

THURSDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER

# FARMER ADVISORY BOARD SESSION

## MEET THE FARMERS

[Click here to read more about each farmer](#)



ANDREW COURT  
MIXED BEEF & ARABLE



ANNA JACKSON  
ARABLE



BEN WILLIAMS  
DAIRY



SOPHIE GREGORY  
DAIRY



CHRIS MANLEY  
BEEF CATTLE & SHEEP FARM



CHRIS WOODHEAD  
BEEF CATTLE, LAMB & GOAT



FLAVIANO OBIERO  
MIXED FARMING



JACK PEARCE  
ROOT VEGETABLES & PRODUCE

## BE PART OF THE

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FFM@VERIS-STRATEGIES.CO.UK

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# Farmers, campaigners, NGOs, retailers, manufacturers, processors and brands came together to address critical industry issues, provide a space to discuss opportunities and hear from the wider supply chain.

Our co-created multi-stakeholder vision from past sessions is aimed at addressing systemic issues in our food system for future generations, with 6 key themes:

1. Regaining respect for the food we eat and the people who produce it
2. Helping the public understand the true value of food
3. Education, beginning in schools, should highlight the impact of healthy food choices on personal health and the health of the planet.
4. Policy adjustments to support: high levels of food availability, regenerative approaches and subsidies and tax incentives to support local growers and producers.
5. Minimise food waste for a better future food system, at all levels.
6. Everyone in the food chain to get a fair share with sustainable incomes.

In September, the focus was on the theme of 'Education, beginning in schools, should highlight the impact of healthy food choices on personal health and the health of the planet.'

We heard from farmers how they thought businesses in their supply chain can contribute to ensuring that future generations understand the vital link between healthy food choices, personal health, and the sustainability of our planet.

Group breakout rooms explored how each guest could take action in their role. Attendees included senior representation from: Act4Food, Action Against Hunger, British Sugar, Compassion in World Farming, Compass Group UK&I (Chartwells), Dairygold, Greencore, Mondra, Samworth Brothers, SDG2 Advocacy Hub, The Billington Group, The Compleat Food Group, The Food Foundation.

## THIS REPORT DETAILS:

### 1) Farmer Questions from the community

### 2) The importance of farmers as communicators

### 2) Key takeaways

- Engaging citizens through storytelling
- What can businesses do right away?
- Spicy topics in climate and agriculture
- Government engagement advice for the FFM network



## NEXT FARMER ADVISORY BOARD MEETING:

Wednesday 27th November  
3:00 – 4:30pm

Please email  
[emma.victor-smith@Veris-Strategies.co.uk](mailto:emma.victor-smith@Veris-Strategies.co.uk)  
if you'd like to attend.

# FARMER QUESTIONS FROM THE COMMUNITY:

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## WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE NEWS THAT PLANS TO MAKE FARMING 'NET ZERO' BY 2040—10 YEARS AHEAD OF THE UK'S LEGALLY BINDING NATIONAL TARGET—MAY NOT BE ACHIEVED?

"Over the past five years, I've conducted carbon audits on the farm using various platforms, but for consistency, I've now settled on one platform. This year's audits, however, have revealed that the weather has had a significant impact on yield levels, particularly in cereal crops and milk production.

For instance, our wheat yield this year is significantly lower, dropping to 2.2 tonnes per acre from 2.7-2.8 tonnes in previous years. However, despite the reduced yield, the wheat is incredibly nutrient-dense, with a high protein content of 13.5% or more and a Hatberg value of 250, well above the required 180. This makes it excellent milling wheat for flour, fetching top market value. Unfortunately, from a carbon footprint perspective, the low yield makes it appear as a poor crop. This highlights how fluctuations in weather can skew carbon footprint data, even when the crop's nutritional value remains high." Andrew Court

## HOW DO WE BEST COMMUNICATE TO YOUNG PEOPLE THE GREAT WORK GOING ON IN THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY TO REDUCE THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF THEIR FOOD?

