227 billions; maintenance, up 3.9 per cent to £2.315 billions; fertilizers, up 5.5 per cent to £1.779 billions; seeds, up 2.2 per cent to £1.007 billions; and veterinary expenses, up 5.7 per cent to £598 millions. However, there were falls of 0.4 per cent for animal feed to £7.061 millions; motor and machinery fuels, 3.7 per cent to £1.047 billions; and chemicals, 4 per cent to £925 millions. Agricultural services and electricity and fuels for heating were unchanged at £1.641 billions and £812 millions respectively.
 - The net worth of the industry is estimated to be down 1.7 per cent at £389.447 billions.
2. A report by the Autonomy Institute has suggested that climate change will make fresh fruit and vegetables unaffordable for many within the next two decades. Heat waves are projected to add 11 per cent to the cost of the UK's top 20 fruit and vegetables by 2035 and 68 per cent by 2050 under a high-emissions scenario. In a low-emissions scenario, the increase by 2035 is forecast to be 8 per cent. The estimates are in addition to general inflation and do not factor in flooding, damage to infrastructure, soil erosion and degraded water quality. Total average shelf prices of the overall basket of fruit and vegetables will reach 170 per cent above current prices by 2050.
 3. An estimate of Total Factor Productivity of the UK agricultural industry in 2025 has been released:
 - Total Factor Productivity is estimated to have increased by 0.9 per cent.
 - The volume of outputs increased by 1.8 per cent while the volume of inputs increased by 0.9 per cent.
 - Regarding outputs, cereals increased by 3.2 per cent; industrial crops fell by 2.6 per cent; vegetables and horticultural products increased by 2.1 per cent; potatoes increased by 8.7 per cent; fruit increased by 1.2 per cent; livestock meat fell by 0.9 per cent; other livestock products increased by 5.1 per cent; and diversification increased by 0.6 per cent.
 - Regarding inputs, seeds increased by 2.9 per cent; energy increased by 0.5 per cent; fertilizers fell by 4.6 per cent; chemicals increased by 2.7 per cent; veterinary expenses fell by 0.8 per cent; animal feed increased by 5.7 per cent; maintenance fell by 0.1 per cent; labour fell by 1.1 per cent; land costs increased by 0.4 per cent; and the consumption of fixed capital increased by 0.1 per cent.
 - Productivity by reference to inputs fell by 0.5 per cent; by reference to capital consumption, it grew by 1.8 per cent; by reference to labour, it grew by 3 per cent; and by reference to land it grew by 1.5 per cent.
 4. The Farm Consultancy Group has reported on the latest changes to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
 - Developments of under 0.2 hectares will no longer need to meet BNG requirements. This should be of benefit to many farm projects.

- Developers will have increased flexibility to use off site land to meet BNG requirements making it easier to buy biodiversity units from farmers. This could increase demand for well-designed habitat schemes.
 - The method of measuring biodiversity is to be simplified.
5. The Agricultural Price Index for outputs for April fell by 6.9 per cent, compared to a year ago, and by 1 per cent compared to March. The index for inputs increased by 6.7 per cent and 2.5 per cent respectively.
6. Data has been published on Total Factor Productivity of the UK Food Chain 2024:
- In 2024, there was no significant change from 2023 while the wider economy grew by 0.4 per cent. In the previous 10 years, the average growth rate of the food chain was 0.8 per cent compared to 0.3 per cent in the wider economy.
 - The wholesale food sector grew by 0.4 per cent and the retail food sector by 1.2 per cent but manufacturing fell by 1.2 per cent and catering by 1.7 per cent.
 - The value of Gross Added Value for the food chain was £147.8 billions with catering at £46.1 billions, retailing at £44.1 billions, manufacturing £39.3 billions and wholesaling £18.3 billions.
7. Results of the February Farm Practices Survey England have been published:
- 69 per cent of holdings have a nutrient management plan, up by 5 per cent, while 21 per cent have no plan, down 3 per cent.
 - Where a plan is in place, 47 per cent have been produced by an adviser or contractor; 32 per cent were self-produced with professional advice; and 21 per cent were self-produced without advice.
 - 33 per cent of holdings calculate the whole farm nutrient balance every year; 8 per cent do it every other year; 29 per cent calculate every 3 years or more; and 30 per cent have never calculated.
 - 15 per cent of farms process any waste by anaerobic digestion, up 2 per cent.
 - 11 per cent of farms consider the greenhouse gas implications of their farming decisions to be very important; 43 per cent fairly important; 31 per cent not very important; 10 per cent not at all important; and 5 per cent believe their farms do not produce any emissions.
 - So as to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, 75 per cent are recycling waste from their farm; 69 per cent are improving energy efficiency; 68 per cent are reducing tillage; 59 per cent are improving nitrogen application accuracy; 52 per cent are increasing the use of clover; 45 per cent are improving manure/slurry application; 28 per cent are increasing legumes in arable rotation; 26 per cent are improving nitrogen feed efficiency; and 25 per cent are using precision farming techniques.
 - 37 per cent spread their own manure/slurry; 27 per cent use a contractor; and 16 per cent split spreading between themselves and a contractor.

