

FARMING FIT FOR THE FUTURE

WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE LINK'S VISION FOR FARMING IN ENGLAND

Food and farming affects us all, regardless of where we live. In turn, the way that we farm shapes our countryside and everything that lives in it. Now is a pivotal point in the history of food, farming and our natural environment. The Government is developing both a long-term plan for the environment, and a long-term plan for food and farming. These plans must be joined up if we are to realise the opportunities to protect and restore the ecosystem services that underpin sustainable farming.

We want to work with farmers, retailers and others in the supply chain and the Government, to help create a food and farming system that encourages nature and landscapes to thrive, supports livelihoods and local communities, and has public health and animal welfare at its heart.

By working together, we believe that we can realise a vision for farming that is:

- **Better for nature:** A farmed landscape that is rich in wildlife, with healthy functioning and resilient ecosystems
- **Better for people:** Approaches to food and farming that are fair to farmers and wider society, and which promote health and wellbeing for all
- **Better for our land and our livestock:** Farms that look after and respect the land, and the farm animals on which we depend
- **Ready for the future:** Farming and food production that can cope with the changes and challenges that lie ahead, as well as being able to capitalise on future opportunities



We would welcome your engagement in these and other key issues that are set out in more detail in Farming Fit for the Future, available at www.farmingfitforthefuture.org.uk. For further information on our vision and to help us take this forward, contact enquiry@wcl.org.uk

THE KEY ISSUES

We would welcome a more detailed discussion with you about Farming Fit for the Future, but in the meantime, wish to highlight two key issues for your immediate consideration:

- To make sure that farming is ready for the future
 - The Government’s proposed 25 year plan to restore nature needs to be firmly embedded in future approaches to farming and food production. We need a clear commitment from Government to ensure that its 25 year plan for nature and its 25 year plan for food and farming complement one another, setting out a clear vision that a healthy natural environment and thriving, sustainable farming industry go hand in hand together.
- To ensure that the public money farming receives under the Common Agricultural Policy delivers outcomes that protect and restore the environment on which people and wildlife depend, it is essential that
 - Countryside Stewardship, the new environmental land management scheme, is actively promoted to farmers and that Natural England has the resources needed to make the scheme a success.
 - A planned 2016 review of the current CAP is used to increase the funding available for environmentally beneficial farming in England.
 - The UK Government works during its 2017 Presidency of the Council of the EU to secure reform of the CAP to deliver more public benefit.

THE VISION IS SUPPORTED BY THE FOLLOWING LINK ORGANISATIONS




69%

FARMING COVERS 69% OF LAND IN ENGLAND. THE WAY WE MANAGE THIS LAND AFFECTS THE QUALITY AND CHARACTER OF OUR COUNTRYSIDE, THE CONDITION OF OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, OUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING.



1.2bn

SOIL DEGRADATION IN ENGLAND AND WALES COSTS FARMERS AND WIDER SOCIETY AN ESTIMATED **£1.2 BILLION PER YEAR** IN LOST PRODUCTIVITY, FLOOD DAMAGE, REDUCED WATER QUALITY AND OTHER COSTS.



1/4

A QUARTER OF THE WILDFLOWER SPECIES THAT GROW ALONGSIDE ARABLE CROPS ARE **THREATENED WITH EXTINCTION**