

A Greenprint for UK Farming.

Working in partnership with UK farmers to
deliver a more sustainable food system

January 2025



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If UK agriculture is to thrive in the years to come, we must take action to ensure farms remain sustainable, both economically and in terms of tackling the climate and nature crises we now face.
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As the biggest customer of UK agriculture, bringing our customers healthy, affordable and sustainable food wouldn't be possible without our farmers and producers.

They work tirelessly year-round to deliver top quality, fresh food. It's no easy task. Inflation has caused challenges over recent years across a range of farming inputs, from energy to fertiliser and animal feed, and in the last year alone, we've seen adverse weather conditions disrupt the farming calendar. That's on top of several years of policy changes that have made investing in innovation and improved production techniques more difficult.

If UK agriculture is to thrive, we must take action to ensure farms remain sustainable, both economically and in terms of tackling the climate and nature crises we now face. Doing so is critical to ensuring security of supply, while also protecting prices for customers.

It's for this reason that we decided to work with Harper Adams University's School of Sustainable Food and Farming on this report. Through surveys and roundtable discussions, we've gathered the views of more than 300 farmers across the country. This report summarises the changes and support they need so that UK agriculture can lead the way in the sustainable transition.

If we get it right, the farming sector will be a powerful driver of green growth in our economy. Its standards are some of the highest anywhere in the world; innovations in areas such as genetics, tech and nature recovery are truly groundbreaking. But we must continue to nurture it and provide it with the best conditions to thrive. This includes maintaining a level playing field for UK agriculture in both environmental and welfare standards in the face of new trade deals. Government policy should aid food security and sustainability in the UK, not work against it.

Through investment in innovation and new technologies we can increase yields and produce more of the food we need in the UK, all while protecting the natural world and reducing the impact of the food we eat.

Many of the solutions we need exist today. At Tesco, we're already rolling out a number of innovations that can significantly improve farming's impact on the natural environment – from providing incentives to our dairy, beef and lamb farmers to introduce sustainability measures such as carbon-footprinting, through to the roll out of low carbon fertilisers and nature-based solutions such as herbal leys and cover crops. We're also encouraging farmers to invest in low-carbon infrastructure, including renewable energy sources, through a groundbreaking scheme with NatWest. But a lack of investment, infrastructure and policy certainty is stopping farmers from committing to many of these improvements. We need to remove barriers and put the right incentives in place so that UK agriculture can reach its potential as a driver of sustainability and economic growth.

The government must set a long-term vision for UK agriculture and give farmers clarity on the role they can play in the UK's wider transition to sustainable net zero. Likewise, the food industry can support farmers to invest in new tools and technology at scale, to bring down farm emissions and improve yields.

I am proud of the work we have already done with the hundreds of farmers that make up our Sustainable Farming Groups, increasingly working in partnership with the School of Sustainable Food and Farming.

Alongside our Sustainable Farming Groups, we plan to launch two low carbon concept farms later this year. These trailblazing farms will look to take a whole farm approach and will act as a model for modern day, low carbon farms, including capturing carbon on farm, whilst protecting and restoring nature.

Getting this right is a win-win. One that is good for our farmers, our customers, the economy and the planet. Only by investing in UK agriculture can we create a future food system that is sustainable in every sense of the word. I hope this report provides a helpful insight into how we can deliver a food system that works for all.

Ashwin Prasad

Chief Commercial Officer, Tesco



The School of Sustainable Food and Farming (SSFF) was established at Harper Adams with the mission of securing a sustainable and profitable farming and food system through educating, inspiring and empowering current and future farmers to work towards reducing emissions, enhancing nature and developing more climate-friendly businesses. The SSFF is a community of organisations and people with a desire to see a profitable, productive and sustainable future for the UK agricultural industry.

Our aims:

- Equip farmers with skills, knowledge and training needed to become fully sustainable on all parameters: economic, environmental and social.
- Be a trusted source of information to demystify the journey to net zero and sustainable farming - speak a common language about sustainable agricultural systems.
- Work to improve farm practice and farm data to track progress on greenhouse gas emissions reduction, sequestration, and broader sustainability metrics such as biodiversity, water and soils.
- Encourage new entrants into the farming and food industry, and a diversity of entrepreneurial talent to support our aims.