- 24 per cent of livestock holdings use a ration formulation programme or expert nutritional advice when planning feeding regimes; 15 per cent do so most of the time; 13 per cent do so some of the time; 16 per cent rarely do; and 32 per cent never do so.
8. AHDB has developed Climate Resilience On-Farm Action Planners which are now available for beef, lamb and dairy enterprises, cereals and oilseeds.
 9. According to Savills, 13,840 hectares of farmland were put to the market in the first 4 months of the year, 8 per cent less than in the same period in 2025. However, 12 farms fell in the bracket 202ha-404ha, the largest since 2002.
 10. The Welsh Government has appointed a former NFU Cymru President as chair of an independent review into the bureaucratic burden on family farms.
 11. The Scottish Government has released data on Total Income from Farming (TIFF) estimates for 2025:
 - TIFF has reached a record level of £1.5 billions.
 - Agricultural output rose by 8 per cent to £5.1 billions.
 - The beef sector achieved a record high of £1.1 billions.
 - Support payments accounted for 40 per cent of all profit, down from the average of 64 per cent over the past 9 years.
 - Average farm income rose by 30 per cent to £58,800. Cereal farms' income fell to an average of £28,600; general cropping fell to £165,300; dairy farms rose by 85 per cent to £218,500, the second highest ever; and less favoured area livestock incomes rose by 88 per cent to £40,800.
 - 40 per cent of cereal farms and 25 per cent of general cropping farms incurred a loss with the total of loss-making farms greater than in 2024.
 12. Fieldwork Robotics, the robotic harvesting specialist, has secured funding of £2.5 millions from Seed Innovations, an AIM-quoted investing company.
 13. Under the Investigation and Commencement of Repair (Scotland) Regulations 2026, farms and estates in Scotland are responsible for damp and mould issues in let properties from 6 October and must take action within 10 weeks of being notified and the tenant must be advised of the results of the investigation, in writing, within 3 days of the consultant issuing a report. Remedial work must then commence within 5 days.
 14. The headline authorised mileage rate for approved mileage allowance payments has increased to 55p per business mile, the first increase for 15 years.

Product prices

A. Market background

1. Sterling closed marginally up against the Euro but down against the US Dollar this month. After opening the month at 86.6p per Euro, Sterling edged up in weeks one and two to 86.2p but fell back to 87.0p by the end of week 3. The final week saw a recovery and, by late June, it sat back at 86.2p per € (0.4p stronger overall). Against the US Dollar, Sterling opened at 74.3p per \$ and fell in marked steps at the end of weeks 1 (to 75.0p) and 3 (to 75.9p) from where it held relatively steady; by late June the rate had recovered marginally to 75.5p per \$ (down 1.2p).
2. The gold price continued to tail off as the tension in the Middle East showed signs of relaxation and with little change in risk with Russia / Ukraine. Opening at £3,386 per troy ounce, the average price fell to a mid-month low of £3,032 and bounced back to £3,261 before falling again to a late June average of £3,046 (down £340).
3. Crude oil prices fell back as the resolution to the Strait of Hormuz ‘issue’ appeared to be holding. The amplitude of daily swings subsided and the trend for the month was downward, levelling out by the end of the month. Brent Crude opened at \$93.26 per barrel and peaked at \$98.91, as a result of daily volatility, but by mid-month it had fallen below \$85, continuing thereafter at a slowing rate of decline, leading to a late June price of \$73.81 per barrel, down \$19.45 (\$6.04 above June 2025).

B. Crops

1. The cereals market fell this month as various market factors added pressure: improved cropping weather in the US and Northern Europe; positive updates to the northern hemisphere’s 2026 harvest forecasts; Sterling’s strength against the Euro and the falling crude oil price. Pushing against this, the dry conditions in northern Europe and UK have reduced maize yield expectations, the reality will become more obvious over time. The milling wheat premium is not moving very far from £10 per tonne. Feed wheat futures closed markedly down overall, having fallen away throughout the month; by late June, deliveries for November 2026 and 2027 were £177/tonne (-12) and £188/tonne (-9) respectively, with May 2028 deliveries opening the month at £205/tonne but closing at £195/tonne (-10). Oilseed rape prices fell back, acknowledging the approach of northern hemisphere harvest and the falling crude oil price.

Average spot prices in late June (per tonne ex-farm): feed wheat £177 (-7); milling wheat £187 (-7); feed barley £145 (-11); oilseed rape £427 (-49); feed peas £204 (-3); feed beans £231 (-4).

C. Livestock

1. The average liveweight cattle prices for steers and heifers both closed back where they started, but via different routes. The average steer price opened at 341p/kg lw and climbed to 344p/kg in the early days before promptly falling back to 341p/kg lw where it stayed and ultimately closed the month (unchanged and 20p/kg below the average a year earlier). The average finished heifer price moved differently but with a similar outcome: opening at 352p/kg lw it rose to an early peak of 360p/kg and fell to a low of 347p/kg before recovering and closing the month at 352p/kg (unchanged to sit 27p below the average a year earlier). The average dairy cow price retained its volatility and added some positivity: climbing from an opening position of £1,783 to peak first, mid-month, at £2,053 and then, after dropping back to £1,872, it progressed to peak at £2,477 per head where it closed the month (up £694 overall to sit £458 above the prior year average).
2. The average finished lamb price (new season SQQ liveweight) fell back from the significant gain seen last month, in line with expectation of the transition from old to new season. From an opening average of 467p/kg, the average price peaked in the opening days at 469p/kg before falling for the remainder of the month to a late June average of 424p/kg (down 43p, to sit 71p/kg above the average new season price a year earlier).
3. The average UK standard pig price (SPP deadweight) has been marginally more volatile. From an opening position of 179.6p/kg dw, it rose to 180.2p/kg and fell back to 177.9p/kg before a partial recovery to a late June average of 178.1p/kg (down 1.5p/kg overall to sit 28.9p/kg below the previous year).
4. The initial average UK all milk price for April, released in early June, was 33.99ppl, 0.78ppl below the revised March average of 34.77ppl (previously 35.05ppl) - 8.92ppl below the average a year earlier and 5.76ppl below the rolling 5-year average. The EU average milk price for April held largely static, rising 0.02ppl to 38.30ppl, to sit 8.31ppl below the price a year earlier.

Other crop news

1. The latest AHDB Planting and Variety Survey shows:
 - The barley area is down 12 per cent to 930,000 ha, the lowest since 2010 and 17 per cent below the 5-year average. The main fall is in spring barley.
 - The barley area in Scotland is down 13 per cent to 258,000 ha, the lowest level since the 1960s.
 - The share of varieties suitable for malting, brewing and distilling has fallen to 62 per cent.
 - The GB wheat area has increased 3 per cent to 1,711,000 ha, 1 per cent above the 5-year average. In Scotland, the wheat area is 116,000 ha, the highest since 1992.

