

The Landworkers' Alliance (LWA) is a union of small and medium scale ecological producers and traditional family farmers founded in 2012 to advocate for a better food and farming system. Our vision for UK agriculture policy is based on the principle of Food Sovereignty. In essence, this means achieving a measure of food security whilst also engaging consumers and communities with the provenance of the food they eat: promoting a greater understanding of agricultural systems in order to achieve multiple social, environmental and economic benefits. We believe that people of all income levels and backgrounds, urban or rural, should have access to healthy, regionally produced, and affordable food. In the UK, this model can be most efficiently serviced by a vibrant mixture of independent small and medium farms that sell domestically and prioritise the health of our landscapes and communities over producing in bulk for the export economy.

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### The Big Picture

#### Affordable Healthy Food Sold Locally by Small and Family Farms

We agree with the critique raised in *Health and Harmony* that “a system of subsidy skewed toward those with the biggest land-holdings has kept land prices and rents high, prevented new talent coming into farming and held back innovation”. However, we are against the removal of financial support for active farmers, most of whom depend on these payments to survive in the face of the market's failure to support humane and ecological food production.

The analysis in *Health and Harmony* implies that farmers are not earning a living from farming because they are inefficient, haven't adopted modern farming technologies, or are lacking business skills. The reality is that the current economic climate for farmers is incredibly difficult, and that this has been exacerbated by the removal of market regulatory mechanisms to help stabilise and guarantee fair prices. Farmers who have high animal welfare standards, high levels of environmental management, and who pay decent wages to their workers have to compete with the prices set by farming systems with poor animal welfare in intensive systems, who use damaging agrochemicals, and exploit workers. The costs to society of these poor management systems are externalized, and good farmers cannot compete. Most farms would survive and thrive if guaranteed a fair price for their produce, but are forced to rely on subsidies due to market failure to protect their livelihoods. The government should adopt price stabilisation mechanisms, a tariff regime, and trade rules which stop British produce being undercut by cheaper imports, if it does not want to financially support farmers in the face of market failure. Under the neo-liberal ascendancy of the last 35 years, the UK agricultural industry has been experiencing a period of heightened competitiveness. Farmers are now expected to be experts in business rather than in husbandry. Profit margins are often far tighter than would be tolerated in many other industries, and are subject to the volatile pressures of the global market. Many farms have sold up, while the remainder have grown bigger and more corporate. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of farms in the UK declined by 47,000, 20 per cent of the total. Over the same period the average size increased by 33 per cent, from 169 acres to 226 acres — the average size for the whole of Europe is 36 acres. (Eurostat Statistics Explained [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Agricultural\\_holdings,\\_2000-10\\_YB14.png](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/File:Agricultural_holdings,_2000-10_YB14.png).) In the absence of measures to ensure viable livelihoods from farming the government must continue to support farmers.

There is a danger that with the new environmental land management system outlined in *Health and Harmony* the very largest farms, which can invest in getting bigger and adopting high tech farming, will start producing food as a commodity that can compete with global market prices. The very smallest and most resilient farms that already survive without subsidy may also continue, but as a marginal niche struggling with under-investment. The middle band of active farms, particularly those producing dairy, meat and arable, will transition to environmental land management without significant levels of food production. This process of gigantism threatens to replace family farms with highly mechanized corporate mega-farms, staffed by an elite of technicians and underpaid immigrant labour. It will reduce the opportunities for down-to-earth farming employment, further alienate the public from the business of food production, and undermine the vitality of rural communities. This is not what the public want their farms to be, as evidenced by the mendacious labelling and advertising used by supermarkets to convince consumers that their produce comes from real farms. (Eg Tesco's "Fake Farms": Aidan Fortune, "Fake Farms Help Tesco Grow Sales", Meat Trades Journal, 18 October, 2016)

Yes, the system is badly in need of reform, but this should not be used as a rationale to cut funding for farming. The BPS should stop, but we strongly believe that the government should dedicate the same level of financial commitment to supporting farmers. Concrete measures should be taken to prevent further concentration of the farming industry and abandonment of family farms. Support should be redirected towards rural development in a way that recognises and rewards environmentally friendly farms that are actively producing food and providing for the local community- within a fairer system and one from which smaller farms are not excluded.

### **Agroecological Farming Delivers Public Goods**

The LWA welcomes the focus on the environment and the measures for environmental stewardship that are outlined in Defra's command paper. However, despite mentions of the need to support public goods, such as environmental quality and public health, we believe that the suggestions outlined for a new environmental land management system will have minimal or possibly even detrimental impact on productivity, while having no impact on public health. Supporting good farmers to produce the food we need is the best way to ensure that everyone has access to healthy, local, affordable food. We believe that while food is not strictly a public good, access to healthy, ecologically, humane and affordable food certainly is.

The isolation of public goods as discrete targets independent of food production would only lead to a reduction in UK agricultural output as farmers opt for the cheapest ways to deliver certain targets. If such a system was allowed to develop, we could well see farmers paid to increase soil carbon by letting arable land turn to scrub, or improve water quality by stopping agricultural activity on land near streams and rivers. Any reduction in UK food production, unless met by a corresponding fall in demand, will simply lead to an increase in imports of the food products in question and a corresponding loss of public goods in other countries. Considering that most of the public goods in question are of a global nature, this is not only unethical, but also a pointless waste of money.

Therefore, the LWA believes that the most effective way to deliver the public goods outlined in the paper is to implement a set of progressive schemes to transition farms to more sustainable production systems and properly implement the 'polluter pays' principle, whilst establishing funding for a public goods support system based on the recognition that agricultural public goods can only be effectively delivered through a productive agroecological farming system, in which the public goods in question are default outputs of the way of farming itself.

We support a well-financed stream of funding for a dedicated "Agroecological Transition" grants scheme to help farmers to convert to agroecological farming methods, and a continuation of the organic conversion and maintenance payments which are accessible to all organic farmers regardless of acreages. In addition, all environmental land management payments should be subject to a rigorous active farmer requirement, which should be met by production levels over total income, with high animal welfare standards as a key component of the regulatory baseline. There should be additional payments for providing public access to affordable food, for a Horticulture Renewal Scheme to increase availability of fresh and healthy fruit and vegetables, and for educational initiatives associated with food production and processing on farms.

## **8 Policy Proposals recommended by the Landworkers' Alliance**

- 1. Sustainable Farming Transition Training and Grants**
- 2. A Horticulture Renewal Programme**
- 3. A New Entrants Scheme**
- 4. Vibrant Rural (and Peri-Urban) Development Programmes**
- 5. A Whole Farm Management Scheme**
- 6. A Local Food Fund as part of a Domestic Food Strategy**
- 7. A Community Supported Agriculture Scheme**
- 8. Rigorous implementation of "Polluter Pays"**

### **Structure of our proposals**

We include here with our responses to each of the consultation survey questions 8 concrete proposals to deliver on the points we make.

#### **The public goods which will be delivered through our 8 proposals:**

**Environmental:** protection and improvement of soils; enhancement of biodiversity; protection of valued landscapes and wild-life habitats; reduction of carbon emissions, and increased sequestration of carbon; reduction of artificial fertilizer use coupled with more efficient use of farmyard manure and slurry; reduced pesticide use; wise water management; reduced reliance on imported commodities which cause environmental degradation elsewhere in the world

**Social:** reversing the decline of family farms; more and better land-based jobs and livelihoods; increased opportunities for physical outdoor work for those whose aptitudes lie in that direction; increased vitality of villages and rural areas; provision of healthy food; enhanced animal welfare

**Economic:** greater food security through increased home production of temperate commodities; reducing the imbalance between rural and urban economies by improving remuneration for land-based work; avoiding the “dumping” of surplus produce on vulnerable peasant economies

**Expressed concisely, the mission is to ensure that farming in the UK provides environmental benefits, supports thriving farming communities, and supplies a substantial proportion of the UK's food.**

It is noteworthy here that the public goods provided go beyond environmental. Food may not strictly be a public good, but matters of public interest such as a stable, affordable, healthy food supply (food security), freedom from price volatility, and a stable and healthy rural economy are "non-rival", and so are a public good.

### **Whole Farm Management Scheme**

Our proposed schemes could be stand-alone or could be folded into the current systems: resembling additional simplified Countryside Stewardship offers which extend beyond stewardship with options for Orchards, Agroforestry, Small scale forestry, Community Supported Agriculture, etc. Our proposal for the Whole Farm Management Scheme fits very well with proposals for the Environmental Land Management Schemes, but puts an important further emphasis on creating productive and ecological farms. It is basically the points-based system for the ELMs which adds in extra points for any techniques employed that increase agroecological farming systems' points, plus extra points for community access to affordable healthy food and educational initiatives which increase public access to buy from, visit, and work on local farms.

This proposal must be coupled with training and capital grants support to allow for the enormous changes that most farms will need to make to farm more environmentally and productively and to shorten supply chains for economic resilience. All farms should be provided access to advice and support upon entry into the scheme.

### **Making subsidy work for small farms**

All schemes must be accessible to small producers and smaller units. The easiest way to accomplish this is to create a simplified points-based system for all active farms, including those under 5 hectares. For some, farms could enter into clustered agreements. All of the contracts should be multi-annual to enable longer term planning and to simplify the application process.

### **Small outcome-based capital grants**

The simplest and most effective way for producers to apply for capital grants is to put the burden of proof on the applicant. The scheme should identify the outcomes, leaving it to the farmer or forester to then prove how they will implement with both a business and whole farm/forest management plan. It is very important that the schemes do not proscribe the types of equipment eligible.



## Reform within the CAP

Please rank the following ideas for simplification of the current CAP, indicating the three options which are most appealing to you:

- a) Develop further simplified packages
- b) Simplify the application form
- c) Expand the online offer
- d) Reduce evidence requirements in the rest of the scheme

How can we improve the delivery of the current Countryside Stewardship scheme and increase uptake by farmers and land managers to help achieve valuable environmental outcomes?