The Future Farmer Programme run by the SSFF, with the support of Tesco, is a leading example of how we have been working together to help up-and-coming British farmers develop their skills in sustainable agriculture. With recent surveys suggesting younger farmers have identified skills gaps in areas including sustainability and the environment, the Future Farmer Programme is already delivering to its second cohort of farmers with face-to-face and live online training on how to implement sustainable agriculture practices and

protect biodiversity. As part of this continued commitment to making a real difference to support farmers, SSFF was delighted to support the development of this report as a further aid to achieving these goals - through critically listening to what farmers are telling us.



Prof Michael Lee
Deputy Vice
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Simon Thelwell
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Executive Summary

At Tesco, we work with partners across the supply chain to bring the public affordable, high-quality food, and UK agriculture is a vital part of the jigsaw. We see every week how the UK's food system works brilliantly from farm to fork to deliver reliable, affordable and great quality food for our customers. But we also see where there are challenges and barriers, and where the effects of climate change threaten to disrupt supply. For the UK food system to remain resilient in the years to come, collaboration across the supply chain will be essential.

The Greenprint for UK Farming report has been developed with Harper Adams University's School of Sustainable Food and Farming to better understand farmers' experiences and share their views on how to achieve a more sustainable future for UK agriculture. Its findings are based on a survey of more than 250 farmers, conducted at agricultural shows across the country, as well as in-depth roundtable discussions with 50 farmers across our arable, livestock and fresh produce supply chains.

We found that farmers are seeing the impacts of climate change on their businesses first-hand, from extreme conditions to less predictable weather patterns. As stewards of their land, they fully recognise the importance of caring for the environment and are deeply committed to preserving their farms for future generations. They also know a sustainable farm is a profitable farm. However, many are currently facing challenges to produce affordable, sustainable food and stay profitable amid rising costs and economic pressures.

Recommendations:

1. Setting a clear vision

A lack of clarity over farming policy is a key barrier in introducing more environmentally friendly measures on many farms. Greater certainty from the government on long-term land use will be crucial in addressing farmers' concerns and accelerating the uptake of lower carbon farming methods. Doing so will help create a positive business environment which will provide confidence to farmers, helping them to commit to investment and green growth.

Recommendations:

- Government and policymakers to set a long-term land use and food security strategy to help inform government decision-making and industry investment in the transition to net zero.
- The food supply chain, including farmers, suppliers and retailers, to work in partnership to provide certainty on sustainability requirements and standards, through clear frameworks and certifications.

2. Providing financial certainty

Improving the sustainability of the farming industry will rely on farmers having the confidence to invest in the future. However, many farmers feel large investments still come with untenable amounts of risk, leaving them reluctant to pursue large investments in sustainability and slowing down progress.

Recommendations:

- Retailers to explore new models and incentives for farmers to trial new, more sustainable approaches that could help them manage investment risk.
- Government and the food supply chain to work more collaboratively in sharing the outcome of in-field research and trialling of new tools, technology and processes to encourage progress throughout the industry.
- Government to develop clear governance models and standards for carbon markets that help farmers manage risk whilst accessing new revenue streams to help fund decarbonisation.



3. Getting innovative technology on to farms

New innovations and low-carbon technologies will be important in the industry's efforts to balance sustainability with long-term profitability. However, farmers still face challenges when it comes to getting these technologies onto farms. Much of the funding currently available for new innovations is for new and emerging technologies, rather than supporting the roll out of proven technology that will be most effective in driving sustainability improvements.

Recommendations:

- Developing a collaborative approach between industry stakeholders – including food, retail finance and technology – and government agencies to create a more streamlined and easy-to-use funding application process.
- Government to increase funding for all stages of innovation, from seed funding to late stage as well as ringfencing of funds for devolved nations.