- Group 1 wheat varieties have increased by 4 per cent to 33 per cent; Group 3 varieties have risen by 12 per cent, the highest since 2014; and Group 4 varieties have fallen to 44 per cent.
 - The oilseed rape area has risen by 49 per cent to 358,000 ha but the area is still below 2023 levels.
 - The oats area is down 15 per cent to 168,000 ha, the lowest since 2023.
 - The total cereals area is down 4 per cent to 2,808,000 ha, the lowest since 2006.
2. Rothamsted Research has drilled an emerging oilseed crop, camelina sativa, the first crop in the UK to receive a Precision Bred Organism Release Notice. The trial is to explore how gene editing can increase seed size and improve yield and oil content.
 3. The James Hutton Institute is to be a partner in PhenomUK, a £35 millions, 6-year infrastructure programme funded by the UK Research and Innovation Infrastructure Fund and led by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council. The aim is to accelerate the development of resilient crops so as to strengthen long-term food security. The project will deliver a co-ordinated, nationwide phenotyping infrastructure tracking crops from controlled environments to field conditions. The Institute's contribution centres on the Advanced Plant Growth Centre which includes facilities for molecular analysis, high-throughput phenotyping, vertical growth, post-harvest storage and controlled environments to simulate current and future climates.
 4. The Agricultural Price Index for April shows increases of 40.6 per cent for forage plants, compared to a year ago, and 12.6 per cent for fresh vegetables, but falls of 0.3 per cent for wheat, 2.5 per cent for barley, 14.4 per cent for oats, 30.8 per cent for potatoes, 6.6 per cent for oilseed rape and 18.1 per cent for fresh fruit. Compared to March, there were increases of 3.7 per cent for wheat, 1.7 per cent for barley, 3.3 per cent for oilseed rape, 8.7 per cent for fresh vegetables and 11.3 per cent for fresh fruit but there were falls of 2.2 per cent for oats, 28.1 per cent for potatoes and 0.9 per cent for forage plants.
 5. Wageningen University & Research has launched HortINspire, a new international network for protected cultivation, bringing together growers, companies, knowledge institutions and others from around the world to share knowledge and practical experience.
 6. The Processors and Growers Research Organisations is to establish the Pulse Performance Network, a new benchmarking tool. It will be accompanied by a dedicated app which will allow participants to record crop management information directly in the field.
 7. The latest GB Potatoes Confidence Survey reveals that 43 per cent of growers are pessimistic or very pessimistic about the year ahead while only 26 per cent are confident. However, as regards the 5-year outlook, 37 per cent are confident or very confident while only 24 per cent are pessimistic. Not surprisingly, 83 per cent lacked confidence in the relevance of Government policy to their needs.

8. Cambridgeshire-based LH Agro is to be the exclusive retrofit and aftermarket importer of Carbon Bee which introduces agricultural imaging and weed detection to agriculture. The SmartStriker X recognises over 20 crops species and various weed types enabling precise application in spot spraying and dual dose spraying modes. The system is designed for most types of sprayer, and is installed directly on the boom.
9. Developed by the Processors and Growers Research Organisation and ADAS, the Pea and Bean Yield Enhancement Network has brought together key measures of crop growth and performance into a set of practical developmental benchmarks that growers can use to compare how their own crops are progressing throughout the season.
10. Potato supplier Albert Bartlett has strengthened its partnership with Fera by funding 43 aphid-monitoring trap sites in Scotland and Jersey. Aphids pose a major threat to potato health and yields. As well as weakening plants by ingesting sap, they act as vectors for viruses including Potato Virus Y, Potato Leaf Roll Virus and Potato Virus A.
11. Cooperative InnoGrowers, Wageningen University & Research and Greenport West-Holland, all of the Netherlands, have commenced a project growing water lentils, or duckweed, in greenhouses for human consumption. Duckweed is a small fast-growing water plant, rich in vitamins and minerals, and can be cultivated sustainably. It grows in a closed environment on a thin layer of water with no land needed. Very high yields per hectare can be produced.
12. Data has been published on horticulture in the UK in 2025:
 - Production of vegetables increased by 8 per cent to 2.6 million tonnes while the value rose by 0.4 per cent to £2.1 billions.
 - Total supply increased by 3.1 per cent to 4.7 million tonnes with imports down 3 per cent to 2.1 million tonnes. Exports fell by 12 per cent to 66,000 tonnes.
 - Home production was 56 per cent of total supply, up 2 per cent. The planted area increased by 6.7 per cent to 104,000 hectares.
 - Field vegetables increased by 9 per cent to 2.4 million tonnes but the value only increased by 0.8 per cent to £1.7 billions. The area increased by 6.7 per cent to 103,000 hectares.
 - Production of protected vegetables fell by 0.3 per cent to 258,000 tonnes with the value down 1.1 per cent to £431 millions. The area increased by 4.7 per cent to 866 hectares.
 - Fruit production increased by 2.3 per cent to 577,000 tonnes while value increased by 5 per cent to £1.1 billions. The area fell by 3.9 per cent to 30,000 hectares.
 - The supply of fruit increased by 7.3 per cent to 4.1 million tonnes with imports up 8.2 per cent to 3.6 million tonnes. Exports increased by 12 per cent to 39,000 tonnes.