**a) Develop packages** relevant to small farms and forestry businesses, including horticulture, orchards, agroecological and organic farms systems and small scale commercial forestry

Have more packages related to community benefits and public access: educational visits from schools, farmers groups, institutions, further adult education, including Community Supported Agriculture. These packages could operate on a points system for schemes alongside a rural and urban development programme with a simple application process whereby the farmer establishes how they will deliver the outcome.

The way to improve delivery for all such schemes is to make sure they are appropriate for all scales of farms and easy to apply for.

There should be clustered agreement options for small farms working together to enter into multi-annual agreements.

### Orchard Planting Grants

The rare and precious habitat of traditional orchards has been disappearing at an alarming rate: 60% of English orchards since the 1950s. If we do not replace them, we are in real danger of losing these unique spaces altogether.

A focal point for communities across the country and a crucial habitat for flora and fauna could be wiped out forever.

Devon, for example, has lost almost 90% of its orchards.

The loss of orchards is accompanied by a huge loss of apple varieties, and of habitats for birds and beetles like the threatened Noble Chafer, mammals such as long-eared bats, moths, lichens, and fungi.

An Orchard Planting and Maintenance Scheme could do something to stem this decline. Orchards bring people and wildlife together in celebration of the food and drink produced, the culture behind it, and their proud heritage.

They are magical places to be in.



### Pasture-Fed Livestock should be eligible for extra points

Pasture Meat and Dairy Products refer to those coming from animals that have ingested nothing but their mothers' milk and fresh grass or conserved pasture throughout their lives.

Pasture feeding has huge environmental benefits, improving soil structure and reducing the devastating environmental impacts of imported animal feeds.



## Reform within the CAP

### Forestry Grants

While the former Woodland Grant Scheme has already been subsumed into Countryside Stewardship, there are also grants for planting woodland available under the Countryside Productivity Scheme (although these have been suspended because they are over-subscribed). The implication is that some woodlands are required for environmental purposes, and others for productive purposes. This “single issue” approach needs to be replaced by a more holistic programme delivered by a single agency. All woodlands are productive and all have environmental impacts. Woodland planting should be designed so as to provide multiple benefits, including: timber, biomass (firewood), carbon sequestration, water retention, biodiversity, game cover, shelter, amenity, education, and employment.

In particular, the employment potential of woodland needs to be enhanced. There has been a revival of labour-intensive woodland industries in recent years including coppicing, charcoal production and horse-logging, and this needs to be built on. Minimum planting distances under the old Woodland Grant Scheme were too widely spaced to produce a commercial crop, resulting in amenity woodland that has the potential to be neglected. Planting distances prescribed under the WFMS should be sufficiently close to provide a crop of thinnings after a few years, and ensure the growth of timber grade wood.

**Woodland planting should by design provide multiple benefits, including timber, biomass (firewood), carbon sequestration, water retention, biodiversity, game cover, shelter, amenity, education and employment.**

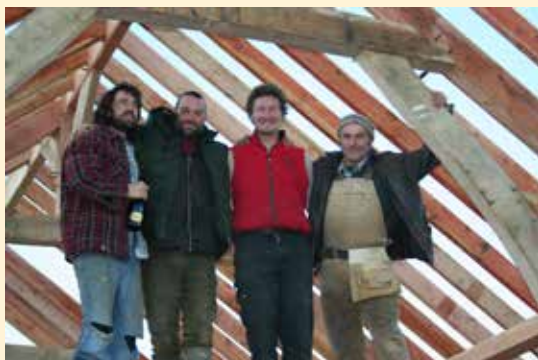


Small woodlands are often managed with low tech tools, making it harder for small forestry enterprises to benefit from Forestry Productivity Grants.

The list of prescribed equipment for these grants is usually too large and expensive. Simple forestry tools and infrastructure, like mobile bandsaws, sheds, and charcoal burning kilns, can help create productive small forestry businesses.



Small woodland management can support traditional craft industries like chairmaking, basketry, hurdle-making, thatching spars, and charcoal, which can play an important part in creating a vibrant land-based economy. Local artisan craftspeople are important to the tourism industry, contributing to a locality's sense of identity.



‘Community Woodland’ (CW) refers to any woodland where the local community has some degree of control over how the woodland is run or managed. ‘community woodland’ (CW) refers to any woodland where the local community has some degree of control over how the woodland is run or managed.

Woodland managed by a community group ‘feels’ different from one managed by a landowner or an agency or a tenant. This is because the focus of management is often on generating multiple benefits for the community (eg areas for children to use, wildlife havens, timber frame buildings and coppicing to create products and local jobs).

## An Agricultural Transition

What is the best way of applying reductions to Direct Payments?  
Please select your preferred option from the following:

- a) Apply progressive reductions, with higher percentage reductions applied to amounts in higher payment bands \*
- b) Apply a cap to the largest payments
- c) Other (please specify)

What conditions should be attached to Direct Payments during the 'agricultural transition'? Please select your preferred options from the following:

- a) Retain and simplify the current requirements by removing all of the greening rules,
- b) Retain and simplify cross compliance rules and their enforcement
- c) Make payments to current recipients, who are allowed to leave the land, using the payment to help them do so
- d) Other (please specify)

What are the factors that should drive the profile for reducing Direct Payments during the 'agricultural transition'?

How long should the 'agricultural transition' period be?

**a) Apply progressive reductions, with higher percentage reductions applied to amounts in higher payment bands.** This would ensure a greater number (22%) of current recipients share the burden of tapered reduction in support, it would also have the greatest limiting effect on the market distortion resulting from current BPS payments.

Redirect this money into capital support for farmers, especially ensuring that payments benefit SME farms to convert to more sustainable farming methods.

**d) Other:** Strengthen the current active farmer rules and introduce capping of payments at £120,000 as well as tapering of payments.

The largest landowners should have payments reduced, redirecting payments towards the small farm sector. The money saved by reducing payments can be made available for active farmers to build resilience and adapt to produce healthy and affordable food for local and regional markets. Particular emphasis should be placed on supporting small and medium farms to remain productive and profitable during the transition, rather than encouraging them to leave farming.

While endorse the introduction of a new framework for English agricultural support by no later than 2024, we would like to see a well-resourced transition to short supply chains for economic resilience, including market support mechanisms, introduced earlier than suggested, by 2019.

Top recipients of the BPS above £150,000

Current BPS

Sustainable Farming Transition Grants

Whole Farm Management Scheme



## An Agricultural Transition

# Sustainable Farming Transition Capital Grants

## Agroecological Farming

Agroecology is not a certified system of agriculture, but rather, a set of principles. Many of our farms do not call themselves agroecological and it is not a term popularised in the UK, but the principles of agroecology could and should be the key outputs of an agricultural transition programme of training and capital grants to create more environmentally friendly, resilient, productive and profitable farms. Certified ORGANIC farms are agroecological and benefit from being a fully inspected, trusted and well-respected by the public and policy makers. We advocate for both certified organic farms and non-certified producers.

The problems affecting our environment and food systems are complex. Agroecology is increasingly being recognised for its holistic approach capable of addressing numerous and intertwined problems simultaneously. In our definition, Agroecology delivers environmental, social and economic public goods.

Agroecology starts with increasing FARM AUTONOMY by creating farm inputs and recycling from within the farming systems. SEED is bred on the farm or in the locality, adapted to local conditions, pests and diseases. Seed can be saved and is adaptable for continually improved resilience. Local seed houses and exchange programmes can assist with this, and the portion of farmers' debt that comes from seed costs can be reduced.

FERTILITY for the farm is provided by green manures or composted Farm Yard Manure instead of artificial nitrate fertilizers. PESTS AND DISEASE are controlled through systems of whole farm management. System diversity, breeding, and rotations act to control pests and disease. An example from arable farming would be beetle banks, which draw ladybirds across a field to control aphids, used instead of neonicotinoid pesticides.

A DIVERSITY of crops and end products spread and manage risk. Mixed farms are generally more sustainable since they allow for a more diverse system for recycling farm inputs and outputs.

CULTIVATION methods focus on improving soil health and structure.

TECHNOLOGIES are Low-cost ecological innovations, managing systems, and accessible low tech solutions such as simple tractors and appropriate technologies. Low cost appropriate technologies do not put farmers into too much debt.

LOCAL MARKETS- Short supply chain markets give farmers more economic resilience because they get a higher share of the retail pound.

An impressive evidence base is beginning to emerge which demonstrates that small scale agroecological farms are not only economically, environmentally, and socially productive, but also a crucial site for the development of extremely valuable solutions to some of the world's most intractable problems. Indeed, this is partly due to the fact that there are so many farmers – both past and present – engaged with these problems. Rebecca Laughton of the Landworkers' Alliance has produced a report on the productivity of small agroecological farms in the UK titled "A Matter of Scale" : <https://landworkersalliance.org.uk/2017/07/small-scale-agroecological-farms-attract-uk-workers-produce-high-yields-of-vegetables-and-deliver-multiple-environmental-and-social-benefits/>.



Using sheep to graze orchards is a traditional agroecological agroforestry system.

Not many farms call themselves "agroecological", but many such techniques are widely used.

## An Agricultural Transition

# Sustainable Farming Transition Capital Grants

## Mixed Farming

By mixed farming we mean a farm producing both arable crops and livestock, where ruminant livestock are an integral part of the arable rotation. A report from the FAO and the World Bank states: "Mixed farming is probably the most benign agricultural production system from an environmental perspective because it is, at least partially, a closed system. The waste products of one enterprise (crop residues), which would otherwise be loaded on to the natural resource base, are used by the other enterprise, which returns its own waste products (manure) back to the first enterprise. Because it provides many opportunities for recycling and organic farming and for a varied, more attractive landscape, mixed farming is the favourite system of many agriculturalists and environmentalists." ( C. De Haan et al, *Livestock and the Environment: Finding a Balance*, FAO/USAID/World Bank. Chapter 3 Mixed Farming and the Environment, 1997.)