Get young people and supply chains out on farms to see firsthand the practices and efforts being implemented to promote sustainability. Experiencing agriculture directly can help convey positive messages about farming and its role in reducing carbon footprints. Sophie Gregory

## GIVEN A WORKABLE FRAMEWORK, DO YOU SEE POTENTIAL IN MONETISING REMOVALS?

There is an opportunity to start offering premiums down the supply chains for hitting and surpassing carbon removal targets. This means that if farmers or businesses can demonstrate effective carbon removal practices, they could potentially receive financial incentives or higher prices for their products.

## WHAT'S THE 1 MAIN REASON YOU THINK FARMING WON'T HIT NET ZERO BY 2040?

Farming faces significant challenges in implementing change without the necessary support, collaboration, and backing. While the initial plan seemed achievable, the lack of commitment from policymakers and the supply chain has made progress much harder. It's difficult for individuals to drive meaningful change alone, as echoed by many in the industry. To create real impact, there needs to be collective action, with a unified effort that feels like an "army" supporting these efforts. With such backing, true transformation in the farming sector could be possible. **Industry - find the school farms, sponsor those farms, champion those farms, raise them up on a pedestal and go back to sort of policy and politicians and say, we want more of this.** Ben Williams

# THE IMPORTANCE OF FARMERS AS COMMUNICATORS

**Farmers have unique stories that resonate with consumers.**

By sharing their personal experiences, they can help demystify agriculture. Authenticity and collaboration allows farmers to educate the public about sustainable practices, dispel stereotypes, and bridge gaps between rural and urban communities. This fosters trust and understanding, making the food system more transparent and accessible.

Sophie Gregory encourages farmers to be bold and authentic, especially on social media, to engage and educate the public. Ben Williams and Chris Manley emphasised the importance of sharing personal stories and maintaining transparency to build trust with consumers and policymakers. Flavian Obiero and Chris Woodhead focused on overcoming stereotypes and fostering positive relationships between farmers, retailers, and consumers, contributing to a more unified understanding of agricultural practices.

**"Personal stories embracing complexity are key to advocating for farms."**

Find out more: [Chris](#)  
Connect: [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#)



**"Your voice is your power; use it to inspire change."**

Find out more: [Sophie](#)  
Follow: [@farmer\\_in\\_training](#)



**"Show consumers what happens on farms; transparency builds trust."**

Find out more: [Andrew](#)  
Connect: [Andrew Court](#)



**"Let's not just talk; let's act together."**

Find out more: [Flavian](#)  
Follow: [@thekenyanpigfarmer](#)

**"Over-simplification misses the full story. Embracing complexity helps everyone grasp the true nuances of food quality & sustainability."**

Find out more: [Ben](#)  
Connect: [LinkedIn](#)



**"It's crucial for people in the supply chain to see how we produce commodities and meet farmers."**

Find out more: [Chris](#)  
Follow: [@thesuperseriousfarmer](#)  
YouTube: [@thesuperseriousfarmer](#)





# 01 ENGAGING CONSUMERS THROUGH STORYTELLING



**WHY SHOULD BUSINESSES  
BOTHER EDUCATING CITIZENS  
ABOUT HEALTHIER,  
SUSTAINABLE FOOD?  
ISN'T IT SOMEONE ELSE'S JOB?**

Businesses possess the budgets, skills, and influence to communicate with citizens across the supply chain, right through to the consumer. This influence is vital for **driving demand**, building a more resilient British supply chain, and supporting public health goals.

**HERE'S  
HOW:**



## **Increased Awareness:**

Better-informed consumers make better purchasing decisions

## **Enhanced Demand for Local Produce:**

As consumers learn about the benefits of British food—freshness, seasonality, lower carbon footprints—they may prefer local products over imports.

## **Healthier Choices:**

Educating consumers on the nutritional benefits of fresh, sustainably produced food can encourage healthier eating habits and improve public health outcomes.

## **Support for Farmers:**

Increased demand for local and sustainable food directly benefits British farmers, supporting rural economies and biodiversity.