- Soft fruit production fell by 2.7 per cent to 39,000 tonnes but value increased by 6 per cent to £776 millions. The planted area fell by 6 per cent to 10,000 hectares.
 - Orchard fruit production grew by 3.9 per cent to 443,000 tonnes with value up 2.8 per cent to £361 millions. The planted area fell by 2.7 per cent to 19,000 hectares.
- 13.** The FLEXBOT project, led by Antobot along with the University of Surrey, Dogtooth Technologies Ltd and the UK Agri-Tech Centre, with funding from Innovate UK, aims to illustrate English Fruit farms' scalable productivity and profitability while encouraging a small ecosystem of add-on supplies and demonstrating the potential for cobot integration into other farm types. The objective is to move the fragmented and siloed agri-tech industry towards standardisation using mobile cobot platforms.
 - 14.** Cambridge HOK is to expand the Dyson Farming site in Lincolnshire with the addition of 17 acres of glasshouses, 14 acres of polytunnels, an additional cold store and an extension to the packhouse.
 - 15.** British Berry Growers has reported that this year's raspberry crop is testing at sugar levels of 11 to 12 Brix, compared with historic average readings of 8.
 - 16.** Belgian climate screen manufacturer, Phormium, has introduced a revolutionary transparent energy screen, Diamond. Features include:
 - Light transmission up to over 3 per cent higher than the existing market standard – a shading level of 8 per cent (Phormium method) or 23.6 per cent (WUR, NEN 2675).
 - Integrated DryTec technology for efficient moisture regulation and optimal light transmission during condensation on the screen.
 - 47 per cent energy savings.
 - 17.** UK fruit grower Mansfields commenced picking of cherries on 17 June, a week earlier than usual. The crop quality is reported to be excellent with fruit size up to 34mm.
 - 18.** A Guardian newspaper taste test has named Driscoll's Zara strawberries as the best overall supermarket strawberry. The crop is grown by Littywood Farm of Staffordshire and is marketed under Waitrose's No 1 range.
 - 19.** Wilkin & Sons in Tiptree, Esses, renowned growers of fruit for nearly 300 years, has harvested its first strawberries from their new 4-hectare Mini-Air fruit cover which captures rainwater and collects drain water, making the crop fully self-sufficient in water.

Other livestock news

- 1.** An independent steering group, established by Defra, has proposed a new bovine TB control strategy for England. The group's proposals, which have been accepted by Defra, include:

- More targeted and proportionate testing including gamma blood testing as well as skin testing to find infection earlier in higher-risk herds.
 - Changes to movement testing and clearer TB risk information.
 - More effective information between farmers, vets and the Animal & Plant Health Agency.
 - Improved tools such as TBHub and ibTB.
 - Faster local action when new TB risks emerge.
 - Preparation for cattle vaccination by 2030.
 - Expansion of badger vaccination in priority areas.
 - Improved disease surveillance in badgers, deer and other species to understand local risk.
- 2.** New rules have come into force in Wales aimed at eliminating Bovine Viral Diarrhoea:
- Cattle keepers whose herds do not hold BVD Negative status must pre-movement test animals before moving them off the holding.
 - Animals can only move on a negative result, valid for 60 days.
 - Cattle of unknown BVD status moving on to a holding from outside Wales must be tested within 20 days of arrival.
- 3.** Data has been published on bovine TB in cattle in Great Britain in the year to March:
- The number of new herd incidents in England fell by 19 per cent, compared to a year earlier, with falls of 19 per cent in the High Risk area, 20 per cent in the Edge area and 15 per cent in the Low Risk area. There was a fall of 23 per cent in Wales but an increase of 15 per cent in Scotland.
 - The number of herds not officially TB free fell by 24 per cent in England with falls of 24 per cent in the High Risk area, 25 per cent in the Edge area and 31 per cent in the Low Risk area. There was a fall of 31 per cent in Wales but an increase of 33 per cent in Scotland.
- 4.** The Association of Independent Meat Suppliers and the British Meat Processors Association have won a High Court challenge against the Food Standards Agency. The judgement ruled that the FSA should not be able to charge for visits by novice Official Veterinarians and temporary registered Official Veterinarians when carrying out official inspections.
- 5.** The annual conference of Eucolait, the largest European dairy trade association, has reported:
- Very strong milk production globally.
 - Weaker butter/fat markets.
 - Falling milk prices.
 - Trade uncertainty and tariffs.

On the brighter side, and over the long-term:

- Structurally growing global dairy demand.
- Resilience of global cheese demand.
- Strong protein/whey demand.
- Importer dependence on dairy imports.
- Slowing EU milk supply growth due to environmental/regulation pressure.

The implications for GB producers are considered to be:

- Increased competition in commodity markets.
- Greater downside risk to farmgate milk prices.
- Pressure on processors exposed to butter/skimmed milk powder returns.
- Dairy consumption could weaken with more trading down and shifts to private label.
- Higher on-farm cost inflation could impact farmers' numbers and thereby milk supplies.
- With the US targeting EU and New Zealand exports, home producers could suffer in future trade negotiations.

6. During May, with comparisons to a year earlier:

- UK prime cattle slaughterings fell by 7.1 per cent to 165,000 head.
- Beef and veal production fell by 5.7 per cent to 72,000 tonnes.
- Sheep slaughterings rose by 3.3 per cent to 933,000 head.
- Mutton and lamb production rose by 4.8 per cent to 23,000 tonnes.
- Pig slaughterings fell by 1.7 per cent to 842,000 head.
- Pigmeat production rose by 0.3 per cent to 80,000 tonnes.

7. AHDB has estimated there were 6,850 dairy producers in Great Britain as at April, down 190 producers on a year ago.

8. As at April, the GB milking herd stood at 2.46 million head, down 2 per cent on a year earlier. Cows aged between 2-4 years fell by 31,000 head with those under 2 years down 20,000 head.

9. Research published from a VetPartners study delivered by LLM Farm Vets has revealed a widespread prevalence of udder cleft dermatitis on UK dairy farms. 28 dairy herds were inspected and an average of 9.9 per cent of cows were affected with a range of 0.7 per cent to 27.4 per cent.

10. During April, with comparisons to March:

- Milk available to processors increased by 1.5 per cent to 1,356 million litres.
- Liquid milk production fell by 3.5 per cent to 513 million litres.
- Cheese production rose by 8.1 per cent to 47,100 tonnes.
- Butter production rose by 8.1 per cent to 20,500 tonnes.