Most mixed farms in the UK rely for their fertility on legume/grass leys, which are effective at sequestering carbon. In a typical mixed farm, the role of livestock will be (a) to take advantage of the fertility building grass and legume crop; (b) to support a diversity of crops that help to keep the land weed free; and (c) transfer nutrients, in the form of manure, from outlying permanent grassland to arable land.

Mixed farming was intrinsic to all farming systems throughout Britain until the end of the 19th century, because there was no other convenient way of ensuring the continuing fertility of the land. When artificial fertilizers became common practice it became both possible and more economically viable to specialize. As a result large sections of the east of Great Britain have become predominately arable, while the west of the island is focussed upon livestock. The area under ley grassland has halved since 1973, from 2,400,000 to around 1,200,000.

The result is a severe nutrient imbalance, with the arable farms mostly in the east mostly reliant upon artificial fertilizers, while the West has a surplus of manure. Dairy farms in particular accumulate vast lagoons of slurry which they pump back onto grassland already saturated with nutrients, resulting in nitrate leaching and pollution of watercourses, or used to fertilize crops of maize silage which are fed back to the cows.

Reverting to genuine mixed farms would bring many environmental and social advantages:

- (i) Arable farms that became mixed farms would be less reliant on chemical fertilizers, more biodiverse, less dependent upon pesticides and herbicides and would sequester more carbon
- (ii) Dairy and other livestock farms that reverted to mixed farming would cause less pollution, would produce more food per acre, and would support more biodiversity
- (iii) Mixed farms would result in less transport since straw and animal feeds would be used on site and a wider variety of goods would be available for local consumption
- (iv) A wider variety of agricultural jobs would be available in specific regions of the country

One main difficulty with promoting mixed farming is that specialized arable and livestock farms have developed such economies of scale that it is difficult for family farms to set up all the infrastructure necessary to run a viable mixed farm. Large scale arable farms would require considerable investment to establish a dairy operation (though there are plenty of examples of expanding dairy farms making such levels of investment). One possible model here is Community Supported Agriculture, and other short supply chains bringing products directly to consumers which provides a local market for a wide range of products.

**All farms transitioning to agroecology and mixed farms should receive capital grants for the cost of transition.**





## A Successful Future for Farming

How can we improve the take-up of knowledge and advice by farmers and land managers? Please rank your top three options by order of preference:

- a) Encouraging benchmarking and farmer-to-farmer learning
- b) Working with industry to improve standards and coordination
- c) Better access to skills providers and resources
- d) Developing formal incentives to encourage training and career development
- e) Making Continuing Professional Development (CPD) a condition of any future grants or loans
- f) Other (please specify)

What are the main barriers to new capital investment that can boost profitability and improve animal and plant health on-farm? Please rank your top three options by order of the biggest issues:

- a) Insufficient access to support and advice
- b) Uncertainty about the future and where to target new investment
- c) Difficulties with securing finance from private lenders
- d) Investments in buildings, innovation or new equipment are prohibitively expensive
- e) Underlying profitability of the business
- f) 'Social' issues (such as lack of succession or security of tenure)
- g) Other (please specify)

What are the most effective ways to support new entrants and encourage more young people into a career in farming and land management?

Does existing tenancy law present barriers to new entrants, productivity and investment?



### a) Encouraging benchmarking and farmer-to-farmer learning

This would involve Defra developing a network of best practice "agro-ecological" farms and developing farmer-to-farmer learning networks and producer co-operatives and giving financial support to LWA to develop farmer-to-farmer networks and deliver training.

**f) Other:** Reintroduce a publicly funded on-farm advisory service aimed at increasing farm productivity (similar to ADAS) focused on whole farm management which can integrate farmers into the scheme.

**c) Better access to skills providers and resources** for agroecological farming

**d) Investments in buildings, innovation or new equipment are prohibitively expensive:** Our experience suggests that targeted capital grants are effective in delivering a transition to more sustainable farming methods.

**e) Underlying profitability of the business:** SMEs that currently prioritise local markets, ecological production, high animal welfare and living wages for employees are forced to compete with subsidised competitors producing food to lower social and environmental standards. This is a significant barrier to both profitability and capital investment for smaller-scale producers.

**a) Insufficient access to support and advice:** Increasingly, research and development within the industry has focused on high-input technological solutions that are largely inaccessible to SMEs. Greater support for low-input appropriate technologies and wider farm management techniques would directly increase the profitability and productivity of smaller farms.

We would like to see the introduction of a New Entrants capital grant scheme modelled on the Scottish Young Farmers and New Entrants Schemes. We would particularly like to see support for new entrants from non-farming backgrounds as well as succession planning schemes.

Better vocational training for agroecological farming and farmer to farmer learning networks is also needed.

Land Trusts, County Farms and other measures increase access to land.

It is imperative to protect the network of County Farms and ensure long term tenancies of at least 20 years to encourage new entrants to make long term investments.

The County Council Farms' estate has undergone a continuous decline, from 6,750 tenants on 127,500 hectares in 1984 to 2,500 tenants on 90,000 hectares in 2015.

This process needs to be reversed. County Smallholdings are very sought after, they offer affordable opportunities to new entrants, and they enable local authorities to initiate farming projects in strategic places for local food provision, care-farms, farms linked to educational facilities, etc. Opportunities exist to subdivide some larger farms, creating two or more smaller holdings focusing on direct sales.

The sections in the Smallholdings and Allotment Acts 1926 which empowered County Councils to acquire land for smallholdings, and to apply to central government for assistance with funding, were repealed in 2004. They should be reinstated, with the help of a budget derived from the promised capping of BPS.

## A Successful Future for Farming

The Landworkers' Alliance believes that the UK needs a large scale increase in both new entrant farmers and agricultural labourers for four key reasons.

- The UK currently produces only 60% of the food we consume<sup>i</sup>. To increase our national food self sufficiency, we need more people working on the land as producers.
- A transition to agroecological practices such as organics, small scale horticulture and high welfare livestock production are needed to ensure sustainable food production for future generations. These are labour intensive methods, requiring more people in agriculture.
- The short supply chains and local markets favoured by new entrants rejuvenate rural communities- socially and culturally as well as economically.
- New entrants maintain the competitiveness of the agricultural sector.

**A calculation carried out by The Land magazine estimated the UK needs 157,000 more farmers and farm workers in order to maximise domestic production from agroecological farms.<sup>ii</sup>**



Luckily, there is a new generation of farmers ready and willing to rejuvenate our food system. Many are interested in new models of farming like organic farming, alternative agri-food networks, and innovative small-holdings. Farming represents an important way of life for new entrants who seek fulfilling employment- they want to earn a living, but they want to do so in a way that perhaps reflects a connection with the land, and a love of working outdoors; the deep satisfaction of washing grubby hands, and the joy of growing healthy food for their families and communities. Interest in farming is growing, sparking increased enrollment in agricultural colleges, on training courses, and schemes such as the Worldwide Workers On Organic Farms programme. New entrants bring with them a wealth of resources gained outside of farming, including skills, networks and financial capital. New entrants are often better at IT, accessing information and creating diverse alternative marketing streams. This wave of innovation has the potential to revolutionise production, marketing and management practices- finding creative ways to make farming work in the face of low economic returns from 'conventional agriculture'. Many are young, but new entrants can be of all ages, some highly educated, some from farming families, or from volunteer work on other farms. But what they have in common is that they are committed to a life on the land.

With the average age of farmers in the UK at 59, we desperately need to give new entrants our full support to increase the number of entrepreneurs who farm and build profitable businesses that can respond to the industry's changing economic environment. Once started, new farms are commercially viable, contributing enormously to local economies and sustainable land management in both rural and urban communities. Providing support for businesses in the critical early stages will make it easier for new entrants to create viable businesses in the long term, and will help to change the face of agriculture in the UK.

**"The spread of industrial agribusiness has been so insidious and complete since the first 'green' revolution that people are only just beginning to realise that there is another way. It's become apparent just how much we lose when we lose a healthy, sustainable food culture. We need to have enough people in Britain engaged in agriculture with the right skills, land, and resources to provide the food we need. We need motivated people, and they need our full support."**

**Ele Saltmarsh, young farmer and researcher**

## A Successful Future for Farming

### Bringing New Entrants into Farming

#### 1 Increasing Access to Land

The rising capital value of agricultural land and its limited availability is a major barrier to new entrants. A large number of land buyers are primarily interested in the investment potential of agricultural land and associated subsidy payments and tax reliefs, a trend that drives the prices of land upwards towards prices far beyond the value for agricultural production. To stem this trend, the government should carry out a study into the increasing cost of land, investigating the effect of subsidies and inheritance tax on spiraling land costs. The sell-off of County Farms, the first rung on the farming ladder, should also be halted.

Additionally, the exorbitant market value of land with housing means that many of the farm houses and barns in the countryside are bought up by wealthier people who are often not engaged in agricultural activity. It is extraordinarily challenging for smallholders to afford housing associated with farming: they are often compelled to gain planning permission to build a house or place mobile homes on their land to be near their livestock and crops. Many young people find the most accessible route into farming is contracting, which is vital to the countryside; however, as they often have problems affording housing, they should also be eligible for agricultural workers' dwellings. There should also be more legislation making it more secure for farmers to rent land on long term (at least 20 year) tenancies.

“A start up grant has the potential to make a huge difference to new entrant producers. If you're just starting out, being able to access suitable land and afford the right infrastructure is critical to the success of your business. Removing one barrier for new entrants is another step towards creating a more productive, vibrant and resilient agricultural sector.”