# 02 WHAT CAN BUSINESSES DO RIGHT AWAY?

## LEARN FROM FARMERS AS STORYTELLERS

- Farmers have authentic stories about their practices, challenges, and successes. These stories can form meaningful connections with consumers.
  - Highlight sustainability and cultural heritage to humanize the supply chain.
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## ENHANCE COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY

- Share stories from farmers and suppliers via social media and websites. Promote transparency by providing sourcing and sustainability information.
  - Use straightforward labels and regular sustainability reports to keep consumers informed.
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## EDUCATE CONSUMERS

- Create and share educational content—blogs, videos, and infographics—about the benefits of British food and sustainable practices.
  - Organise webinars or workshops with experts and farmers to foster direct interaction.
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## LEVERAGE DIGITAL PLATFORMS

- Launch social media campaigns focusing on British food and sustainability, encouraging user-generated content.
  - Use email newsletters to inform customers about the importance of local and sustainable food.
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## COLLABORATE WITH FARMERS

- Develop partnerships to promote farmers' products in stores and online.
- Feature a "Farmer of the Month" to highlight different producers and their stories.

## IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES

- Prioritise local and sustainable sourcing and reduce packaging waste.
  - Increase transparency throughout the supply chain to ensure ethical practices.
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## ENGAGE EMPLOYEES

- Train employees on sustainability and local sourcing to enhance customer communication.
  - Encourage employees to share their own stories related to sustainable practices.
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## CREATE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Organise or participate in local food events and cooking demonstrations to promote British food.
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## GATHER FEEDBACK

- Implement consumer surveys and focus groups to understand preferences for local and sustainable food, shaping future strategies.
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## PROMOTE HEALTH BENEFITS

- Highlight nutritional information and launch health campaigns emphasising the benefits of local, sustainable food, potentially in collaboration with health professionals.

By focusing on transparency and effective communication, businesses can play a crucial role in educating stakeholders about healthier, sustainable food options and fostering a deeper understanding of the food system.

# 03 SPICY TOPICS IN CLIMATE AND AGRICULTURE

## INDIVIDUAL CHOICE VS. SYSTEMIC CHANGE:

While personal dietary choices can reduce carbon footprints, systemic changes are needed to tackle larger environmental issues. The complexity of modern supply chains often challenges transparency efforts.

## LOBBYING INFLUENCE:

Industry lobbying can skew public perceptions and policies, raising concerns about the integrity of health messaging.

## POLARISATION IN AGRICULTURE:

Activism and public perception can create divisions between farmers and consumers, leading to mistrust.

## GREENWASHING CONCERNS:

Misleading claims about sustainability can erode consumer trust. Businesses must communicate their practices with integrity. Many businesses are concerned about the potential backlash from consumers and regulatory bodies if their practices are perceived as inadequate or misleading. This fear can lead to a reluctance to disclose information that might be interpreted negatively.

## SHORT-TERM FOCUS:

Some businesses prioritise profits over long-term sustainability, hindering transparency and engagement efforts.

## LACK OF UNDERSTANDING:

Some businesses may not fully understand the importance of transparency or how to effectively communicate their practices. This can result in missed opportunities to engage consumers and stakeholders positively.

## CULTURAL NORMS:

In some industries, there may be a cultural norm of not sharing information openly. This can create an environment where transparency is not valued or prioritised.

**These topics highlight significant tensions in the discussions around food systems, sustainability, and public health.**

# 04 GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT FOR THE FFM NETWORK



## **UNDERSTAND THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE:**

Recognise that politicians may not have as much influence over policy as civil servants do. Engaging with the right civil servants who are involved in policy-making is crucial.

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## **ADVOCACY AND LOBBYING:**

Engage in advocacy and lobbying efforts at government level. This can be a way to influence policy changes that benefit the agricultural sector.

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## **HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION:**

The historical neglect of agricultural education in schools is clear - advocate for the reinstatement and support of educational programs related to agriculture. The network should champion farms that provide educational opportunities.

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## **ENGAGEMENT WITH DECISION-MAKERS:**

Influencing decision-makers and stakeholders within organisations to prioritise agricultural issues is critical. This involves making sure that those in leadership positions understand the significance of these matters.

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## **USE OF YOUTH ADVOCACY:**

Leverage the energy and perspectives of young people to apply pressure on food leaders and policymakers, highlighting the potential impact of youth engagement in advocacy efforts.

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DO YOUR COLLEAGUES HAVE THE  
TOOLS TO DELIVER ON THE HEALTHY  
SUSTAINABLE DIETS (HSD) OPPORTUNITY?