4. Standardising data and insight

Many farmers are now measuring and reporting on sustainability metrics in some capacity. However, there is no unified or standardised framework in place to track industry-wide progress. Supporting the farming industry in accessing the right tools to measure and manage carbon and biodiversity data, as well as animal health and welfare improvements, easily and accurately is a crucial starting point for farmers to implement more effective strategies to reduce their environmental impact.

Recommendations:

- Government to agree with the farming and wider agriculture supply chain on a common set of metrics for both environmental and animal health and welfare data against which farmers should regularly measure. This should include a standard methodology for carbon, soil, water and biodiversity reporting taking learnings and insights from existing schemes such as the AHDB's baselining project.
- Government, retailers and the broader agriculture supply chain to support farmers by establishing a carbon reporting hub to serve as a centralised platform to streamline data collection.
- Tesco and other retailers to continue to work with farmers and key supply chain stakeholders to simplify and standardise certification and data collection, potentially through the Sustainable Farm Networks.

5. Attracting future talent

A skilled, engaged workforce will be essential in supporting farming's environmental transition, and the whole industry can play a role in attracting future talent. Training and education, especially in new innovations and technical skills, will be increasingly important.

Recommendations:

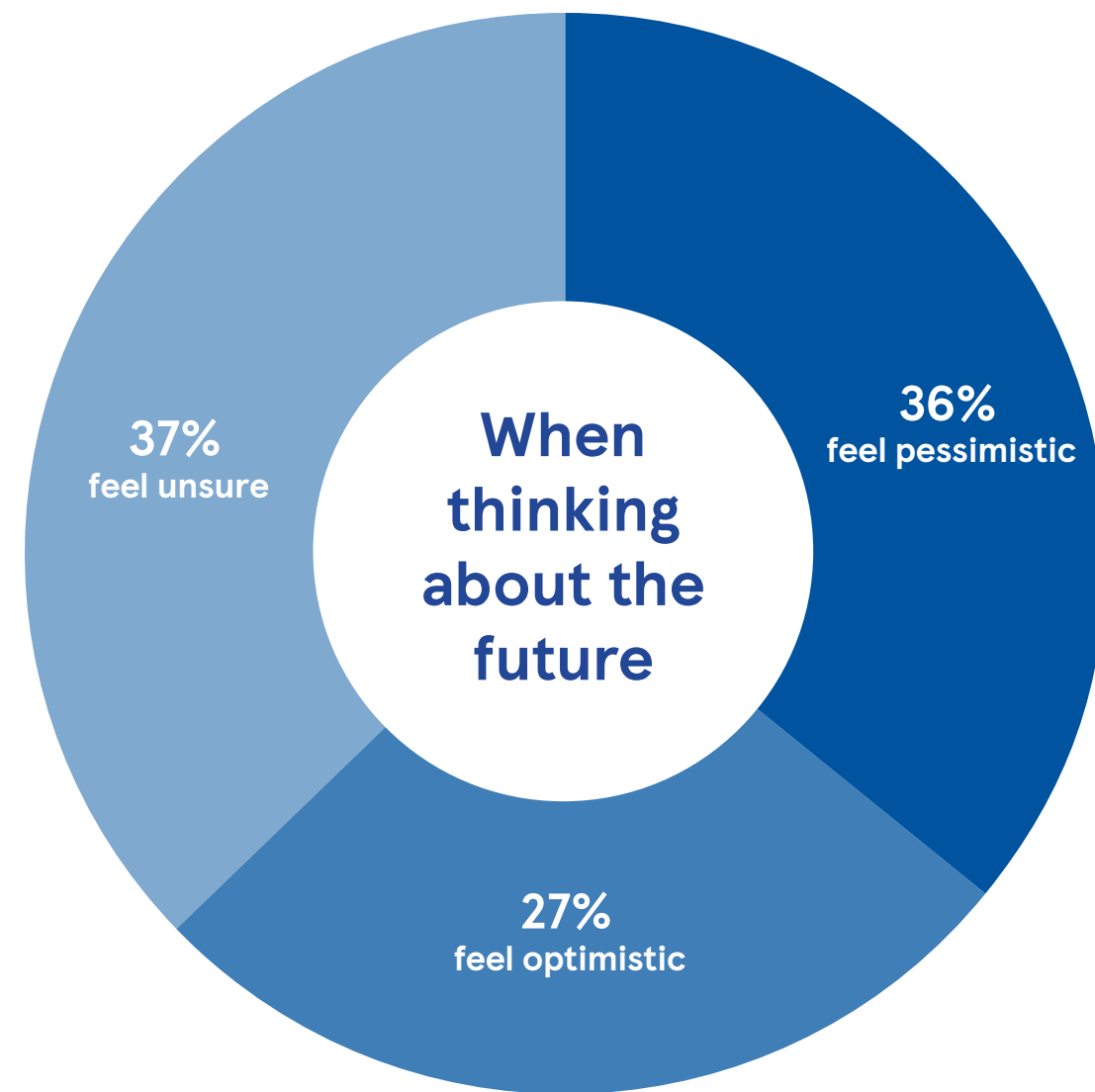
- Use the Tesco and Harper Adams University's Future Farmer Programme to gather and share insights on how the industry could be made more attractive to future talent.
- Food industry to use their platform with consumers, in stores and the media, to champion UK farmers, educate consumers on how they feed the nation and help change perceptions around farming and the value of a career in the industry.
- Continue and expand the engagement with schools, as already demonstrated by Harper Adams University, especially within urban settings, to better understand the agri-food sector and the exciting jobs that exist to realise a sustainable food system whilst protecting the planet.
- Government to consider how food production can be better embedded into the national curriculum to help with the realisation of a healthy food system for humans and the planet.