Dave Washington, new entrant

#### 2 Aiding Startup Costs

Leveraging the capital needed for the land and infrastructure to invest in a commercial farm business represents a considerable challenge, particularly for young people entering agriculture who do not have inherited or earned wealth to draw upon. The Landworkers' Alliance proposes Young Farmers Start-Up and New Entrants Capital Grants Schemes, similar to those started in Scotland, be rolled out across the UK.

The Schemes would be aimed at all start-up farmers, supporting establishment of resources central to core agricultural activities, such as the acquisition or rental of land, livestock, buildings, and equipment. Allocation would be linked to the delivery of business plan objectives; businesses must demonstrate future standard outputs and suitable agricultural experience. The Scottish New Entrants Start-Up Scheme gives up to 70,000 Euros- a healthy boost!

**Public spending of £70 mn per year (just 2% of the current agricultural budget) on a New Entrants Start Up Scheme could kick start 1,000 new local food businesses each year with a potential multiplier affect of contributing £420 mn to both rural and urban economies<sup>iv</sup>.**



i. Agriculture in the UK [2015]. Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs  
ii. Can Britain Farm Itself? [2012]. The Land Magazine  
iii. Exchange Programmes for Young Farmers, Executive Summary [Nov 2015]. M-J Zondag et al, European Commission  
iv. Creative Industries Economic Estimates [Jan 2016]. Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. Figures are based on the estimate that every £1 invested in a creative industry (which includes local food industries) has the effect of generating £6 in increased economic activity.



## Agricultural Technology and Research

What are the priority research topics that industry and government should focus on to drive improvements in productivity and resource efficiency? Please rank your top three options by order of importance:

- a) Plant and animal breeding and genetics
- b) Crop and livestock health and animal welfare
- c) Data driven smart and precision agriculture
- d) Managing resources sustainably, including agro-chemicals
- e) Improving environmental performance, including soil health
- f) Safety and trust in the supply chain
- g) Other (please specify)

How can industry and government put farmers in the driving seat to ensure that agricultural R&D delivers what they need? Please rank your top three options by order of importance:

- a) Encouraging a stronger focus on near-market applied agricultural R&D
- b) Bringing groups of farms together in research syndicates to deliver practical solutions
- c) Accelerating the 'proof of concept' testing of novel approaches to agricultural constraints
- d) Giving the farming industry a greater say in setting the strategic direction for research funding
- e) Other (please specify)

What are the main barriers to adopting new technology and ideas on-farm, and how can we overcome them?

**e) Improving environmental performance, including soil health**, specifically ORGANICS and AGROECOLOGY. At least 10% of the research budget should be spent on broad scale holistic management techniques to promote agroecological practice and organic farming

**f) Safety and trust in the supply chain**. Transparency can be delivered most effectively through shorter supply chain that link consumers directly to producers.

**g) Other:** Extending the June census to collect, analyse, and publish data on farms under 20 hectares

**1. b) Bring groups of farmers together in research syndicates to deliver practical solutions**

**2. e) Other:** Encourage farmer- to farmer innovation networks like Farmer led Seed saving and Breeding programmes (example Southwest Seed Saving Network) and Farm Hack initiatives.

**3. e) Other:** Give public funding to open source research institutes looking at whole farm management techniques for agroecology and organic farming, rather than to agri-tech companies.

Most new technologies are too expensive and farmers do not want to go into debt. The technologies researched should instead be low cost or open source.

Grants for helping farmers to adopt whole farm management techniques need to be simple and low cost, allowing for standard agricultural equipment to be used in innovative ways.

Most new technologies are not applicable to smaller-scale mixed farms or agroecological farming systems



**CASE STUDY SAVARI Research Trust** aims to make potato growing globally less dependent on chemical and energy inputs by producing and promoting low-input varieties. Ideally these should be blight and virus resistant, capable of smothering weeds and have natural dormancy that prevents early sprouting in store. Researching varieties of blight resistance potatoes is very important to growers, because consumers do not want to buy GM foods. It is important that government research funding supports the development of non GM crops for producers who do not want to plant GM.

## Labour: A Skilled Workforce

What are the priority skills gaps across UK agriculture? Please rank your top three options by order of importance:

- a) Business / financial
- b) Risk management
- c) Leadership
- d) Engineering
- e) Manufacturing
- f) Research
- g) Other (please specify)

What can industry do to help make agriculture and land management a great career choice?

How can government support industry to build the resilience of the agricultural sector to meet labour demand?

1. Whole farm management approaches
2. Organic and agroecological farming techniques
3. Short supply chains

Better wages for farmers  
Apprenticeship programmes  
Farm Start programmes (i.e., Organiclea, Manchester Farm Start)  
Work with schools to reclaim the cultural value of agricultural livelihoods  
Funding for further professional development and training

Reintroduction of the Agricultural Wages Board  
A New Entrants Scheme modelled on the LWA/Scottish example

## Farmer-to-farmer innovation knowledge sharing

Farmer-to-farmer learning networks have been increasingly recognized for their capacity to enable the transmission of knowledge/innovation, mutual support, and sharing of equipment, resources, and facilities. Farmer-derived innovations are essential to agroecology and can be amplified and shared through these learning networks.

“Farm Hack” is a farmer-to-farmer network that was originally started by The Greenhorns in the USA and has been gaining momentum in the UK. Farm Hack is founded on the principles of open source technology, and tools and techniques are also shared freely and developed on the online forum [farmhack.net](http://farmhack.net). Farm hack events bring together farmers, growers, fabricators, engineers, and IT programmers to demonstrate and share tools, skills, and ideas through field demonstrations, practical workshops, seminars, entertainment, and sharing good food, local ale, and cultural exchanges such as a stomping ceilidh dance.



L'Atelier Paysan is a collective of small-scale farmers, employees and agricultural development organisations gathered together as a cooperative in southeastern France. Based on the principle that farmers are themselves innovators, L'Atelier Paysan have been collaboratively developing methods and practices to reclaim farming skills and achieve self-sufficiency in relation to the tools and machinery used in organic farming. They promote sharing farm-based inventions, collectively developing new technological solutions adapted to small-scale farming, and make these skills and ideas widely available through courses and educational materials.



## Labour: A Skilled Workforce

### Training Schemes

Training schemes help farmers to use both traditional knowledge and new discoveries to get their farms started efficiently. Many new entrants do not come from an agricultural background, meaning that though the enthusiasm is there, they don't know how to get started. This is coupled with a gradual loss of traditional knowledge as ageing farmers find it hard to connect to apprentices. Farmer-to-farmer training through farm start programmes enable skills to be shared and spreads collective approaches to solving problems to farmers of all ages from across the UK. Apprenticeships allow longer training, with the trainer receiving help, and the trainee knowledge. Both new and established farmers would benefit from governmental support, such as re-establishment of the past Defra fund allowing all farmers with a holding number to undertake a short training course, a farmer to farmer study tour, a mentoring scheme, or a paid apprenticeship. Especially important are training schemes to help farms transition to more sustainable farming methods, looking at whole farm management and shorter supply chains.

CASE STUDY Land Trusts such as **The Ecological Land Cooperative** purchase parcels of land to be leased in small plots to farmers looking to get a foothold on the land. Land trusts tackle many of the barriers to new entrants to farming by providing basic infrastructure and planning permission on the plots. The trust is able to select leaseholders to ensure that their smallholdings are run sustainably and are economically stable.

[www.ecologicalland.coop](http://www.ecologicalland.coop)



CASE STUDY **The Kindling Trust** and **Manchester Veg People** are working to grow a new generation of sustainable growers and increase access to fresh healthy food for all. Their Farm Start programme encourages and support new entrants into farming through access to affordable land, shared equipment, training and access to fair markets. But they face huge challenges keeping the programme going. Their impact could be ten fold with supportive public policies on a range of issues from land access and planning, to funding for training programmes.

[www.kindling.org.uk/farmstart](http://www.kindling.org.uk/farmstart)



CASE STUDY **Practical Farmers of Iowa** was founded in 1985 as an organization for farmers to help them transition to better farming methods. They use farmer-led investigation and information sharing to help farmers practice an agriculture that benefits both the land and people. The farmers are of all sizes and scales, organic and non-organic, who are transitioning their farming systems through farmer field days and mutual learning networks. Farmers who are transitioning from very industrial farm systems follow a 12 step programme of gradually incorporating more sustainable farming methods.

[www.practicalfarmers.org](http://www.practicalfarmers.org)





## Enhancing our Environment

From the list below, please select which outcomes would be best achieved by incentivising action across a number of farms or other land parcels in a future environmental land management system:

- a) Recreation
- b) Water quality
- c) Flood mitigation
- d) Habitat restoration
- e) Species recovery
- f) Soil quality
- g) Cultural heritage
- h) Carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas reduction
- i) Air quality
- j) Woodlands and forestry
- k) Other (please specify)

What role should outcome based payments have in a new environmental land management system?

How can an approach to a new environmental land management system be developed that balances national and local priorities for environmental outcomes?

How can farmers and land managers work together or with third parties to deliver environmental outcomes?

k) All of these outcomes are equally valuable and can be incentivised by smaller farmers working together to develop local food plans that integrate all aspects of environmental management with food production and distribution. We propose that the ELMs operate as a Whole Farm Management Scheme.

The "Whole Farm" Environmental Land Management Schemes should be open to farm and forestry businesses of all sizes, with no minimum claim area. Smaller scale land owners can work together with others to enter into joint agreements for larger scale packages.

Local food distribution systems should be integrated into the land management.

Outcome-based payments must be linked first and foremost to the production of healthy and affordable food for local and regional markets. In addition, payments should be linked to a strict active farmer clause: ensuring that only those actively engaged in farming as a livelihood are eligible for support. Capital grants are important for conversion to more sustainable farming systems to allow farmers to deliver outcomes.