- 11.** In a report Uncovering Possible Negative Effects of Bovaer Feeding in Practice, Aarhus University found no evidence of an overall increase in mortality or a general decrease in milk yield in a sample of dairy herds after the introduction of the feed additive Bovaer in 2025. However, it noted there remained unanswered questions as some farmers had experienced serious problems with their herds.
- 12.** In the period end-May into June, new bluetongue BTV-3 cases were reported in Ceridigion; South Yorkshire; Shropshire; and Staffordshire.
- 13.** The Royal Association of British Dairy Farmers has launched a dedicated entrepreneurs club for former participants in its Entrepreneurs in Dairying programme.
- 14.** During May, average butterfat fell by 2.6 per cent, compared to April, but was up 2.1 per cent on May 2025 at 4.27 per cent. Average protein fell by 1.2 per cent, compared to April, but was up 2.1 per cent on May 2025 at 3.46 per cent.
- 15.** Recent milk price changes include:
 - Saputo has increased its headline price by 1.5ppl to 34.5ppl.
 - First Milk has increased the price of a standard manufacturing litre by 0.6ppl to 31.35ppl.
- 16.** The Agricultural Price Index for April shows increases of 19.2 per cent for sheep and lambs, compared to a year ago, 1.9 per cent for poultry and 1.6 per cent for eggs, but there were falls of 8 per cent for cattle and calves, 12.2 per cent for pigs, 18.3 per cent for animal products and 22.3 per cent for milk. Compared to March, there was an increase of 4.2 per cent for sheep and lambs but falls of 3.1 per cent for cattle and calves, 1.3 per cent for pigs, 2.1 per cent for poultry, 1.7 per cent for animal products and 2.2 per cent for milk.
- 17.** The NFU has published ‘Supporting British Sheep Farming.’ The report calls for:
 - The retention of all castration and tail docking methods on lambs from 0 to 7 days old.
 - The removal of sheep from Specified Risk Material requirements.
 - The safeguarding of border controls and biosecurity against exotic diseases.
 - Recognition of the importance of grassland livestock in Enterprise Land Management schemes.
 - The RPA, AHDB and industry to monitor compliance with the Sheep Carcase Classification Scheme.
 - The monitoring of existing trade deals for quota usage and market distortion.
 - Investment in export growth.
 - The delivery of a Red Tractor beef and lamb scheme.
- 18.** A sheep shearer has clipped 64 sq ft off Lincoln Longwool Lottie, nicknamed the ‘Woolly Lammoth’, with the wool weighing 1.2 stone, one of the largest produced by a sheep in the UK.

19. Peste des Petis Ruminants has been reported in a sheep flock in Romania, the first for over a year. Two further outbreaks have recently been reported in Albania.
20. Data from the Animal and Plant Health Agency has revealed that Cobalt deficiency ranked 3rd among the most common diagnosis in sheep and lambs between 2016 and 2025. Cobalt is needed by rumen microbes to produce vitamin B12 which supports appetite, energy metabolism, growth and immunity.
21. BREED for Ch4nge, a 3-year project featuring 11 industry-wide partners led by Innovis, has measured data from 13,581 lambs across 40 flocks and confirmed that methane emission is heritable, resulting in the development of a new estimated breeding value for methane output, the BREED for CH4nge index.
22. An AFBI study of 2,100 piglets born from 140 sows in 4 separate pig trials has revealed that those born later in the farrowing process are less likely to survive, irrespective of their birth weight. Piglets were divided into 3 categories: 1st to 5th born; 6th to 10th born; and 11th+. Piglets in the third category had a 77 per cent chance of survival, compared to 83 per cent in the first category and 85 per cent in the second category.
23. The Agricultural Supply Chain Adjudicator has launched a survey of the pig sector to better understand the awareness of the Fair Dealing Obligations (Pigs) Regulations 2025.
24. An outbreak of African Swine Fever has been reported in domestic pigs in Hungary, on a farm holding 3,166 pigs.
25. Tesco is to expand its Sustainable Pig Group to cover 23 per cent of its British pork supply and 15 per cent of its total pigmeat supply. The number of pigs in the scheme will increase by 30 per cent.
26. As part of its campaign #Love British Chicken, the NFU has reported that the average age of a broiler house in the UK is over 30 years while 15 per cent are over 50 years old. It has estimated that 1,100 new poultry sheds are needed to keep up with demand for chicken, but excessive planning delays, inconsistent local decisions and systematic barriers were hindering producers.
27. The avian influenza prevention zone for poultry and captive birds in England, Wales and Scotland was lifted on 4 June.
28. During May, with comparisons to a year earlier:
 - UK commercial layer chick placings rose by 6.7 per cent to 3.2 million chicks.
 - Broiler chick placings rose by 0.3 per cent to 97.7 million chicks.
 - Turkey poulth placings rose by 33 per cent to 1.1 million chicks.
 - Turkey slaughterings rose by 28 per cent to 600,000 birds.
 - Broiler slaughterings fell by 1 per cent to 94.6 million birds.
 - Total poultry meat production fell by 0.7 per cent to 177,400 tonnes.

29. Defra has published a 'Risk Assessment' on the likelihood of spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza H5Nx associated with bird fairs, shows, markets, sales and other gatherings.