Our farmers' view

This report has been developed with Harper Adams University's School of Sustainable Food and Farming to better understand farmers' experiences and share their views on how to achieve a more sustainable future for UK agriculture. Its findings are based on a survey of more than 300 farmers, conducted at agricultural shows across the country, as well as in-depth roundtable discussions with farmers across our arable, livestock and fresh produce supply chains. Farmers are seeing the impacts of climate change on their businesses first-hand, from extreme weather conditions to rising input costs. As stewards of their land, they fully recognise the importance of caring for the environment and are deeply committed to preserving their farms for future generations. Yet they also know a sustainable farm is a profitable farm. However, many are currently facing huge challenges to produce affordable, sustainable food and stay profitable amid rising costs and economic pressures.

For these farms, the future is uncertain. A lack of clarity when it comes to finances and policy are preventing many farmers from investing in the long-term sustainability of their farms, especially in the wake of announcements on agricultural policy and inheritance tax which formed part of the government's October budget announcement.

The recommendations in this report have been informed by farmers' views and aim to provide actionable steps that farming, government and the retail industry can take to achieve both environmental and economic sustainability for UK agriculture.



67%

are already seeing the impacts of climate change on their farms.

76%

haven't been able to implement all the environmental measures they want. High upfront costs, the risk of poor financial returns and a lack of policy certainty were cited as the top reasons.

72%

want to be able to do more to make their farms environmentally friendly.

92%

think the government needs to do more to support UK farming to become more resilient.



About Tesco's Sustainable Farming Groups

Tesco's Sustainable Farming Groups (SFGs) include groups dedicated to its milk, cheese, beef, lamb and potato farmers, and offer members fair and transparent pricing structures, as well as support to reduce emissions through carbon foot-printing for lamb, beef and dairy group members. They also convene industry representatives; share knowledge between farmers, suppliers and Tesco colleagues; and trial innovations that can help reduce on-farm emissions and protect biodiversity.

Setting a clear vision

Farmers told us a lack of clarity over farming policy is a key barrier in introducing more environmentally friendly measures on their farms, with 88% of those surveyed citing it as a concerning issue.