Local action plans should be integrated into national plans and should prioritise the delivery of healthy and affordable food in a way that achieves national- and international-level environmental outcomes.

The "polluter pays" principle integrates farmers and government with organic certification bodies. We suggest taxation of harmful pesticides, herbicides, and artificial nitrate fertilizers. This revenue should go toward payments for organic producers which cover the costs of conversion, certification, training, and ongoing maintenance payments.



## Enhancing our Environment

### Proposed Whole Farm Management Scheme

According to agriculture minister George Eustice, the main reason farmers gave for voting Leave was the EU's "nightmare bureaucracy" and the "regulations which make life hard for English farmers". Of course a lot of these regulations are imposed for good reasons; and anyway, life is hard — the UK can do without the sort of farmer who seeks a soft life. Nevertheless, the paperwork designed to regulate the damage that increasing numbers of humans and their technologies can wreak on the environment is burdensome. Any scheme for supporting and regulating agriculture should be as streamlined as possible in order to gain the co-operation of participants.

To simplify life for both farmers and civil servants we propose that all farm support be delivered through a single scheme — just one "Pillar". This scheme would comprise a number of components or options; but it would involve just one application, one monitoring procedure and one payment. We also suggest that each farmer would be assigned one employed adviser to assist them with the process, much as people have a personal doctor or bank manager. Organically certified producers would be eligible, but their support and monitoring would be taken care of by the Organic Certification bodies. The Whole Farm Management Scheme WFMS — such is its working title as a way to bring holistic farm management and productivity into the environmental land management. The WFMS would be loosely based on the framework of the various Stewardship schemes. These have been moderately successful in their aims, and although they are voluntary, they have been widely taken up, covering 70 per cent of the country in the case of ELS/HLS. There is an existing team of Natural England advisers, which could be built on. However since the objectives of the scheme would include rural development and agricultural productivity as well as environmental protection, either Natural England would have to broaden its remit, or else a new administrative body might need to be established. This would signal a return to the broader vision of a few years ago when social and economic concerns as well as environmental matters were the focus of rural agencies such as the Countryside Agency and before that the Rural Development Commission.

Affiliation to the scheme would be obligatory for all commercial holdings and all holdings of agricultural land over a certain size, or at least all of those who receive any state support to ensure that public money is spent on public goods. This would be to ensure and enforce compliance with statutory environmental conditions, such as prevention of nitrate flow into water courses; and also for the purpose of collecting agricultural census information as a way to enforce the "polluter pay" principle. However all subsidized components would be voluntary, and only accessible to active farmers producing over a certain threshold.

These subsidies would comprise:

- (i) Environmental options, including many similar to those found in the HLS and CS option directories — different options being available for different classifications of land. Plus ongoing support for measures which convert farms to more environmentally benign farming systems. Extra points should go towards farms which produce their own animal feeds or convert to pasture fed livestock.
- (ii) Start-up schemes for new holdings or enterprises, and for conversions to new farming systems; eg converting to a mixed farm, or to direct sales and processing.
- (iii) Other capital grants for improvements to farm infrastructure.
- (iv) Contributions towards organic certification, organic conversion and maintenance payments.
- (v) Forestry planting and management.
- (vi) Special grants for establishing public access- Community Supported Agriculture schemes, Farm-Based Village Shops, Low Impact Farm Hamlets, etc.
- (vii) Grants for taking trainees and apprentices; or for the farmer to take a training course.
- (viii) Horticulture and Orchard payments



## Fulfilling Our Responsibility to Animals

Do you think there is a strong case for government funding pilots and other schemes which incentivise and deliver improved welfare?

Should government set further standards to ensure greater consistency and understanding of welfare information at the point of purchase? Please indicate a single preference of the below options:

- a) Yes
- b) Yes, as long as it does not present an unreasonable burden to farmers
- c) Perhaps in some areas
- d) No, it should be up to retailers and consumers
- e) Other (please specify)

What type of action do you feel is most likely to have the biggest impact on improving animal health on farms? Please rank your top three choices from the below list, in order of importance:

- a) Use of regulation to ensure action is taken
- b) Use of financial incentives to support action
- c) Supporting vets to provide targeted animal health advice on farm
- d) Making it easier for retailers and other parts of the supply chain to recognise and reward higher standards of animal health
- e) An industry body with responsibility for promoting animal health
- f) Research and knowledge exchange
- g) Transparent and easily accessible data
- h) An understanding of animal health standards on comparable farms
- i) Other (please specify)
- j) N/A – Cannot rank as they are all equally important.

How can the government best support industry to develop an ambitious plan to tackle endemic diseases and drive up animal health standards?

Yes. However, we believe that high animal welfare should not be simply regarded as a public good: it is an end product of responsible farming practice. Farmers delivering anything other than high animal welfare should not be eligible for support. To level the playing field, trade rules should restrict imports from countries with lower animal welfare.

**a) Yes**

Organic and agroecological systems that demonstrate higher animal welfare should be eligible for higher levels of support because they have a recognised label that promotes high animal welfare.

**a) Use of regulation to ensure action is taken**

**b) Use of financial incentives to support action:** Capital grants should be given to farmers who can prove that better infrastructure would result in better animal welfare.

**i) Other:** Promoting organic farming-- the animal welfare standards are incorporated within organic regulations

Capital grants for conversion to more humane farming systems



Small farms receive minimal amounts of subsidy, if they get anything at all. Many small farms suffer from decades of under-investment, or never had sufficient capital start-up costs to operate their businesses as well as they would like to. A simple small capital grants scheme to improve the productivity, sustainability and animal welfare on small farms would deliver multiple public goods: for the environment, animals and communities. To be effective, the scheme would need to allow farms to apply for standard agricultural equipment and basic farm infrastructure.



## Supporting Rural Communities and Remote Farming

How should farming, land management and rural communities continue to be supported to deliver environmental, social and cultural benefits in the uplands?

There are a number of challenges facing rural communities and businesses. Please rank your top three options by order of importance:

- a) Broadband coverage
- b) Mobile phone coverage
- c) Access to finance
- d) Affordable housing
- e) Availability of suitable business accommodation
- f) Access to skilled labour
- g) Transport connectivity
- h) Other, please specify

With reference to the way you have ranked your answer to the previous question, what should government do to address the challenges faced by rural communities and businesses post-EU Exit?

We recognise that there is a growing public interest in the re-wilding of the uplands for public benefit, however we are also committed to prioritising environmentally responsible food production. We therefore support a modest increase in the stocking of the uplands in order to increase productivity within environmental limits and maintaining farming cultures while at the same time maintaining public access.

**d) more affordable housing** for rural workers, including self build. Changes to planning laws to allow for more affordable housing

**h) Other:** Rural communities need a wide range of farms selling and processing locally for a vibrant rural economy. Loss of farms will greatly impact rural communities. Rural development funding to create sustainable land-based employment for rural workers.

**c) Access to finance:** A Local Food Fund- creating more profitable farming businesses by shortening supply chains and creating vibrant local food networks. Must not let farms go out of business, but help them transition to short supply chain farms using techniques that create employment.

Well financed rural development schemes- including a new version of Leader plus funding.

A Local Food Fund, a New Entrants Start up scheme, and a Horticulture Renewal Scheme

Relax planning laws to make it much easier to build low impact agricultural workers dwellings and strengthen agricultural ties on existing rural workers housing (this is more an issue for the Department for Housing Communities and Local Government)

### Making Rural Development grants accessible to small farmers

Since 2005 the CAP has been awarding grants for farm infrastructure projects under its rural development programme. In reality, however, smaller-scale enterprises are often excluded by the scale of the grants, the eligibility requirements or the weight of paperwork involved. An example are the the growth and processing grants under the RDPE for 2017. The minimum grant is £35,000 , which is 40% of the eligible cost- the rest to be raised from private sources. This means the total cost of the project has to be at least £87,500. This is too high an investment for many smaller projects. Excluded from eligibility are any costs associated with standard agricultural equipment and other inputs like animals. There are also no grant schemes that support core production.

Any infrastructure support schemes under the RDPE should be carefully designed with the help of active small scale farmers, so that they are accessible and match the needs of farmers in creating mixed, sustainable, productive farms that supply value-added products locally.



Supporting Rural Communities and Remote Farming

Rural Development Programmes to create thriving rural communities



Rural development needs an approach which creates lots of jobs – a sector of huge farms in which robotics have replaced human labour will do nothing to tackle social isolation for farmers or to encourage thriving rural communities.

Funding from capping payments should be channelled into well designed Rural Development Funding- extending beyond just rural areas to peri-urban and urban food growing initiatives also. Large corporately-owned farms, even if they employ a few local people, bring comparatively little wealth into the local community since they produce commodities on a scale that can only be conveniently sold to processors and supermarkets, who take the lion's share of the added value. Family farms, smallholdings, and small-scale forestry enterprises are better equipped to process and sell goods locally, through village and farm shops, local markets, and box schemes, keeping money circulating within the local economy.



Thriving communities need good jobs in farming and related food industries. UK citizens in rural communities want employment in agriculture: picking, packing, weeding, working with animals and food processing... but they want these jobs to be creative, well respected, and paid in proportion to their societal value.



## Supporting Urban Communities Too!

### Urban and Peri-Urban Farming

Urban agriculture is currently undergoing a welcome revival: there is renewed interest in allotments, city farms are thriving, and small horticultural enterprises are striking up in previously uncared for patches of land and abandoned council green-houses. The movement is, among other things, a manifestation of a widely felt need to have more engagement with the natural world, and greater transparency of food provenance.

However the urban farming movement still has ground to recover. Until the Second World War, the area around London and other large cities was the domain of market gardeners, dairy farmers and hay dealers — all making maximum use of land that was ideally placed for supplying a huge metropolitan market.