# HEALTHY SUSTAINABLE DIETS ACCELERATOR

19TH SEPTEMBER

This 6 week accelerator is designed to empower leaders of the future with food systems knowledge and how to support the shift to healthy sustainable diets with integrity.

## THIS PROGRAMME GIVES A FRAMEWORK TO:

- Future-proof strategic business planning
- Influence sustainable growth strategies
- Pro-actively support customers with their HSD targets

**£2000  
PP+VAT**  
25% DISCOUNT  
AVAILABLE FOR BUSINESS MEMBERS

# THE SUSTAINABILITY ACCELERATOR

4TH OCTOBER

This 6 week accelerator is designed to empower leaders of the future with not only the foundational knowledge, but the confidence to challenge and create change with a new community of allies behind them.

## THIS PROGRAMME GIVES A FRAMEWORK FOR:

- Helping non-technical food professionals navigate an uncertain and complex world
- Building connections and a new network
- Growing confidence and capacity to plug into change and relook at business as usual
- Developing climate-first leadership.

**£2000  
PP+VAT**  
25% DISCOUNT  
AVAILABLE FOR BUSINESS MEMBERS

Book now: [Carly Davies](#) Business  
Community Manager,  
Future Food Movement



# THE ROLE OF FUTURE FOOD MOVEMENT IN THE INDUSTRY

## WE CONVENE THOUGHT LEADERS & CHANGEMAKERS

We bring together stakeholders across the food industry to foster collaboration and share best practices in regenerative agriculture through events and our platform.

## WE UPSKILL YOUR WORKFORCE TO STIMULATE SUPPLY & DEMAND

We offer CPD certified training programmes and masterclasses designed to educate and upskill food businesses and their buyers on regenerative practices. Led by experts, we ensure that all participants improve on the knowledge and tools needed to transition to help shift the market towards more sustainable practices.

## WE'RE BUILDING A COMMUNITY

We cultivate a supportive community committed to regenerative principles. The FFM ecosystem of farmers, manufacturers, processors, retailers, foodservice providers, NGOs, advocacy groups and food systems leaders is sharing learning and mutual support, driving faster and more impactful change.

IF YOU'D LIKE TO  
CHAT ABOUT  
ANYTHING YOU'VE  
READ TODAY:

Kate Cawley, Founder of Future Food  
Movement & Veris Strategies



Louis Bedwell, Head of Future  
Food Movement



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# KEY TAKEAWAYS IN THIS REPORT:

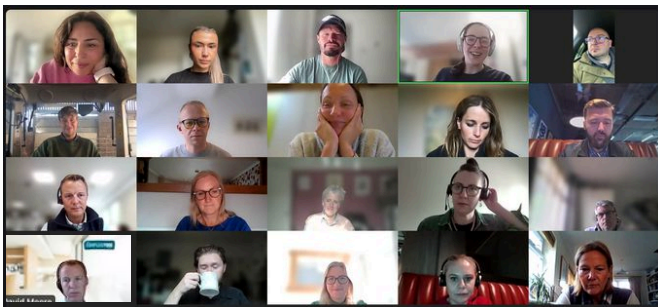
**01** ENGAGING CITIZENS  
THROUGH STORYTELLING

**03** SPICY TOPICS IN CLIMATE  
AND AGRICULTURE

**02** WHAT CAN BUSINESSES  
DO RIGHT AWAY?

**04** GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT  
ADVICE FOR THE FFM NETWORK

## 01 ENGAGING CONSUMERS THROUGH STORYTELLING



### Why should businesses bother educating citizens about healthier, sustainable food? Isn't it someone else's job?

Businesses possess the budgets, skills, and influence to communicate with citizens across the supply chain, right through to the consumer. This influence is vital for **driving demand**, building a more resilient British supply chain, and supporting public health goals.

#### HERE'S HOW:

**Increased Awareness:** Better-informed consumers make better purchasing decisions

**Enhanced Demand for Local Produce:** As consumers learn about the benefits of British food—freshness, seasonality, lower carbon footprints—they may prefer local products over imports.

**Healthier Choices:** Educating consumers on the nutritional benefits of fresh, sustainably produced food can encourage healthier eating habits and improve public health outcomes.

**Support for Farmers:** Increased demand for local and sustainable food directly benefits British farmers, supporting rural economies and biodiversity.