Farmers raised concerns in several key areas of agricultural policy, especially when it comes to improving sustainability and healthy diets. The National Food Strategy, published in 2021, although not perfect, was a critical first step in beginning to establish a longer-term strategy for food production to deliver on health. Although some elements were implemented by government, the UK would still benefit from a more detailed strategy on how we produce and consume food. Similarly, the Land Use Framework, which was promised by the previous government in 2023, is yet to be published, so there is no overarching vision or set of recommendations for what actions farmers should prioritise. The Food, Farming and Countryside Commission report [set out what a framework could do](#), including ‘offering a more certain planning horizon, enabling farmers to integrate critical questions of food security and resilience in land use decisions’.

There is also uncertainty around the specific sustainability measures farmers should be prioritising on their farms. In England, whilst the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) goes some way to outlining common standards and approaches to improve sustainability on farm, many of the farmers we spoke to felt it lacks sufficient detail,

leaving them unsure how to effectively implement it. This was also the case for farmers looking to measure carbon stocks, sequestration and removal on their farms. This is due to a lack of guidance or standard practice when it comes to how farmers can and should account for healthy soil and plant biomass (hedgerows and trees) which trap and store carbon and green energy production on farm, when assessing their emissions i.e. reporting ‘net’ not ‘gross’ emissions at farm level.

Greater certainty will be crucial in addressing these concerns both in England where the SFI was introduced, but also in the devolved nations which have similar schemes. Government policies should aim to establish clear directives and provide farmers with a stable framework and clear goals to work towards. Retailers can support by setting clear standards and providing compliance guidelines. For example, all fruit and vegetable growers in Tesco’s UK supply chain are now LEAF Marque certified¹, working towards whole-farm, continuous improvement in areas including climate resilience, biodiversity, soil health, greenhouse gas emissions, and deforestation. Tesco continues to consult on a similar certification for livestock farmers across the UK but also recognises the importance of ensuring the government and the broader supply chain are aligned on requirements and support any investment farmers require to meet these standards.

Recommendations

- Government and policymakers to set a long-term land use and food security strategy to help inform government decision-making and industry investment in the transition to net zero.
- The food supply chain, including farmers, suppliers and retailers, to work in partnership to provide certainty on sustainability requirements and standards, through clear frameworks and certifications.

¹ LEAF Marque, run by global farming organisation LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming), requires farms to take a whole business approach to delivering more sustainable, climate positive farming. By benchmarking growers’ progress against practices related to nature, climate, society, and economy, the LEAF Marque Standard identifies target areas and helps producers drive further improvements.

Providing financial certainty

Improving the sustainability of the farming industry will rely on farmers having the confidence to invest in the future. However, many farmers feel large investments still come with untenable amounts of risk; unsuccessful trials and unpredictable and extreme weather conditions may leave them less able to pay back their initial outlay. Farmers must be able to offset some of the risk.

Building the right relationships between farmers and other actors in the supply chain will be key. Contracts between farmers and their customers will undoubtedly be part of the solution; in some sectors, farmers felt they would benefit from contracts that make it easier to plan ahead. In arable farming, for example, long-term planning can be beneficial for informing crop rotation and planting. Tesco's five-year contracts with UK egg suppliers are an example of where longer-term contracts have helped the industry deal with uncertain market conditions.

However, in a diverse industry, longer-term contracts will not always be the answer in ensuring farmers can access the best market prices. Two-way communication between retailers and farmers on changing consumer demands and emerging trends will also help. Whilst the Agriculture Act gives the government powers to provide direct financial support to farmers in exceptional circumstances, such as natural disasters or extreme market disruptions, further support to mitigate against the risk of crop failure would help farmers continue to invest.

Retailer-funded trials and incentives are another way to support farmers looking to adopt new methods. Ensuring that farmers can trial new interventions and approaches, such as low carbon fertilisers, at no extra cost, helps speed up adoption and provide insights and learnings for other farmers looking to adopt similar

technology. This highlights the further potential of the [SSFF's Sustainable Farm Networks](#) an initiative which connects diverse demonstration farm networks across the UK to share experiences, findings and best practice so that pre-competitive examples of low carbon farming can be shared more widely and effectively across networks.