Now they are nearly all gone. Much of the green belt around London, despite its privileged position, is underused, and some is a blighted no-man's-land where nags graze dock-sick fields, while landlords wait for planning restrictions to be removed. In 2010, eighteen per cent of green belt land was found to be “neglected” and only 40 per cent judged to be well-maintained, compared to 61 per cent of England as a whole,<sup>1</sup>

Using this underused land for local food production, and for hosting farm visits from schools etc, is a no-brainer. A survey of the public by Natural England and CPRE in 2010 found that over 80 per cent of respondents would rather buy food grown in the Green Belt that surrounded them than food produced elsewhere, including vegetables, fruit, meat and milk. Seventy eight per cent agreed that “If farmland around England’s towns and cities isn’t being fully used, then it should be used to grow food to feed the people who live in the local towns and cities.”<sup>2</sup>

**Peri-Urban Development Programmes and City Plans should promote the use of Green Belt and other peri-urban land for local food production.**



<sup>1</sup> Natural England and CPRE, Green Belts: A Greener Future, CPRE, 2010 p51, <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/housing-and-planning/green-belts/item/1956-green-belts-a-greener-future>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



## Changing Regulatory Culture

How can we improve inspections for environmental, animal health and welfare standards? Please indicate any of your preferred options below.

- a) Greater use of risk-based targeting
- b) Greater use of earned recognition, for instance for membership of assurance schemes
- c) Increased remote sensing
- d) Increased options for self-reporting
- e) Better data sharing amongst government agencies
- f) Other (please specify)

Which parts of the regulatory baseline could be improved, and how? How can we deliver a more targeted and proportionate enforcement system

**f) Other:** Incentivise and subsidise organic certification whereby the regulation is carried out by organic inspection bodies.

Tax the use of recognised environmentally damaging agro-chemicals: herbicides, pesticides and fungicides. Tax the use of artificial nitrate fertilizers. Enforce the “polluter pay” principle through more transparent labelling to highlight environmental costs associate with intensive production. This would require reversing the burden of certification to the polluter instead of to organic producers.

### Polluter Pays: Regulation

Farming, like other industries, should pay the costs of its “externalities” ie the harm that it causes which otherwise is borne by society as a whole. Eg D Helm op.cit. 99 This is the “polluter pays” principle. The most obvious application of this principle would be to license and tax farmers for using poisonous chemicals, precautionary antibiotics, and artificial fertilizers. Such a tax could be calibrated so that farmers only resorted to such measures when they felt it was necessary, resulting in reduced levels of pollution and antibiotic resistance. It would, of course have the advantage of bringing in funds that could then be used to subsidize environmental forms of farming.

Taxation would encourage the “precision farming” techniques to reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers which they are keen to promote; and that the funds would be returned to the farming industry in the form of subsidies for environmental improvements.

### Polluter Pays: Labelling

There is one other cost incurred by the agrochemical industry but borne by other members of society — namely the provision of consumer information. At the moment the cost of labelling food so that consumers can identify whether it has been produced with agro- chemicals is borne by those consumers who do not want to consume such food, who pay for the considerable costs of organic certification and labelling.

Organic food production has a pedigree of several thousand years, whereas the contentious chemicals in question were introduced over the last 100 years. It is perverse for the cost of informing the public about their presence in food to be borne by consumers who do not want to buy such food. If a paint, for example, contains a noxious chemical, we force its manufacturer to advertise the fact on the label. We do not demand manufacturers of paint which does not contain such chemicals to apply for a special certificate. The same principle should apply to food labelling. As well as being inequitable, the current organic labelling system is also inefficient since there are large areas of land which are not subject to chemical management and yet are not certified organic.

The alternative would be to establish a licensing and labelling regime whereby supermarket goods so produced were obligatorily labelled “produced with pesticides/ artificial fertilizers/antibiotics/ GM” with a Little Black Tractor certification mark. Most food produced organically would then not need to undergo certification since it would be regarded as “conventional” and the price differential between organic and non-organic would be radically altered — leading to much greater public uptake of organic food.

**The cost of informing consumers about the use of chemicals, precautionary antibiotics and GM processes in the production of food items should be borne by the farmers and food producers using these inputs.**





## Risk Management and Resilience

What factors most affect farm businesses' decisions on whether to buy agricultural insurance? Please rank your top three options by order of importance:

- a) Desire to protect themselves from general risks (e.g. – revenue protection)
- b) Desire to protect themselves from specific risks (e.g. – flooding, pests or disease)
- c) Provision of government compensation for some risks
- d) Cost of insurance
- e) Complexity and administrative burden of insurance
- f) Availability of relevant insurance products
- g) Other (please specify)

What additional skills, data and tools would help better manage volatility in agricultural production and revenues for (a) farm businesses and (b) insurance providers?

How can current arrangements for managing market crises and providing crisis support be improved?

a, b, c

Diversifying production to include mixed farming enterprises and agro-ecological systems – this enables economic resilience as well as biological resilience against pests, diseases, and weather events. There is a need for training and capital support for the transition to more resilient systems. Long term resilience can be built from transition to shorter supply chains and better systems across the whole chain.

Community Supported Agriculture is a new and innovative model of farming that enables farmers to share the risk of the enterprise with the consumer. CSA schemes need direct support to promote themselves and establish new initiatives.

Import tariffs reduce price volatility for farmers exposed to global market prices and result in better revenues for farmers.

Reintroduce and strengthen market management tools, such as marketing boards, that guarantee fair prices for farmers up to a certain level of production.

## Ensuring Fairness in the Supply Chain

How can we improve transparency and relationships across the food supply chain? Please rank your top three options by order of importance:

- Promoting Producer Organisations and other formal structures?
- Introducing statutory codes of conduct?
- Improving the provision of data on volumes, stocks and prices etc.?
- Other (please specify)?

What are the biggest barriers to collaboration amongst farmers?

What are the most important benefits that collaboration between farmers and other parts of the supply chain can bring? How could government help to enable this?

b, a, c

Farmers are short of the time needed to develop co-operatives. They need technical support to put together collaborative applications and initiatives.

Financial barriers- there should be a rural development scheme focused on increasing collaboration in the farming sector and top up funding on any scheme that is carried out collaboratively

Need more co-operative advisory services suitable for small producers. (Boot Strap)

Government can support industry led cooperation between small farms for marketing, processing, and knowledge sharing about innovations in direct marketing. Farmers can get together to supply larger volumes of produce for public procurement or to use collective distribution systems like open food networks.

A strong Grocery Code Adjudicator can help negotiate fair prices and guaranteed long-term contracts for farmers.

## Protecting Crop, Tree, Plant and Bee Health

Where there are insufficient commercial drivers, how far do you agree or disagree that government should play a role in supporting:

- Industry, woodland owners and others to respond collaboratively and swiftly to outbreaks of priority pests and diseases in trees?
- Landscape recovery following pest and disease outbreaks, and the development of more resilient trees?
- The development of a bio-secure supply chain across the forestry, horticulture and beekeeping sectors?

Where there are insufficient commercial drivers, what role should government play in:

- Supporting industry, woodland owners and others to respond collaboratively and swiftly to outbreaks of priority pests and diseases in trees?
- Promoting landscape recovery following pest and disease outbreaks, and the development of more resilient trees?

What support, if any, can the government offer to promote the development of a bio-secure supply chain across the forestry, horticulture and beekeeping sectors?

Strongly agree

The government should offer guidance based on expert advice about how to control pests and disease and offer financial support for collaborative responses.

The government should issue guidance based on expert advice about how to ensure a bio-secure supply chain in all of these sectors, but should not increase the regulatory burden on these sectors with the introduction of movement orders.



## Devolution: Maintaining Cohesion

With reference to the principles set out by JMC(EN) above, what are the agriculture and land management policy areas where a common approach across the UK is necessary?

What are the likely impacts on cross-border farms if each administration can tailor its own agriculture and land management policy?



We would like to ensure that any devolution deal does not risk diluting any of the progressive Scottish and Welsh policies currently in place. England should adopt the rural development programmes that the Scottish have, such as the Small Farms, Young Farmers, and New Entrants Schemes. It should also look at progressive policies implemented by the Welsh Assembly such as the Future Generations Act, the One Planet Development Policy, and the specific funding for CSAs under Measure 19.9 of the Co-operation and Supply Chain Development Scheme RDP Wales 2014 – 2020, p6-7, which could be replicated across the UK.

It is extremely important that decision making continues to be devolved, but all countries should receive equivalent levels of support, so that farms across borders can operate on a level playing field. None of the 4 countries in the UK should be favoured or disadvantaged.

The impact of Brexit on Wales and Scotland could be very serious, particularly on how funding for farmers is calculated.

**The Barnett Formula should not be used to determine the levels of funding for agriculture in the devolved nations.**

As an example, under the EU, Wales has received 16% of the CAP budget.

- If the Barnett formula is used (as is used for NHS Wales), then Wales will receive only 4% of the agriculture budget: a budget cut of 40%.
- 80% of farm income in Wales comes from the EU, so any cuts will have a massive impact.
- The main market for Welsh lamb is in the EU.
- The majority of farms in Wales are small and family-run.
- A high percentage of farms in Wales are upland farms on less favourable land.
- The devolved nations need to have an equal say in decisions such as how agricultural funding is shared out and allocated. The small number of Welsh MPs relative to the Westminster total means that Wales has very little say and minimal power.

## International Trade

How far do you agree or disagree with the broad priorities set out in the trade chapter?

**Unnecessary trade deals create market distortions that undermine local food economies. For example in 2013 the UK imported 383 million pounds worth of lamb mostly from New Zealand and exported precisely the same amount, mostly to the EU.**

2013 figures Trade Indignity op cit

How can government and industry work together to open up new markets?

How can we best protect and promote our brand, remaining global leaders in environmental protection, food safety, and in standards of production and animal welfare?