VIII Inputs/Supply businesses

1. The EU has failed to agree on new rules governing pesticide use and approvals. At least 12 countries, including Germany, Italy and Spain, have refused to endorse the text of a compromise agreement proposed by Cyprus which currently holds the EU presidency. A major stumbling block is the proposal to restrict imports containing traces of prohibited pesticides, which is supported by France and Poland. A proposal to grant unlimited approvals for pesticide substances to speed up their authorisations was rejected by Denmark.
2. The European Parliament has approved a regulation on New Genomic Techniques which encompass new gene-editing technologies that allow breeders to make precise changes to a plant's DNA without introducing foreign genetic material. It has now been agreed that the new techniques will be regulated in the same manner as conventional breeding methods.
3. The NFU has released a fertilizer resilience plan which includes the following:
 - If imported ammonium nitrate hits £500/tl, the government should launch compensation schemes similar to those made available by the EU whereby support could be claimed covering 70 per cent of the additional costs, up to a maximum of £50,000.
 - The Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism should be postponed for 12 months.
 - The AHDB should address information gaps on nutrient management to minimise the risk that growers reduce or delay applying essential nutrients.
4. The Environment Agency has updated its irrigation prospects for 2026. The West Midlands, Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire have been downgraded to moderate to poor prospects with water levels well below average. Soil moisture deficit has developed earlier than usual and significant restrictions on abstraction from surface and groundwater are probable.
5. The Agricultural Price Index for April shows fall of 0.7 per cent for veterinary services and 1.5 per cent for animal feeding stuffs but there were increases of 0.4 per cent for seeds, 27.7 per cent for energy and lubricants, 23.4 per cent for fertilizers, 33.1 per cent for chemicals, 7 per cent for equipment maintenance and 2.1 per cent for buildings maintenance. Compared to March, there were falls of 0.3 per cent for seeds, 0.4 per cent for chemicals and 0.4 per cent for animal feeding stuffs but increases of 15.2 per cent for energy and lubricants, 10.4 per cent for fertilizer and 0.6 per cent for equipment maintenance.

6. A petition organised by The Soil Association and Riverford calling for the banning of glyphosate has garnered 60,000 signatures in 28 days since it was launched. Research by Riverford has indicated that 83 per cent of consumers are concerned about long-term exposure to chemical residues in their food while 67 per cent would like a ban on glyphosate being used in British food production.
7. A study by The Farm Consultancy Group has considered how to maximise the value from slurry. Findings include:
 - Higher protein or concentrate-based diets typically produce more nutrient-rich slurry.
 - Rainfall, wash water and storage systems can dilute nutrients significantly.
 - Nutrients settle into layers when slurry is sorted.
 - Straw or sawdust can increase dry matter and affect how the slurry behaves.The recommendations for use include:
 - Test it regularly.
 - Apply it when crops can use it.
 - Match applications to soil and crop requirements.
 - Improve storage to increase flexibility.
 - Consider separating or composting solids to improve efficiency.
8. Edwards Seaweed Fertiliser UK has launched The Edwards Drone Pack, a product designed for professional drone applicators which contains a blend of Edwards Advanced Seaweed Fertiliser, EASy BioN soil enhancer and clean water.

Marketing

1. According to The Grocer, the price differential between organic and conventional produce has reduced as demand for organic produce has increased. Greater availability of organic products, larger production volumes and improved supply chain efficiencies have combined to reduce costs and bring prices closer together.
2. According to NIQ Homescan POD, Total GB, in the 12 weeks to 16 May, cows' dairy increased by 0.2 per cent, year-on-year, while spend increased by 4.2 per cent driven by a 4 per cent increase in average prices.
 - Cows' milk volumes fell by 0.9 per cent but spend increased by 5.9 per cent. Only whole milk saw volume growth, up 2.6 per cent.
 - Cows' cheese volumes increased by 2 per cent with spend up 2.1 per cent. Cheddar fell by 0.5 per cent but other cheeses recorded growth of 9.5 per cent, while snacking rose by 6.7 per cent, speciality and continental by 3 per cent.
 - Cows' butter volumes fell by 0.1 per cent and spend fell by 1.3 per cent. Only block butter recorded volume growth, up 7.6 per cent.
 - Volumes of cows' yoghurt, yoghurt drinks and fromage frais grew by 6 per cent with spend up 8.5 per cent. Standard plain yoghurt recorded growth of 25 per cent while fat-free grew by 8.5 per cent.

- Cows' cream volumes fell by 1.6 per cent but spend increased by 3.5 per cent. Aerosol fell by 17.5 per cent but double rose 0.2 per cent and other cream by 4.5 per cent.
- 3. According to Worldpanel by Numerator, Asda's sales fell by 3.6 per cent in the 12 weeks to 14 June, the only major supermarket to register a fall. Lidl's sales grew by 8.6 per cent, Sainsbury's by 2 per cent and Tesco's by 1.2 per cent. Asda's market share has now fallen from 12 per cent to 11.5 per cent over the past year.
- 4. Quality Meat Scotland has unveiled survey data which shows that 81 per cent of consumers want their supermarkets to prioritise stocking Scottish red meat over imported alternatives. The body estimates that £350 millions in output could be unlocked by 2032 as well as adding £100 millions in Gross Value Added to the Scottish economy.
- 5. In the 12 weeks to 17 May, according to Numerator UK, beef retail spend increased by 7.5 per cent, year-on-year, although volumes fell by 4 per cent:
 - Primary beef volumes fell by 5.6 per cent, with mince down 3.5 per cent.
 - Processed beef volumes fell by 8.1 per cent, with burgers down 8.5 per cent.
 - Added-value volumes increased by 6.5 per cent with spend up 17.7 per cent. Sous vide volumes rose by 20.1 per cent.
 - Lamb spend increased by 7.8 per cent with volumes up 0.9 per cent.
 - Primary lamb volumes increased by 0.8 per cent, with steaks up 14.1 per cent but roasting joints fell by 0.5 per cent.
 - Volumes of processed lamb fell by 6.7 per cent.
 - Added-value volumes grew by 5.7 per cent with spend up 15.8 per cent.
 - Pigmeat volumes fell by 3.4 per cent and spend by 3.1 per cent.
 - Volumes of primary pigmeat increased by 6.8 per cent with spend up 5.5 per cent. Mince volumes grew 30.1 per cent while roasting joints grew 16.5 per cent.
 - Processed pigmeat volumes fell 5.9 per cent with bacon, sausages and sliced cooked meats all down.
 - Added-value pigmeat volumes grew by 4.7 per cent.
- 6. In the 4 weeks to 14 June, UK take-home grocery sales increased by 2.4 per cent with on-line sales up 9.1 per cent. Sales of fresh prepared salads and chilled dips increased by 13 per cent while fresh beef burger sales grew by 40 per cent.
- 7. Data on beef trade in the first three months of the year has been released:
 - Beef imports rose 3.2 per cent, compared to a year earlier, to 75,000 tonnes, with value up 19.7 per cent at £547 millions.
 - Fresh beef imports fell 8.9 per cent to 37,000 tonnes but frozen increased by 25.8 per cent to 23,000 tonnes.
 - Offal volumes increased by 30.5 per cent to 6,000 tonnes.
 - Beef exports grew by 14.4 per cent to 36,000 tonnes with value up 36.2 per cent to £231 millions.