Farmers will also need support in navigating emerging revenue streams that could support decarbonisation. Carbon markets offer potential for farmers to be able to create new forms of income and be incentivised to improve soil carbon capture on their farms, however uncertainty around how to engage with this emerging market, and a lack of clarity on best-practice governance and standards, mean many are unsure how to take advantage of this emerging area.

Recommendations

- Retailers to explore new models and incentives for farmers to trial new, more sustainable approaches that could help them manage investment risk.
- Government and the food supply chain to work more collaboratively in sharing the outcome of in-field research and trialling of new tools, technology and processes to encourage progress throughout the industry.
- Government to develop clear governance models and standards for carbon markets that help farmers manage risk whilst accessing new revenue streams to help fund decarbonisation.



Case study: Low carbon fertilisers

Conventional fertilisers contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, so identifying lower-carbon alternatives is a way to reduce emissions on farms. Alternatives exist, but uptake has historically proved a challenge as many are not available at scale, and farmers are concerned about the possible impact on yields.

To encourage uptake at scale, Tesco partnered with five major fresh produce suppliers to implement the UK's largest commercial roll-out of low-carbon fertilisers, testing eight innovative solutions from diverse sources such as food waste, chicken litter and algae. Initial results found these fertilisers are just as effective as conventional fertilisers, while reducing emissions by up to 50%.

As Stephen Shields, technical director at Huntapac, one of the suppliers involved in the trial, said, *“by moving to these new low-carbon technologies, we can save money compared to chemical-based fertiliser and at a time when all costs are going up for farmers, any steps that reduce them are ideal.”*

It is hoped the initiative will encourage the industry to adopt lower carbon fertilisers, helping pave the way for large-scale production in the UK. Tesco plans to expand the trial further to other produce areas including wheat and barley, as well as grasslands, beef, dairy and lamb supply chains.

Getting innovative technology on to farms

Farmers still face challenges when it comes to getting new technologies onto farms, with prohibitively high upfront costs cited as the top reason.

Financing for innovation on farm will therefore be crucial. Of the farmers we surveyed, 73% ranked the lack of funding available for investment and innovation among their biggest concerns. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the level of government investment in innovation in the UK ranks below the global average in an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) survey conducted in 2023².

Farmers feel funding is often difficult to access, while the application process can be complicated and difficult to navigate. And much of the funding available is often for new and emerging technologies, rather than supporting the roll out of proven innovations.

The whole food sector has a part to play. Helping to make more funding available for environmental technologies was the most common way farmers we surveyed felt the retail industry can support the farming sector in the net zero transition. Tesco's partnership with NatWest to boost renewable energy sources on farms is a good example of the sort of cross industry collaboration that could be key to helping farmers access technology to cut farm emissions. The voluntary programme offered 1,500 farmers, who are part of Tesco's Sustainable Farming Groups, access to preferential rates on finance for renewable energy assets.

Retailers can also support by sharing knowledge and insight into the innovations that prove most effective across the supply chain through initiatives such as the Sustainable Farm Networks. By sharing the results of trials of new innovations, such as the use of methane reducing feed additives for dairy cattle, we can support the agricultural sector in mitigating some of the risk when investing in new technology by understanding what works in practice within similar farming systems.

Getting new technology into the hands of farmers, with funding

available at all stages of innovation, will be crucial.

In November 2024 we joined forces with our milk suppliers Arla and Müller UK & Ireland to launch a farmer-led partnership which aims to put sustainability at the heart of the dairy industry.

All 400 of Tesco's Sustainable Dairy Group (TSDG) farmers across the UK will be part of the initiative, accelerating the reduction of carbon emissions, enhancing animal welfare and protecting and restoring nature, whilst promoting a shared vision for the dairy industry to collaborate in building a more resilient and sustainable future.

Recommendations

- Developing a collaborative approach between industry stakeholders – including food, retail finance and technology – and government agencies to create a more streamlined and easy-to-use funding application process.
- Government to increase funding for all stages of innovation, from seed funding to late stage, as well as ringfencing of funds for devolved nations.



Case Study: Low carbon farms

To help farmers and suppliers accelerate innovation and low carbon farming methods, Tesco is launching two low carbon trial farms in its UK supply chain. The multi-year initiative will see the trailblazing farms trial new technologies and share learnings to scale the adoption of sustainable farming techniques.