We want to make sure our trade system is not based on exporting high quality goods to the world, while we import low quality food to feed ourselves. Therefore, meeting national demands for food should take precedence over establishing export markets. This would be beneficial for a number of reasons:

- **It will reduce our reliance on imported food, reducing the sway export markets can have on prices and accessibility.**
- **It will increase the availability of fresher, more nutritious and affordable food that is directly accessible to local communities, bringing agricultural policy into line with public health.**
- **It will reduce transport costs and the carbon emissions associated with long distance food transport, minimising our contribution to climate change, and preparing us for a time when fossil fuels are less abundant.**
- **It will allow producers gain a higher share of the retail pound through short supply chains, thus making farming enterprises more profitable and a valuable contribution to local economies, without resulting in higher prices for the consumer.**
- **It will encourage more diverse, sustainable mixed farms with multiple products, which enable more on-farm recycling, lower inputs, reduction of food waste, and other environmental benefits.**
- **It will reduce our reliance on “ghost acres”, the land in other countries that currently should be available to feed their own populations, but which is currently used for growing export crops to satisfy UK markets.**

There is a whole section in “Health and Harmony” on International Trade. We would like to see at least equal emphasis and resources dedicated to the development of local and regional markets and shorter supply chains. Over the past decades there has been significant underinvestment in local supply chains, leading to today’s situation in which very little financial support exists to develop small farm enterprises and local markets. We propose a local food fund, supporting development of direct sales by small businesses, for example through box schemes, food hubs, community supported agriculture, delivery rounds, farm shops and catering businesses, which make fresh affordable food accessible to people of all income levels.

The Landworkers' Alliance advocates an integrated tariff regime to enforce the maximum permissible rates under current WTO rules relating to agricultural goods and services. This includes low tariff rate quotas plus selectively applied seasonal tariffs to protect sensitive industries (like UK strawberries). Tariffs raise revenue for government, which can be used to support the development of stronger short-supply chains. Since the UK joined the CAP our supply chains are geared towards export to Europe, but these can be shifted back towards domestic supply chains with equivalent market opportunities being opened up domestically.

Protecting farmers from imports produced to lower standards We should maintain our world-leading animal welfare and environmental standards by applying strict trade rules. The basic principle behind protectionism is that farmers should be protected from being undercut by cheap imports. If we do not enter into completely free trade deals in agriculture, prices should not collapse for farmers, they should increase. For example, if hormone injected beef from the US is being sold in the UK for less than the price of UK beef, the UK applies a tariff to the imported beef bringing the price up to the an equivalent price. UK farmers get a higher price and benefit from not being forced to sell their products at the cheaper price to compete with poor quality food.

## A Local Food Fund

### Local Organic Food Strategies

Defra, in conjunction with industry and consumers, should put together a development strategy to increase the number of small and medium scale farms selling through short supply chains in local and regional domestic markets providing for the public goods of access to healthy affordable food for all.

Direct sales of primary products have proven to be one of the main means of ensuring the financial viability of farms; however, most producers currently develop businesses in isolation. Government partnership with producer, marketing, processing, and distribution collectives and cooperatives across the country will facilitate co-ordination of local production and distribution through technologies, training, advisory services, and finance. This in turn will support coordination of direct sales and short supply chains to enable local distribution, create local employment, stimulate local economies, and enable small enterprise to achieve scale. Direct sales strategies for small businesses include box schemes, food hubs, retail space for local producers in larger shops, community supported agriculture, delivery rounds, farm shops and catering businesses. The government should also explore stronger models of cooperation between small farms for marketing, processing, and knowledge sharing about innovations in direct marketing. And larger retailers should be encouraged to open up and maintain retail space for local farms.

To support and encourage local processing, a set of environmental health regulations relevant and appropriate to local sales should be applied to farms selling direct to consumers within a 15-mile radius.

**Strengthening short supply chains serves to protect our domestic food systems, strengthen local economies, and facilitate access to fresh, healthy, affordable food for all.**

### Rural development funds for organic farms selling locally

Currently very little financial support exists to develop small farm enterprises which sell locally.

Loans for business development can be obtained from banks such as Triodos, and there are limited government grants schemes like the (now finished) National Lottery "Local Food Fund" and Leader+, but more consistent financial support is required to ensure diversity in the organic farming sector. Organisations concerned with farm diversity are currently developing plans for sustainable business and rural development support that is tailored to the needs of organic small/medium scale regional and local businesses for supply chain innovation and sustainability. These organisations should be included in rural development consultations.



### What a Local Food Fund will deliver

- Diverse sustainable mixed farms with multiple products enable more on-farm recycling, lower inputs, and reduction of food waste.
- Producers gain a higher share of the retail pound, thus making smaller enterprises more profitable, and more valuable contributors to local economies. (BEIS Industrial Strategy)
- Cutting down on the cross-haulage of food products reduces transportation, and thereby carbon emissions, in line with commitments to the Paris Climate Change Agreement.
- A more resilient food supply bolsters the UK in the face of uncertain trade deals and volatile global prices.
- Substitution for some imported food products creates a secure domestic food supply.
- Fresher, more nutritious, and affordable food directly accessible to local communities, brings agricultural policy into line with public health strategies. (Public Health England's 2016 Tackling Obesity Strategy)



## Public Money for Public Goods

From the list below, please select which outcomes would be best achieved by incentivising action across a number of farms or other land parcels in a future environmental land management system:

- a) Recreation
- b) Water quality
- c) Flood mitigation
- d) Habitat restoration
- e) Species recovery
- f) Soil quality
- g) Cultural heritage
- h) Carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas reduction
- i) Air quality
- j) Woodlands and forestry
- k) Other (please specify)

Of the other options listed below, which do you consider to be the most important public goods that government should support?

Please rank your top three options by order of importance:

- a) World-class animal welfare
- b) High animal health standards
- c) Protection of crops, tree, plant and bee health
- d) Improved productivity and competitiveness
- e) Preserving rural resilience and traditional farming and landscapes in the uplands
- f) Public access to the countryside

Are there any other public goods which you think the government should support?

All of these are essential environmental public goods and it is impossible to prioritise one over any other. It is possible to deliver all of them simultaneously through agroecological farming systems.

Again - all of these are essential public goods and it is impossible to prioritise one over any other. It is possible and prudent to deliver all of them simultaneously through agroecological farming systems.

**e) Preserving rural resilience and traditional farming landscapes** is equally relevant in all rural areas – and should not be restricted to the uplands.

**f) Public access to the countryside** must include the accessibility of locally and regionally produced healthy food to all members of society.

Access to healthy affordable agroecological local food. The public goods being a sustainable and resilient domestic food supply, public health and a reduction in food poverty and rural and urban resilience delivered through jobs created in food production and processing across all areas of the UK



## Public Money for Public Goods

### Community Supported Agriculture

Community supported agriculture integrates the public into the farm. A simplified Community Supported Agriculture scheme would provide start-up funds and payments annually for farms that provide public access to the community and increase public access to healthy and affordable food. Payment could be awarded on the basis of points in ELM schemes. A support scheme should specifically develop Community Supported Agriculture projects (CSAs), community-orientated farms, and peri-urban agriculture as a way to connect consumers and producers. The Specific funding for CSA under Measure 19.9 of the Co-operation and Supply Chain Development Scheme RDP Wales 2014 – 2020, p6-7, could be replicated across the UK.

#### CASE STUDY **Chew Valley's Community Farm**

[www.thecommunityfarm.co.uk](http://www.thecommunityfarm.co.uk)

The Community Farm encourages everyone to 'Get On Our Land!', welcoming over a thousand visitors each year.

##### What is The Community Farm?

In 2009, Chew Valley farmer Luke Hasell wanted ordinary people to be able to experience nature-friendly farming for themselves. He realised that this is essential if we are to succeed in transforming our food system for the benefit of health and the natural world. The Community Farm was founded in April 2011, funded by a community share offer, as a Community Benefit Society owned by its 500 members. Its purpose is to produce organic food for the local market and to connect people with food and land.

##### What does the 'Get On Our Land' programme involve?

The growing operation is market-garden scale and volunteer-friendly. We welcome volunteers every weekday in the growing season, every Tuesday and Thursday through the winter, and on 16 Community Farmer Saturdays throughout the year. We have schoolchildren learning days every week in term time and season, numerous wildlife-related activities; from owl prowls to moth mornings and bee walks. Diverse groups come for learning and team days and we collaborate with Bristol Drugs Project and Bath Wellbeing College to enable therapeutic and rehabilitation activities. Numbers for 2016/17 were 551 schoolchildren and 650 adults spending at least one day on the land for learning, work, or recreation. Total person days for adults was 1,517. Numbers in 2017/18 have grown considerably.

##### What are the benefits?

The benefits are many and include;

- People describe time on the Farm as 'rehab in a mad world', they go away healthier and happy, in the long term they change the way they eat.
- For drug users, and mental health clients, it gives structure, meaning, purpose, provides new skills, confidence and connection.
- Entry to new jobs and opportunities - several of our drugs project clients have gone on to hold down jobs as growers or woodworkers.
- Community building, as many local people make connections and The Farm becomes a focus for shared activities.
- Culture change in support of a fairer, healthier, more nature-friendly approach to land use and food production.

##### What investment is needed?

To welcome volunteers onto a working farm requires investment in key areas:

- Staff - to welcome, supervise, induct, teach, and support volunteers; to conduct outreach and partnership-building with key groups and organisations; to be skilled in dealing with all kinds of people and creating a happy culture and atmosphere. Many of our volunteers are jobless and some are vulnerable, and it is essential to create a psychologically safe environment, as well as a physically safe one.
- Facilities and infrastructure - volunteer-friendly tools, equipment, clothing, together with warm indoor space for break times, safe paths, well organised communal workspaces, toilets, kitchen facilities and information.

At The Community Farm this has only been possible because of grant funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation to cover the staff costs, we have successfully fundraised for the infrastructure, and we have had volunteer support to enable the grant applications and fundraising to happen.



Community Supported Agriculture refers to farms in which affiliated consumers or members have a share, taking on some of the risks as well as benefiting from the produce. In some cases, members may contribute to the labour and management of the farm, while in others members simply pay the farmer a subscription in return for a share of the produce. There are several examples of successful CSAs in the UK and the movement is growing. CSAs provide a guaranteed market for farmers, allowing them to adopt a more low-input model of production.

CSAs could play a particularly valuable role in the management of land in Green Belts and on the edges of towns and large villages<sup>1</sup>.





## Public Money for Public Goods

### A Horticulture Renewal Programme: Public Access to Healthy Fruit and

To meet the UK demand for fruit and vegetables a massive scaling up of production is required. Since the 1980's the area growing vegetables has declined by 26% and the area growing fruit by 35%<sup>1</sup>. Such a decline is not surprising, since only 1% of Pillar 1 direct payments are offered to the horticultural sector<sup>2</sup>. Currently UK production represents 58% of vegetables consumed and only 11% of fruit. As a result fresh produce is by far the greatest source of imports into our food system. This situation is untenable for several reasons. A lack of support for horticulture contradicts overwhelming health advice to increase fruit and vegetable consumption and reduce consumption of meat and dairy products<sup>3</sup>.

Brexit brings specific challenges for UK horticulture. 80% of our vegetables and 39% of our fruit come from the EU. Reliance on imports of fresh produce risks price increases, should the pound weaken, resulting in further reductions in fruit and vegetable consumption with negative health repercussions. Already labour shortages in the UK horticulture industry are causing 70% of UK horticultural businesses to consider relocating production to the continent<sup>4</sup>. We need to produce more fruit and vegetables in the UK, and Defra must take a strong policy position to lead a horticultural renaissance. The Landworkers' Alliance proposes the policies listed in this document to encourage the development of a thriving UK horticultural sector.



### An Agroecological Approach to Horticulture

Rather than increasing the scale of production on a few large farms, the Landworkers' Alliance believes that a dramatic increase in the number of small scale, agroecological producers growing fruit and vegetables close to the point of sale would facilitate the following advantages:

- Fresher produce, often bought within hours of harvest, brings greater nutritional benefit and better flavour encouraging increased consumption
- Less energy for refrigeration and transport, and less packaging required
- Spreads production risks over a much larger number of businesses in different geographic areas, insuring against problems of poor business management, spread of pests and diseases, and climatic extremes, compared with dependency on a handful of large businesses.
- Small scale growers produce higher yields of high labour intensive crops, such as peas, green beans and salad leaves, compared with industrial systems<sup>5</sup>.
- Diverse market gardens provide fulfilling, varied and attractive career/employment opportunities for UK workers.
- Short supply chains mean viable livelihoods for growers while produce remains affordable, as the purchase price is divided between fewer "players".
- Community ties are strengthened around farms that sell direct, counteracting growing rural and urban loneliness and isolation, while revitalising local trade.



## Public Money for Public Goods

### A Horticulture Renewal Programme: Public Access to Healthy Fruit and

#### 1 Fruit and vegetable producers should be eligible for support payments to grow the sector

Horticulture is the most labour intensive sector in UK agriculture, accounting for 0.23 jobs/ha,<sup>5,6</sup> yet the prices received are often insufficient to cover the true labour costs of environmentally friendly production. Under WTO regulations, a certain percentage of coupled support payments for agriculture is allowed, and can be reviewed periodically. The horticulture sector should be eligible for coupled support payments to support the public goods provided in terms of increased access to affordable healthy food, environmental protection, and community vitality. These payments would incentivise domestic production until the sector has strengthened sufficiently to substitute imports of fruit and veg that can be grown in the UK. Coupled support payments (in the region of a £5,000 top up for each FTE employee up to 4 employees) could be distributed annually to farms demonstrating a minimum level of productivity of fruit and veg for the domestic market. Payments would help compensate for the low wages expected in the industry and the loss of cheap labour from the EU by ensuring a living wage for UK employees.

#### 2 An infrastructure support scheme should be introduced for new horticultural enterprises

Highly productive horticultural holdings can be established on relatively small areas of land, but require significant capital investment in infrastructure and equipment, such as glasshouses or polytunnels, fencing, irrigation, and machinery. Horticulturalists often lack the resources or sufficiently secure tenure to invest in the infrastructure needed to run an efficient and successful enterprise. The availability of capital grants, such as those available through the Scottish RPA Capital Grants Schemes, would enable more market gardeners to develop. The schemes would also provide extra support for existing businesses, wanting to increase capacity, and community-based social enterprises.

#### 3 A “Mixed Farms Scheme” could support creation of horticultural units on larger farms

Landowners, especially near towns and cities, should be encouraged to consider renting areas of land, with or without infrastructure to become market gardens. While diversifying into fruit and vegetables themselves is one option, horticulture requires a different skill set to agriculture and the introduction of another enterprise to a mixed farm can bring benefits such as “fresh farm produce” for a farm shop, a vibrant working community, enterprise diversity and income from rent. While many new entrants would prefer to buy their own holding, renting a market garden on an existing mixed farm can kick-start enterprises by providing a foothold in a rural community as well as access to shared facilities such as farm buildings, machinery and manure for fertility.

#### CASE STUDY Trill Farm Organic Garden: a successful salad business on one hectare rented from a mixed farm

A fully equipped horticultural unit to rent, complete with on-site accommodation, enabled a young couple to swiftly establish a thriving business selling organic salad and other vegetables to restaurants in a busy tourist area. The garden provides jobs for three seasonal workers, as well as a livelihood for the growers' family.



1. Schoen, V. & Lang, T. (2010) Horticulture in the UK: Potential for Meeting Dietary Guideline Demands, Food Research Collaboration.
2. Defra 2017 Pers. Corr., Percentage estimated from Farm Business Survey sample of horticultural farms generating an output of over 25,000 euros
3. World Health Organisation (2015). Increasing fruit and vegetable consumption to reduce the risk of noncommunicable diseases.
4. BBC Survey (June 2017) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-40354331>
5. Laughton, R. (2017) A Matter of Scale: A study of the productivity, financial viability and multifunctional benefits of small farms (20 ha or less). Landworkers' Alliance and Centre for Agroecology, Coventry University
6. Devlin, S. (2016) 'Agricultural Labour in the UK.' New Economics Foundation and Food Research Collaboration, p11

## 4 Establish support for peri-urban horticulture to develop market gardens as a community resource

Vegetables and fruit should be produced as close as possible to the people who will eat them, so they are fresh, and packaging, transport and refrigeration are minimised. Urban and peri-urban horticulture not only facilitate short supply chains, but offer people in cities the opportunity to help grow produce. These are often a welcome antidote to the stress of office work, or provide therapeutic benefits or access to affordable produce for low income households.

### CASE STUDY **OrganicLea**

OrganicLea offer City and Guilds Level 1 and 2 courses to 100 people per year at their twelve acre market garden near London. The combination of theory and practical lessons, on a commercial organic market garden, provides students with the skills and inspiration to find employment in a range of commercial, communal and therapeutic horticultural contexts.

## 6 A “New Deal for Horticulture” programme would rapidly increase the number of growers

Such a scheme would include a recruitment scheme for secondary school children, and encouragement of horticultural courses and apprenticeships from NVQ to degree level. Prospects for a successful career would be improved by measures to improve access to land and infrastructure, and investment in agroecological research and development.

### CASE STUDY **Tamar Valley Food Hub**

Tamar Valley Food Hub distributes produce from 60 local producers, including 20 fruit and vegetable growers, via its online shop. The system enables flexibility of choice compared to box schemes, cuts waste, and reduces transport and packaging compared to supermarkets. The local market means produce is fresher and healthier for the consumer.

## 5 Introduce an Orchard Planting and Maintenance Scheme to encourage long term investment in fruit production

60% of England's orchards have disappeared since the 1950s, contributing to massive erosion in the diversity of apples and other fruit varieties available to UK residents. Production of top fruit and soft fruit requires particular support to encourage import substitution, long term investment and to develop a skilled work force able to manage fruit pests and diseases without the use of pesticides. Financial support to encourage orchard planting, together with training in orchard maintenance, agroforestry plantation design, biological control and processing skills to make use of “grade out” produce would all contribute to the development of a thriving domestic fruit sector.

## 7 Encourage short supply chains to support growers and increase access to fresh and affordable food

Most fruit and vegetables are currently purchased from supermarkets, which rely on centralised supply chains, meaning that produce on the shelves will have been harvested at least several days earlier. Direct marketing systems such as farmers' markets, vegetable box schemes and food hubs enable customers access produce within a couple of days, if not hours, of being harvested, maximising its nutritional value and flavour. Moreover, shortening the supply chain means both producer and purchaser get a better deal as fewer middlemen are involved. These direct sales are usually more sustainable, negating the needs for refrigeration, transport, and packaging.

For more information about any of our ideas please get in touch with our policy team. The policy team compiles ideas from our UK wide membership of around 1,000 active small and family farmers to create our policy documents. The Landworkers' Alliance also worked with over 160 civil society organisations to compile *A People's Food Policy*. More details about this set of policy suggestions and further details about proposed schemes can be found on our website. We are happy to meet with any Defra staff to work with the further development of agricultural policy and would be delighted to give feedback on any proposed schemes so that they are user-friendly for agroecological small and family farms (including those below 5 ha).

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Landworkers' Alliance Website: [www.landworkersalliance.org.uk](http://www.landworkersalliance.org.uk)

*A People's Food Policy* Website: [www.peoplesfoodpolicy.org](http://www.peoplesfoodpolicy.org)