- Fresh beef exports grew by 20.1 per cent to 20,000 tonnes while frozen grew by 14.7 per cent to 10,000 tonnes. Offal increased by 2.7 per cent to 6,000 tonnes.
- 8. Aldi has opened its 1.3 million sq ft distribution facility in Bardon, Leicestershire which will service 350 stores across the UK and have capacity of 7 million pallets each year. It is the UK's largest supermarket warehouse.
- 9. As part of the Bang in Some Beans campaign, which aims to double UK bean consumption by 2028:
 - Aldi has pledged to increase volume sales for all bean products by 15 per cent.
 - Subway will increase volume sales for all beans by 20 per cent.
 - Almanhall intend to increase volume sales for all bean products by 30 per cent.
 - Elior will increase the proportion of beans procured by 20 per cent.
 - Higgidy will increase bean sales by 15 per cent.
 - National Trust for Scotland will increase beans procured by 15 per cent.
 - Vegetarian Express will increase volume sales for all beans by 25 per cent.
- 10. A new public sector food procurement taskforce in Scotland will help to address barriers to public sector caterers buying more produce from Scottish producers.
- 11. The Brassica Growers Association is to publish monthly league tables ranking the support of supermarkets for British brassica growers culminating in a British Brassica Retailer of the Year award.
- 12. Asda is to use Ocado's Smart Platform technology solutions to improve on-line shopping, mobile app and home delivery services.
- 13. Not-for-profit organisation Veg Power has joined forces with Hazera and the Brassica Growers Association to celebrate the 'year of the cabbage' with a view to increase cabbage consumption.
- 14. According to British Apples & Pears, in the first 9 months of the season, British apple sales have reached 138,823 tonnes, the highest level in the past 4 years and 6,481 tonnes up on 2024/25. Tesco leads the retailer league table with 29,186 tonnes followed by Aldi on 27,171 tonnes and Lidl on 24,421 tonnes.
- 15. G's has created new packaging for its iceberg lettuces which include football style panels for the duration of the World Cup.
- 16. The Co-op has launched 'Second Chance Saver Bags' in a trial with Deliveroo to offer on-line shoppers cut-price fruit and vegetables to help reduce food waste. £3 'mystery' bags can be ordered on Deliveroo from 20 selected stores in the UK which will contain 6 to 8 fruit and vegetable products worth between £5 and £32.

Miscellaneous

1. The latest YouGov survey commissioned by Red Tractor has revealed:
 - 94 per cent of consumers trust UK food.
 - 80 per cent of consumers trust British farmers.
 - 37 per cent of consumers are not confident imported food meets UK standards.
 - 83 per cent lack understanding in at least one aspect of food production.
 - 87 per cent experience confusion at the point of purchase, highlighting a growing disconnect between shoppers and farming.
2. The latest Consumption Monitor produced by Freshfel Europe shows that, in 2024, EU fresh fruit and vegetable consumption increased by 1.98 per cent to 355.71 grams per day per person but this is still well below the 400 grams recommended by the World Health Organisation. Only Greece, Portugal, Italy, Belgium and Poland exceed the WHO target whereas Finland had the worst performance at 223 grams per person per day.
3. According to the NFU Mutual's report on rural crime in the UK in 2025:
 - The cost of crime fell by 6 per cent to £41.5 millions.
 - Theft of GPS systems fell by 80 per cent to a cost of £250,000.
 - Thefts of agricultural vehicles rose by 18 per cent to a cost of £8.3 millions.
 - Thefts of ATV's rose by 31 per cent to a cost of £3.5 millions.
 - Livestock theft rose by 30 per cent to £4.5 millions.
 - There was a 10 per cent increase in the maiming or death of farm animals caused by dog attacks at a cost of £1.95 millions.
 - Claims in Northern Ireland rose by 24 per cent to £2.2 millions while those in Scotland rose by 14 per cent to £1.4 millions. Claims in Wales fell by 21 per cent to £2.2 millions.
4. Scottish Land and Estates has called for an Integrated Fire Management Strategy to counter increased wildfire risk.
5. Research has revealed that Suffolk and Norfolk scored 91.35 and 91.30 respectively on the Financially Complex Divorce Index, 3 times the national average. Southern England had 8 out of 10 of the UK's most financially complex divorce settlements. The index comprises average house prices; landlord density; pension wealth; divorce volumes; and the number of high-value family-owned businesses in each area.
6. Grounded Research, which runs Five Bar Gate, a community of over 2,000 farmers who take part in commercial, environmental and policy research, has published the results of its latest survey:
 - 2.94/10 reflected how positive farmers feel about their industry.
 - 27.87 per cent of farmers believe the Land Use Framework will have no beneficial impact on farming; 14.75 per cent consider it has decreased confidence a little; while 26.23 per cent said it has decreased confidence significantly.