The farms – one in partnership with potato supplier Branston and another in Tesco's beef supply chain in partnership with our supplier ABP, will explore current and future innovations such as low carbon fertilisers, alternative fuels, state-of-the-art cold storage, and carbon removal techniques.

The farms will aim to provide farmers in Tesco's supply network with a practical demonstration of a route to net zero, helping pave the way to more low carbon farms in the future. There is potential for the farms to also host academic institutions to record field trials and measure the results, as well as trial new innovations from Tesco's Agri T-Jam initiative, which helps to unearth agriculture start-ups specialising in sustainability.

² Cambridge Industrial Innovation Policy: <https://www.ciip.group.cam.ac.uk/reports-and-articles/does-the-uks-scientific-research-translate-into-industrial-success/>

Standardising data and insight

Many farmers are now measuring and reporting on sustainability metrics in some capacity. However, there is no standardised framework in place to track industry-wide progress; 77% of farmers we surveyed said they are concerned by the lack of consistency in environmental standards and assurance. This lack of standardisation is often time consuming, requiring farmers to provide the same information to various organisations multiple times and in multiple formats. According to ADAS, over 80 carbon tools have been developed for quantifying farm emissions³. This takes up valuable time and makes it difficult to accurately compare sustainability efforts across different farms, making a clear assessment of overall progress towards sustainability goals more difficult.

Those farmers we spoke to were clear there needs to be more commonality in how sustainability metrics – such as emissions, energy use, soil carbon and animal health and welfare improvements – are measured and reported accurately from data relevant to individual farms. Basic reporting tools that run on averages don't reflect some of the improvements farmers are implementing across their farms, making progress difficult to accurately quantify. Simplicity and ease of use are also critical; if reporting and measurement are too complex or time-consuming, farmers may struggle to provide accurate data. Finally, a streamlined system needs to allow farmers to retain control of their data, whilst also enabling the sharing of aggregate data across the industry to support more targeted, insight-driven emissions reduction.

Tesco is working with [Forestry England and NatureMetrics](#) to measure biodiversity using eDNA analysis of soil, water, and insects. The innovation converts this complex data into simple metrics which can be viewed through its Nature Intelligence Platform, allowing users to comprehensively report on biodiversity improvement in their supply chain.

More work needs to be done between industry and government to clearly define what should be included in farm-level assessments

of environmental performance, and how they should be used. ADAS's work with Defra on harmonising carbon accounting tools for agriculture provides a useful starting point for a more unified approach, but more guidance for farmers is needed across key areas including carbon stocks, sequestration, soil health, biodiversity, and nutrient management. And as technology emerges that allows farmers to measure carbon capture and storage in their farms' soil, hedgerows and trees, a unified approach to carbon accounting that is robust and credible will be essential.

Recommendations

- Government to agree with the farming and wider agriculture supply chain on a common set of metrics for both environmental and animal health and welfare data against which farmers should regularly measure. This should include a standard methodology for carbon, soil, water and biodiversity reporting taking learnings and insights from existing schemes such as the AHDB's baselining project.
- Government, retailers and the broader agriculture supply chain to support farmers by establishing a carbon reporting hub to serve as a centralised platform to streamline data collection.
- Tesco and other retailers to continue to work with farmers and key supply chain stakeholders to simplify and standardise certification and data collection, potentially through the Sustainable Farm Networks.



Case study: Data-driven emissions reduction

Clear and accurate data that measures a farm's environmental impact is the first step for farmers to understand the best way to reduce emissions. Since 2016, farmers in the Tesco Sustainable Dairy Group (TSDG) have received an annual bespoke carbon assessment report from a CarbonTrust-accredited consultancy that helps them identify the emissions hotspots on their farms.

The insights in the report support farmers in putting in place interventions, such as the optimised application of nitrogen fertiliser, increased animal health, energy efficiency and building soil organic matter, to help lower the carbon footprint of their farm.

As a result, many TSDG farmers have been able to make significant progress in reducing on farm emissions. Since 2016, carbon emissions from TSDG farmers have decreased by 8.5%.

³ <https://adas.co.uk/news/harmonisation-of-carbon-accounting-tools-for-agriculture-report-published/>



Attracting future talent

Those working in farming and agriculture often feel misunderstood by consumers. Of the farmers we surveyed, 88% were worried about negative public perception of farming and its environmental impact, citing a lack of understanding of the reality of running a farm or the effort many put into looking after their land and livestock for future generations.

This doesn't just affect farmers' morale; it also has an impact on talent coming into the industry at a time when a skilled, engaged workforce will be essential in supporting farming's environmental transition. As new technology becomes increasingly important, the next generation of UK farmers will need a high level of technical understanding, advanced practical skills and sharp business acumen.

Retailers can play a vital role - using their reach with customers to champion a modern progressive farming sector. Whilst farming will always be a demanding job, new technologies have the potential to cut working hours and reduce labour intensity, making a career in farming more appealing.

Training and education, including apprenticeships, also need to be more accessible so those from non-farming backgrounds can find a way into the industry, and those taking on family farms can get the skills they need to run the farm in an ever-more-demanding future - one where sustainability knowledge and commercial skills will play an increasing role. Tesco's Future Farmer Programme, designed and run in collaboration with Harper Adams' School of Sustainable Food and Farming, is just one example of new training opportunities that seek

to equip younger generations with sustainability and environmental skills, business operations, and personal development, alongside core farming skills. Farming Connect, a subsidised programme available to farmers in Wales, is another good example of the support on offer to farmers to help build their knowledge in sustainable business.

As technical skills become increasingly important, curriculums at agricultural colleges and universities will need to continue to develop. At Harper Adams University this challenge has been met head-on with the development of their Harper Forward curriculum to align with the challenges of realising the UN's sustainable development goals and the Paris Climate Change Agreement across all its courses. Furthermore, the School of Sustainable Food and Farming, with its wider partners, have engaged in numerous urban school projects which brings the agri-food sector to the classroom to inform students, who otherwise would not consider a career in the sector, of the highly technical and exciting opportunities that exist.

Recommendations

- Use the Harper Adams University's School of Sustainable Food and Farming and the Tesco Future Farmer Programme to gather and share insights on how the industry could be made more attractive to future talent.
- Food industry to use their platform with consumers, in stores and the media, to champion UK farmers, educate consumers on how they feed the nation and help change perceptions around farming and the value of a career in the industry.
- Continue and expand the engagement with schools, as already demonstrated by Harper Adams University, especially within urban settings, to better understand the agri-food sector and the exciting jobs that exist to realise a sustainable food system whilst protecting the planet.
- Government to consider how food production can be better embedded into the national curriculum to help with the realisation of a healthy food system for humans and the planet.



Methodology

This report has been informed by quantitative and qualitative research, which has been conducted in collaboration with Harper Adams University's School of Sustainable Food & Farming.

Quantitative survey

Quantitative research was collated by surveying 258 farmers at agricultural fairs, ensuring a broad sample from various regions and farming sectors. This has provided measurable data on a range of issues, such as the financial pressures of sustainable practices, the accessibility of resources, and barriers to adopting new technologies. The data gathered from these surveys has helped identify common trends and challenges that farmers face across the UK, adding statistical weight to the report's conclusions.

Qualitative round table discussions

Qualitative research played a central role in capturing the nuanced, personal perspectives of farmers. By hosting round-table discussions at Harper Adams University the team was able to gather insights from farmers in a conversational and open format. Three separate discussions took place with farmers from the following industry subcategories: arable, monogastric and ruminants. This allowed farmers to express their views on sustainability challenges specific to their industry sector and to share ideas for potential solutions. The qualitative data from these round tables has enriched the findings of our report, adding depth and context to the quantitative survey results and surfacing the views of those working at the forefront of UK agriculture.

For more information please visit:
[Tesco.plc.com/greenprint-report](https://tesco.plc.com/greenprint-report)