- 74.76 per cent believe input costs are the biggest challenge; 51.46 per cent are concerned about profitability/margins; 47.08 per cent are worried about commodity prices/market volatility; 41.75 per cent fear regulation and compliance burdens; while 35.92 per cent believe weather/climate will have an adverse impact.
 - Confidence in the Labour Government ranked 0.86/10.
 - Only 5.83 per cent believed farming representatives and industry bodies/organisations represented farmers ‘very well’; 28.64 per cent answered ‘fairly well’; 23.3 per cent said ‘fairly poorly’; and 20.87 per cent responded ‘very poorly’.
7. The Rural Initiatives Tackling Abuse has published Rural Domestic Abuse: The Paradox of Community. This reveals that current systems to tackle abuse have never been designed with rural realities in mind and are geared to cope with urban communities. In rural areas, coercive control, economic abuse, threats and acts of violence are shaped by geography, culture, visibility, inequality, such as low wages, and unaffordable housing.
 8. A new report from Future Countryside and the National Rural Crime Network, entitled Breaking the Cycle: Tackling Fly-Tipping and Waste Crime – A Roadmap for Reform, suggests that the current system for dealing with waste crime is fragmented, inconsistent and failing victims.
 9. Applications have opened for the Society of Agriculture Agricultural Leadership Development Programme 2027, delivered in partnership with the Royal Agricultural University. Applications close on 1 September.
 10. The Society of Agriculture’s Rural Consultancy Foundation Course takes place at Warwick Conferences on 15/16 September.
 11. In the King’s Birthday Honours List, there was an OBE for Maitland Mackie, chair of Mackies of Scotland; and an MBE for Philip Stocker of the National Sheep Association.

Postscripts

1. Tim decided to tie the knot with his long-time girlfriend. One evening, after the honeymoon, he was out in the garage organising his golfing equipment. His wife came to the door and after a long period of silence, she said, “Tim, I’ve been thinking, now that we’re married, maybe it’s time you quit golfing. You spend so much time on the course. I’m sure you could probably get a good price for your clubs.” Tim got a horrified look on his face. His wife said, “Darling, what’s wrong?” Tim shook his head and said, “For a minute there, you started to sound like my ex-wife.” “Ex-wife!” she screamed, “I didn’t know you were married before!” He gave her a pointed look and said “I wasn’t.”
2. It’s the World Cup Final, and a man makes his way to his seat right next to the pitch. He sits down, noticing that the seat next to him is empty. He leans over and asks the guy on the other side of the empty seat if someone will be sitting there. The guy shakes his head and says, “No. The seat’s empty.” The man can’t believe what he’s hearing. “Who in their right mind would have a seat like this for the Final and not use it?” The other guy says, “Well, actually, the seat belongs to me. I was supposed to come with my wife, but she passed away. This will be the first World Cup Final we haven’t been to together since we got married.” The man says, “I’m so sorry to hear that, buddy. That’s terrible ... But couldn’t you find someone else to come with you? A friend, a relative, or even a neighbour to take her seat?” The man shakes his head. “No”, he says. “They’re all at the funeral.”
3. Two cows were standing in a field. “Have you heard that mad cow disease is going around?” asked the first. “Yeah,” the other cow replied. “Makes me glad I’m a penguin.”
4. A lady goes to the doctor for a checkup. The doctor asks her if she is having any problems. “Yes, doctor,” she says. “I have to fart a lot. Fortunately, no one can hear them or smell them. In fact, I’ve farted twice since you came in and they were silent and odourless.” The doctor nods and says, “I can treat this problem with an over-the-counter medication, a prescription, and a referral. The medication will help your body produce less gas. The prescription will help you recover your sense of smell. I’m giving you a referral to an audiologist to see if they can help you hear better.”

5. Men vs Women

Nicknames

If Laura, Kate and Sarah go out for lunch, they will call each other Laura, Kate and Sarah.

If Mike, Dave and John go out, they will affectionately refer to each other as Fat Boy, Godzilla and Four-eyes.

Eating Out

When the bill arrives, Mike, Dave and John will each throw in £20, even though it's only for £32.50. None of them will have anything smaller and none will actually admit they want change back.

When the girls get their bill, out come the pocket calculators.

Money

A man will pay £2 for a £1 item he needs.

A woman will pay £1 for a £2 item that she doesn't need but it's on sale.

Bathrooms

A man has six items in his bathroom: toothbrush and toothpaste, shaving cream, razor, a bar of soap, and a towel.

The average number of items in the typical woman's bathroom is 337. A man would not be able to identify more than 20 of these items.

Arguments

A woman has the last word in any argument.

Anything a man says after that is the beginning of a new argument.

Future

A woman worries about the future until she gets a husband.

A man never worries about the future until he gets a wife.

Marriage

A woman marries a man expecting he will change, but he doesn't.

A man marries a woman expecting that she won't change, but she does.

The Eagle has Landed!

Well, not exactly landed but shunted. Dame Angela Eagle has been moved from being a Defra Minister to being Minister for Security in the Home Office. Those who organise the boats for illegal immigrants must be rubbing their hands in glee – it heralds open season, exacerbated by the warm, flat seas that surround our coastline at present.

So, the person representing Wallasey, a constituency without a hectare of agricultural land, has been replaced by Stephen Morgan, MP for Portsmouth South, another constituency without a hectare of agricultural land.

You may well say, who is Stephen Morgan? After all, he is responsible for a major element of your future business wellbeing.

- He studied politics and sociology.
- He has been chair of the Portsmouth Cultural Consortium, vice-chair of Age UK Portsmouth and a governor of a couple of schools.
- He is a prominent member of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Group and a member of the Fabian Society, a socialist think tank, generally perceived to be on the left of centre.
- His roles have included Shadow Minister for Defence Procurement; Shadow Minister for Rail; Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Early Education; and Lord Commissioner of the Treasury.

Have you noticed the words food, farming, agriculture, horticulture, environment in any of the appointments? More still, has he any business experience? Has he any understanding of rural issues? As his train wizzes from Portsmouth Harbour to Waterloo, can he tell the difference between fields of wheat, barley, oats, oilseed rape, maize etc.?

Once again, agriculture has been served a pup. This appointment is an illustration of the regard in which food, farming and the environment is held within government.

It is, quite frankly, another snub to the agricultural sector.

Monthly Farming Update

We welcome feedback on the MFU.
Does this issue raise any questions in your mind?
Would you like more information on a particular item?

Please ring one of our agricultural specialists:

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If you would like to add a friend or colleague's name to the mailing list
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The MFU was edited from 1991 to 2006 by John Nix, Emeritus Professor of
Farm Business Management at Imperial College London.



CHAVEREYS

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS