

be weighed against the economic benefits, but such small impacts seem unlikely to warrant much or any weight in the planning balance.

- 8.15 The Council recognises, in its Statement of Case, that development of BMVAL may be inevitable in allocating land for non-agricultural development within the Borough. My analysis of the land quality of the land around the settlement concludes that the use of BMVAL seems inevitable, and therefore I agree with the Council.
- 8.16 Having agreed that the use of BMVAL is inevitable, research indicates that the Appeal Site is some of the poorest quality available. Sub-grade 3a, which covers most of the Site, is the lowest grade within the BMV definition.
- 8.17 In practice the Council has accepted the loss of BMVAL in development management decisions, and has not given that loss much or any weight, so far as we can ascertain. The same is true for the proposed allocations, including land on the provisional maps shown as Grade 2, where land quality has not been a consideration given much or any weight in site selection so far as we can ascertain.
- 8.18 In these circumstances the weight to be accorded to the use of BMV land on this site should be limited.



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LAND AT JUNCTION OF  
NEWARK ROAD AND COXMOOR ROAD,  
SUTTON IN ASHFIELD

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AGRICULTURAL EVIDENCE  
ON BEHALF OF  
THE APPELLANT

BY

TONY KERNON BSc (Hons) MRICS FBIAC

LPA Ref: V/2022/0629

PINS Ref: APP/W3005/W/24/3350529

**VOLUME 2: APPENDICES**

December 2024





**LAND AT JUNCTION OF  
NEWARK ROAD AND COXMOOR ROAD,  
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**December 2024**

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*Directors - **Tony Kernon** BSc(Hons), MRAC, MRICS, FBIAC **Sarah Kernon**  
Consultants - **Ellie Clark** BSc(Hons), **Amy Curtis** BSc(Hons)*

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## CURRICULUM VITAE

# ANTHONY PAUL KERNON

### SPECIALISMS

- Assessing the impacts of development proposals on agricultural land and rural businesses
- Agricultural building and dwelling assessments
- Equestrian building and dwelling assessments (racing, sports, rehabilitation, recreational enterprises)
- Farm and estate diversification and development
- Inputs to Environmental Impact Assessment
- Expert witness work



### SYNOPSIS

Tony is a rural surveyor with 35 years experience in assessing agricultural land issues, farm and equestrian businesses and farm diversification proposals, and the effects of development proposals on them. Brought up in rural Lincolnshire and now living on a small holding in Wiltshire, he has worked widely across the UK and beyond. He is recognised as a leading expert nationally in this subject area. Married with two children. Horse owner.

Tony's specialism is particularly in the following key areas:

- assessing the need for agricultural and equestrian development, acting widely across the UK for applicants and local planning authorities alike;
- farm development and diversification planning work, including building reuse and leisure development, Class Q, camping etc;
- assessing development impacts, including agricultural land quality and the policy implications of losses of farmland due to residential, commercial, solar or transport development, and inputs to Environmental Assessment;
- and providing expert evidence on these matters to Planning Inquiries and Hearings, court or arbitrations.

### QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor of Science Honours degree in Rural Land Management, University of Reading (BSc(Hons)). 1987. Awarded 2:1.

Diploma of Membership of the Royal Agricultural College (MRAC).

Professional Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (MRICS) (No. 81582). (1989).

### OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Co-opted member of the Rural Practice Divisional Council of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. (1994 - 2000)

Member of the RICS Planning Practice Skills Panel (1992-1994)

Member of the RICS Environmental Law and Appraisals Practice Panel (1994 - 1997).

Fellow of the British Institute of Agricultural Consultants (FIAC) (1998 onwards, Fellow since 2004).

Secretary of the Rural Planning Division of the British Institute of Agricultural Consultants (BIAC) (1999 – 2017).

Vice-Chairman of the British Institute of Agricultural Consultants (2019 – 2020)

Chairman of the British Institute of Agricultural Consultants (2020 – 2022)

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Website: www.kernon.co.uk*





## EXPERIENCE AND APPOINTMENTS

- 1997 -----> **Kernon Countryside Consultants.** Principal for the last 27 years of agricultural and rural planning consultancy specialising in research and development related work. Specialisms include essential dwelling and building assessments, assessing the effects of development on land and land-based businesses, assessing the effects of road and infrastructure proposals on land and land-based businesses, and related expert opinion work. Tony specialises in development impact assessments, evaluating the effects of development (residential, solar, road etc) on agricultural land, agricultural land quality, farm and other rural businesses.
- 1987 - 1996 **Countryside Planning and Management,** Cirencester. In nearly ten years with CPM Tony was involved in land use change and environmental assessment studies across the UK and in Europe. From 1995 a partner in the business.
- 1983 - 1984 **Dickinson Davy and Markham,** Brigg. Assistant to the Senior Partner covering valuation and marketing work, compulsory purchase and compensation, and livestock market duties at Brigg and Louth.

## RECENT RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

### TRAINING COURSES

- Landspeading of Non Farm Wastes.** Fieldfare training course, 24 – 25 November 2009  
**Foaling Course.** Twemlows Hall Stud Farm, 28 February 2010  
**Working with Soil: Agricultural Land Classification.** 1 – 2 November 2017

## TRANSPORT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

- 1992 **Port Wakefield Channel Tunnel Freight Terminal, Yorkshire**  
1993 **A1(M) Widening, Junctions 1-6 (Stage 2)**  
1994 - 1995 **A55 Llanfairpwll to Nant Turnpike, Anglesey (Stage 3)**  
1994 - 1995 **A479(T) Talgarth Bypass, Powys (Stage 3)**  
1995 **Kilkhampton bypass (Stage 2)**  
1997 **A477 Bangeston to Nash improvement, Pembroke**  
2000 **Ammanford Outer Relief Road**  
2001 **A421 Great Barford Bypass**  
2001 **Boston Southern Relief Road**  
2003 **A40 St Clears - Haverfordwest**  
2003 **A470 Cwmbrach – Newbridge on Wye**  
2003 **A11 Attleborough bypass**  
2003 - 2008 **A487 Porthmadog bypass (Inquiry 2008)**  
2004 **A55 Ewloe Bypass**  
2004 **A40 Witney – Cogges link**  
2005 – 2007 **A40 Robeston Wathen bypass (Inquiry 2007)**  
2005 – 2007 **East Kent Access Road (Inquiry 2007)**  
2006 **M4 widening around Cardiff**  
2007 – 2008 **A40 Cwymbach to Newbridge (Inquiry 2008)**  
2007 **A483 Newtown bypass**  
2008 – 2009 **A470/A483 Builth Wells proposals**  
2009 – 2017 **A487 Caernarfon-Bontnewydd bypass (Inquiry 2017)**  
2009 – 2010 **North Bishops Cleeve extension**  
2009 – 2010 **Land at Coombe Farm, Rochford**  
2009 – 2011 **A477 St Clears to Red Roses (Inquiry 2011)**  
2010 – 2011 **Streethay, Lichfield**  
2010 – 2012 **A465 Heads of the Valley Stage 3 (Inquiry 2012)**  
2013 – 2016 **A483/A489 Newtown Bypass mid Wales (Inquiry 2016)**  
2013 - 2016 **High Speed 2 (HS2) rail link, Country South and London: Agricultural Expert for HS2 Ltd**  
2015 – 2017 **A487 Dyfi Bridge Improvements**



2016 – 2018	A465 Heads of the Valley Sections 5 and 6 (Inquiry 2018)
2017 - 2018	A40 Llanddewi Velfrey to Penblewin
2017 – 2018	A4440 Worcester Southern Relief Road
2019 – 2020	A40 Penblewin to Red Roses
2019 – 2020	A55 Jn 15 and 16 Improvements

## NSIP/DCO SOLAR INPUTS

2020 – 2023	Heckington Fen Mallard Pass Penpergwm Parc Solar Traffwll Alaw Môn Parc Solar Caenewydd Tween Bridge Solar Farm Gate Burton Great North Road Solar Helios Renewable Energy Project Dean Moor Oaklands Solar
-------------	--

## EXPERT EVIDENCE GIVEN AT PUBLIC INQUIRIES AND HEARINGS

1992	<b>Brooklands Farm:</b> Buildings reuse <b>Chase Farm, Maldon:</b> Removal of condition	<b>Bonehill Mill Farm:</b> New farm building
1993	<b>Haden House:</b> Removal of condition	<b>Manor Farm:</b> New farm dwelling
1994	<b>Brooklands Farm:</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Inquiry (housing) <b>Barr Pound Farm:</b> Enforcement appeal <b>Fortunes Farm Golf Course:</b> Agric effects	<b>Cameron Farm:</b> Mobile home <b>Land at Harrietsham:</b> Enforcement appeal
1995	<b>Village Farm:</b> New farm dwelling <b>Claverdon Lodge:</b> Building reuse <b>Harelands Farm:</b> Barn conversion <b>Castle Nurseries:</b> Alternative site presentation	<b>Attlefield Farm:</b> Size of farm dwelling <b>Bromsgrove Local Plan:</b> Housing allocation <b>Lichfield Local Plan:</b> Against MAFF objection <b>Hyde Colt:</b> Mobile home / glasshouses <b>Highmoor Farm:</b> New farm dwelling <b>Gwenfa Fields:</b> Removal of restriction <b>Yatton:</b> Horse grazing on small farm <b>Newbury Local Plan:</b> Effects of development
1996	<b>Church View Farm:</b> Enforcement appeal <b>Flecknoe Farm:</b> Second farm dwelling	<b>Two Burrows Nursery:</b> Building retention <b>Dunball Drove:</b> Need for cattle incinerator
1997	<b>Basing Home Farm:</b> Grain storage issue <b>Viscar Farm:</b> Need for farm building / viability <b>Lane End Mushroom Farm:</b> Need for dwelling	<b>Lambriggan Deer Farm:</b> Farm dwelling
1998	<b>Moorfields Farm:</b> New farm dwelling <b>Maidstone Borough LPI:</b> Effects of dev'ment <b>Glenfield Cottage Poultry Farm:</b> Bldg reuse	<b>Coldharbour Farm:</b> Buildings reuse <b>Heathey Farm:</b> Mobile home <b>Wheal-an-Wens:</b> Second dwelling <b>Apsley Farm:</b> Buildings reuse <b>Home Farm:</b> Size of grainstore <b>A34/M4 Interchange:</b> Agricultural evidence <b>Weyhill Nursery:</b> Second dwelling <b>Mannings Farm:</b> Farm dwelling
1999	<b>Holland Park Farm:</b> Farm dwelling / calf unit <b>Northington Farm:</b> Existing farm dwelling	<b>Land Adj White Swan:</b> Access alteration <b>Happy Bank Farm:</b> Lack of need for building <b>Lower Park Farm:</b> Building reuse / traffic <b>Stourton Hill Farm:</b> Diversification
2000	<b>Twin Oaks Poultry Unit:</b> Traffic levels <b>Meadows Poultry Farm:</b> Farm dwelling <b>Hazelwood Farm:</b> Beef unit and farm dwelling <b>Shardeloes Farm:</b> Farm buildings <b>Aylesbury Vale Local Plan:</b> Site issues <b>Deptford Farm:</b> Buildings reuse	<b>Darren Farm:</b> Impact of housing on farm <b>Greenways Farm:</b> Farm diversification
2001	<b>Lambriggan Deer Farm:</b> Farm dwelling <b>Blueys Farm:</b> Mobile home	
2002	<b>A419 Calcutt Access:</b> Effect on farms <b>Cobweb Farm:</b> Buildings reuse / diversification <b>Philips Farm:</b> Farm dwelling <b>West Wilts Local Plan Inquiry:</b> Dev site <b>Manor Farm:</b> Building reuse	
2003	<b>Fairtrough Farm:</b> Equine dev and hay barn <b>Hollies Farm:</b> Manager's dwelling	

	<b>Land at Springhill:</b> Certificate of lawfulness	<b>Land at Four Marks:</b> Dev site implications
	<b>Oak Tree Farm:</b> Mobile home	
2004	<b>Chytane Farm:</b> Objector to farm dwelling	<b>Oldberrow Lane Farm:</b> Relocation of buildings
	<b>Crown East:</b> Visitor facility and manager's flat	<b>Forestry Building, Wythall:</b> Forestry issues
	<b>Swallow Cottage:</b> Widening of holiday use	<b>Lower Dadkin Farm:</b> Mobile home
	<b>Etchden Court Farm:</b> New enterprise viability	<b>Villa Vista:</b> Viability of horticultural unit
	<b>Attleborough Bypass:</b> On behalf of Highways Agency	
2005	<b>Howells School:</b> Use of land for horses	<b>Newton Lane:</b> Enforcement appeal
	<b>Otter Hollow:</b> Mobile home	<b>Manor Farm:</b> Change of use class
	<b>Springfield Barn:</b> Barn conversion	<b>South Hatch Stables:</b> RTE refurbishment
	<b>Ashley Wood Farm:</b> Swimming pool	<b>Trevaskis Fruit Farm:</b> Farm dwelling
	<b>The Hatchery:</b> Mobile home	<b>Tregased:</b> Enforcement appeal
	<b>Stockfields Farm:</b> Building reuse	
2006	<b>Manor Farm:</b> Replacement farmhouse	<b>Bhaktivedanta Manor:</b> Farm buildings
	<b>Sough Lane:</b> Farm dwelling	<b>Military Vehicles:</b> Loss of BMV land
	<b>Whitewebbs Farm:</b> Enforcement appeal	<b>Ermine Street Stables:</b> Enforcement appeal
	<b>Land at Condicote:</b> Farm dwelling	<b>Featherstone Farm:</b> Replacement buildings
	<b>Rye Park Farm:</b> Enforcement appeal	<b>Flambards:</b> Mobile home and poultry unit
	<b>Woodrow Farm:</b> Buildings reuse	<b>Manor Farm:</b> Effect of housing on farm
	<b>Rectory Farm:</b> Retention of unlawful bldg	<b>Goblin Farm:</b> Arbitration re notice to quit
	<b>Walltree Farm:</b> Retention of structures	<b>Terrys Wood Farm:</b> Farm dwelling
	<b>Weeford Island:</b> Land quality issues	<b>Etchden Court Farm:</b> Mobile home
	<b>College Farm:</b> Relocation of farmyard	<b>Hollowshot Lane:</b> Farm dwelling and buildings
2007	<b>Woolly Park Farm:</b> Manager's dwelling	<b>Barcroft Hall:</b> Removal of condition
	<b>Park Gate Nursery:</b> Second dwelling	<b>Kent Access Road:</b> Effect on farms
	<b>Penyrheol Ias:</b> Retention of bund	<b>Greys Green Farm:</b> Enforcement appeal
	<b>Hucksholt Farm:</b> New beef unit in AONB	<b>A40 Roboston Wathen bypass:</b> Underpass
	<b>The Green, Shrewley:</b> Mobile home	<b>Woodland Wild Boar:</b> Mobile homes
	<b>Brook Farm:</b> Retention of polytunnels	
2008	<b>Weights Farm:</b> Second dwelling	<b>Whitegables:</b> Stud manager's dwelling
	<b>Hill Farm:</b> Mobile home	<b>Balaton Place:</b> Loss of paddock land
	<b>Relocaton of Thame Market:</b> Urgency issues	<b>Point to Point Farm:</b> Buildings / farm dwelling
	<b>Spinney Bank Farm:</b> Dwelling / viability issues	<b>Norman Court Stud:</b> Size of dwelling
	<b>Higham Manor:</b> Staff accommodation	<b>High Moor:</b> Temporary dwelling
	<b>Roboston Watham bypass:</b> Procedures Hearing	<b>Land at St Euny:</b> Bldg in World Heritage Area
	<b>Monks Hall:</b> Covered sand school	
	<b>Porthmadog bypass:</b> Road scheme inquiry	<b>Baydon Meadow:</b> Wind turbine
2009	<b>Claverton Down Stables:</b> New stables	<b>Meadow Farm:</b> Building conversion
	<b>Hailsham Market:</b> Closure issues	<b>Bishop's Castle Biomass Power Station:</b> Planning issues
	<b>Gambledown Farm:</b> Staff dwelling	<b>Foxhills Fishery:</b> Manager's dwelling
	<b>Oak Tree Farm:</b> Farm dwelling	<b>Bryn Gollen Newydd:</b> Nuisance court case
	<b>A470 Builth Wells:</b> Off line road scheme	<b>Swithland Barn:</b> Enforcement appeal
	<b>Hill Top Farm:</b> Second dwelling	<b>Woodrow Farm:</b> Retention of building
	<b>Sterts Farm:</b> Suitability / availability of dwelling	
2010	<b>Poultry Farm, Christmas Common:</b> Harm to AONB	<b>Stubwood Tankers:</b> Enforcement appeal
	<b>Wellsprings:</b> Rention of mobile home	
	<b>Redhouse Farm:</b> Manager's dwelling	<b>Meridian Farm:</b> Retention of building
	<b>Lobbington Fields Farm:</b> Financial test	<b>Swithland Barn:</b> Retention of building
2011	<b>Fairtrough Farm:</b> Enforcement appeal	
	<b>Etchden Court Farm:</b> Farm dwelling	<b>A477 Red Roses to St Clears:</b> Public Inquiry
	<b>Trottscliffe Nursery:</b> Mobile home	<b>Upper Bearfield Farm:</b> Additional dwelling
2012	<b>Tickbridge Farm:</b> Farm dwelling	<b>North Bishops Cleeve:</b> Land quality issues
	<b>Blaenanthir Farm:</b> Stables and sandschool	<b>Langborrow Farm:</b> Staff dwellings
		<b>Heads of the Valley S3:</b> Improvements

2013	<p><b>Land at Stonehill:</b> Eq dentistry / mobile home  <b>Cwmcoedlan Stud:</b> Farm dwelling with B&amp;B  <b>Barnwood Farm:</b> Farm dwelling  <b>Spring Farm Barn:</b> Building conversion  <b>Baydon Road:</b> Agricultural worker's dwelling  <b>Stapleford Farm:</b> Building reuse  <b>Meddler Stud:</b> Residential development  <b>Deer Barn Farm:</b> Agricultural worker's dwelling</p>	<p><b>Seafeld Pedigrees:</b> Second dwelling  <b>Beedon Common:</b> Permanent dwelling  <b>Upper Youngs Farm:</b> Stables / log cabin  <b>Tithe Barn Farm:</b> Enforcement appeal  <b>Lower Fox Farm:</b> Mobile home / building  <b>Tewinbury Farm:</b> Storage barn  <b>Church Farm:</b> Solar park construction</p>
2014	<p><b>Land at Stow on the Wold:</b> Housing site  <b>Allspheres Farm:</b> Cottage restoration  <b>Land at Stonehill:</b> Equine dentistry practice  <b>Spring Farm Yard:</b> Permanent dwelling  <b>Land at Valley Farm:</b> Solar park  <b>Land at Haslington:</b> Residential development  <b>Manor Farm:</b> Solar farm on Grade 2 land  <b>Penland Farm:</b> Residential development</p>	<p><b>Land at Elsfield:</b> Retention of hardstanding  <b>Queensbury Lodge:</b> Potential development  <b>Kellygreen Farm:</b> Solar park development  <b>Spring Farm Barn:</b> Building conversion  <b>Land at Willaston:</b> Residential development  <b>Bluebell Cottage:</b> Enforcement appeal  <b>Clemmit Farm:</b> Mobile home  <b>Honeycrock Farm:</b> Farmhouse retention  <b>The Mulberry Bush:</b> Farm dwelling  <b>Redland Farm:</b> Residential dev issues  <b>Emlagh Wind Farm:</b> Effect on equines  <b>Fox Farm:</b> Building conversion to 2 dwellings  <b>Wadborough Park Farm:</b> Farm buildings  <b>Delamere Stables:</b> Restricted use</p>
2015	<p><b>Sandyways Nursery:</b> Retention of 23 caravans  <b>The Lawns:</b> Agricultural building / hardstanding  <b>Harefield Stud:</b> Stud farm / ag worker's dwelling  <b>Newtown Bypass:</b> Compulsory purchase orders  <b>Barn Farm:</b> Solar farm  <b>Hollybank Farm:</b> Temporary dwelling renewal  <b>Five Oaks Farm:</b> Change of use of land and temporary dwelling</p>	<p><b>Meddler Stud:</b> RTE and up to 63 dwellings  <b>Land off Craythorne Road:</b> Housing dev  <b>Berkshire Polo Club:</b> Stables / accomm  <b>Harcourt Stud:</b> Temporary dwelling  <b>Clemmit Farm:</b> Second redetermination  <b>Stonehouse Waters:</b> Change of use of lake</p>
2016	<p><b>Clemmit Farm:</b> Redetermination  <b>The Lawns:</b> Replacement building  <b>Land at the Lawns:</b> Cattle building</p>	
2017	<p><b>Low Barn Farm:</b> Temporary dwelling  <b>High Meadow Farm:</b> Building conversion  <b>Windmill Barn:</b> Class Q conversion  <b>Land at Felsted:</b> Residential development</p>	
2018	<p><b>Thorney Lee Stables:</b> Temporary dwelling  <b>Benson Lane:</b> Outline app residential  <b>Park Road, Didcot:</b> Outline app residential  <b>Coalpit Heath:</b> Residential development</p>	<p><b>Watlington Road:</b> Outline app residential  <b>A465 Heads of the Valley 5/6:</b> Agric effects  <b>The Old Quarry:</b> Permanent dwelling  <b>Chilaway Farm:</b> Removal of condition  <b>Leahurst Nursery:</b> Temporary dwelling  <b>Icomb Cow Pastures:</b> Temp mobile home  <b>Forest Faconry:</b> Construction of hack pens</p>
2019	<p><b>Mutton Hall Farm:</b> Agric worker's dwelling  <b>Clemmit Farm:</b> Third redetermination  <b>Ten Acre Farm:</b> Enforcement appeal  <b>Harrold:</b> 94 Residential dwellings</p>	
2020	<p><b>Stan Hill:</b> Temp dwelling/agric. buildings  <b>Allspheres Farm:</b> Enlargement of farm dwelling</p>	<p><b>Hazeldens Nursery:</b> Up to 84 extra care units  <b>Leahurst Nursery:</b> Agricultural storage bldg  <b>Sketchley Lane, Burbage:</b> Industrial and residential development  <b>Park Solar Traffwl:</b> Solar Hearing</p>
2021	<p><b>Ruins:</b> Dwelling for tree nursery</p>	
2022	<p><b>Thornbury:</b> Local BMV  <b>Penpergwym:</b> Solar Farm Hearing</p>	
2023	<p><b>Mudds Bank:</b> Equestrian workers dwelling  <b>Mallard Pass NSIP:</b> Issue specific hearing  <b>Bramford Solar:</b> Loss of BMV / food  <b>Gate Burton NSIP:</b> BMV and Food  <b>Heckington Fen NSIP:</b> Issue Hearing  <b>Cutlers Green Solar:</b> Use of BMV  <b>Twigworth, Glos:</b> Use of BMV land</p>	<p><b>Scruton Solar Farm:</b> Effects on BMV and food  <b>Land at East Burnham:</b> Equestrian facilities  <b>Fladbury:</b> Housing on BMV land  <b>Pound Road, Axminster:</b> BESS and BMV  <b>Wymondley Solar:</b> Use of BMV  <b>Little Acorn Farm, St Keyne:</b> Worker's dwelling</p>
2024	<p><b>Sheepwash Solar, Kent:</b> Use of BMV land  <b>Washdyke Solar, Grantham:</b> Use of BMV  <b>Copper Bottom Solar, Camborne:</b> Use of BMV</p>	<p><b>East End Solar, Harlow:</b> Use of BMV  <b>Sittingbourne, Kent:</b> Housing on BMV  <b>Murrells End Solar, Gloucester:</b> BMV</p>

**Appendix KCC2  
Natural England's Technical  
Information Note TIN049**

# Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land

Most of our land area is in agricultural use. How this important natural resource is used is vital to sustainable development. This includes taking the right decisions about protecting it from inappropriate development.

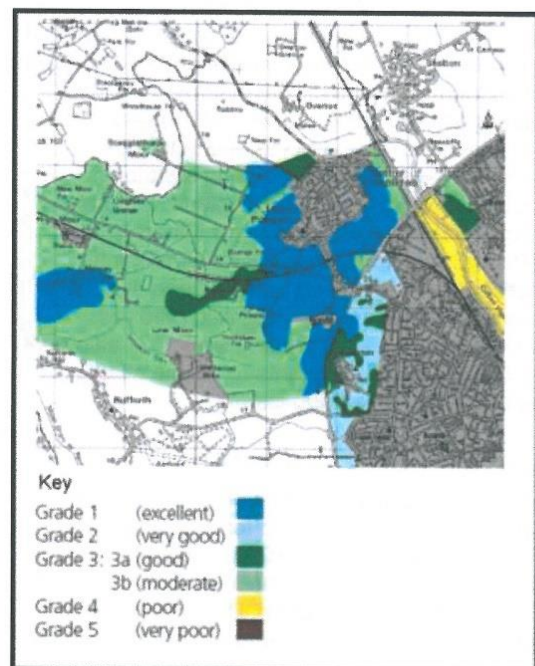
## Policy to protect agricultural land

Government policy for England is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012 (paragraph 112). Decisions rest with the relevant planning authorities who should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality. The Government has also re-affirmed the importance of protecting our soils and the services they provide in the Natural Environment White Paper The Natural Choice:securing the value of nature (June 2011), including the protection of best and most versatile agricultural land (paragraph 2.35).

## The ALC system: purpose & uses

Land quality varies from place to place. The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) provides a method for assessing the quality of farmland to enable informed choices to be made about its future use within the planning system. It helps

underpin the principles of sustainable development.



Agricultural Land Classification - map and key



## Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land

The ALC system classifies land into five grades, with Grade 3 subdivided into Subgrades 3a and 3b. The best and most versatile land is defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a by policy guidance (see Annex 2 of NPPF). This is the land which is most flexible, productive and efficient in response to inputs and which can best deliver future crops for food and non food uses such as biomass, fibres and pharmaceuticals. Current estimates are that Grades 1 and 2 together form about 21% of all farmland in England; Subgrade 3a also covers about 21%.

The ALC system is used by Natural England and others to give advice to planning authorities, developers and the public if development is proposed on agricultural land or other greenfield sites that could potentially grow crops. The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 (as amended) refers to the best and most versatile land policy in requiring statutory consultations with Natural England. Natural England is also responsible for Minerals and Waste Consultations where reclamation to agriculture is proposed under Schedule 5 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The ALC grading system is also used by commercial consultants to advise clients on land uses and planning issues.

### Criteria and guidelines

The Classification is based on the long term physical limitations of land for agricultural use. Factors affecting the grade are climate, site and soil characteristics, and the important interactions between them. Detailed guidance for classifying land can be found in: *Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land* (MAFF, 1988):

- **Climate:** temperature and rainfall, aspect, exposure and frost risk.
- **Site:** gradient, micro-relief and flood risk.
- **Soil:** texture, structure, depth and stoniness, chemical properties which cannot be corrected.

The combination of climate and soil factors determines soil wetness and droughtiness.

Wetness and droughtiness influence the choice of crops grown and the level and consistency of yields, as well as use of land for grazing livestock. The Classification is concerned with the inherent potential of land under a range of farming systems. The current agricultural use, or intensity of use, does not affect the ALC grade.

### Versatility and yield

The physical limitations of land have four main effects on the way land is farmed. These are:

- the range of crops which can be grown;
- the level of yield;
- the consistency of yield; and
- the cost of obtaining the crop.

The ALC gives a high grading to land which allows more flexibility in the range of crops that can be grown (its 'versatility') and which requires lower inputs, but also takes into account ability to produce consistently high yields of a narrower range of crops.

### Availability of ALC information

After the introduction of the ALC system in 1966 the whole of England and Wales was mapped from reconnaissance field surveys, to provide general strategic guidance on land quality for planners. This Provisional Series of maps was published on an Ordnance Survey base at a scale of One Inch to One Mile in the period 1967 to 1974. These maps are not sufficiently accurate for use in assessment of individual fields or development sites, and should not be used other than as general guidance. They show only five grades: their preparation preceded the subdivision of Grade 3 and the refinement of criteria, which occurred after 1976. They have not been updated and are out of print. A 1:250 000 scale map series based on the same information is available. These are more appropriate for the strategic use originally intended and can be downloaded from the Natural England [website](#). This data is also available on 'Magic', an interactive, geographical information website <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>.

Since 1976, selected areas have been re-surveyed in greater detail and to revised



## Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land

guidelines and criteria. Information based on detailed ALC field surveys in accordance with current guidelines (MAFF, 1988) is the most definitive source. Data from the former Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) archive of more detailed ALC survey information (from 1988) is also available on <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>. Revisions to the ALC guidelines and criteria have been limited and kept to the original principles, but some assessments made prior to the most recent revision in 1988 need to be checked against current criteria. More recently, strategic scale maps showing the likely occurrence of best and most versatile land have been prepared. Mapped information of all types is available from Natural England (see *Further information* below).

### New field survey

Digital mapping and geographical information systems have been introduced to facilitate the provision of up-to-date information. ALC surveys are undertaken, according to the published Guidelines, by field surveyors using handheld augers to examine soils to a depth of 1.2 metres, at a frequency of one boring per hectare for a detailed assessment. This is usually supplemented by digging occasional small pits (usually by hand) to inspect the soil profile. Information obtained by these methods is combined with climatic and other data to produce an ALC map and report. ALC maps are normally produced on an Ordnance Survey base at varying scales from 1:10,000 for detailed work to 1:50 000 for reconnaissance survey

There is no comprehensive programme to survey all areas in detail. Private consultants may survey land where it is under consideration for development, especially around the edge of towns, to allow comparisons between areas and to inform environmental assessments. ALC field surveys are usually time consuming and should be initiated well in advance of planning decisions. Planning authorities should ensure that sufficient detailed site specific ALC survey data is available to inform decision making.

### Consultations

Natural England is consulted by planning authorities on the preparation of all development

plans as part of its remit for the natural environment. For planning applications, specific consultations with Natural England are required under the Development Management Procedure Order in relation to best and most versatile agricultural land. These are for non agricultural development proposals that are not consistent with an adopted local plan and involve the loss of twenty hectares or more of the best and most versatile land. The land protection policy is relevant to all planning applications, including those on smaller areas, but it is for the planning authority to decide how significant the agricultural land issues are, and the need for field information. The planning authority may contact Natural England if it needs technical information or advice.

Consultations with Natural England are required on all applications for mineral working or waste disposal if the proposed afteruse is for agriculture or where the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land agricultural land will be 20 ha or more. Non-agricultural afteruse, for example for nature conservation or amenity, can be acceptable even on better quality land if soil resources are conserved and the long term potential of best and most versatile land is safeguarded by careful land restoration and aftercare.

### Other factors

The ALC is a basis for assessing how development proposals affect agricultural land within the planning system, but it is not the sole consideration. Planning authorities are guided by the National Planning Policy Framework to protect and enhance soils more widely. This could include, for example, conserving soil resources during mineral working or construction, not granting permission for peat extraction from new or extended mineral sites, or preventing soil from being adversely affected by pollution. For information on the application of ALC in Wales, please see below.



## Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land

### Further information

Details of the system of grading can be found in: *Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: revised guidelines and criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land* (MAFF, 1988).

Please note that planning authorities should send all planning related consultations and enquiries to Natural England by e-mail to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk). If it is not possible to consult us electronically then consultations should be sent to the following postal address:

Natural England  
Consultation Service  
Hornbeam House  
Electra Way  
Crewe Business Park  
CREWE  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

ALC information for Wales is held by Welsh Government. Detailed information and advice is available on request from Ian Rugg ([ian.rugg@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ian.rugg@wales.gsi.gov.uk)) or David Martyn ([david.martyn@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:david.martyn@wales.gsi.gov.uk)). If it is not possible to consult us electronically then consultations should be sent to the following postal address:

Welsh Government  
Rhodfa Padarn  
Llanbadarn Fawr  
Aberystwyth  
Ceredigion  
SY23 3UR

Natural England publications are available to download from the Natural England website: [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk).

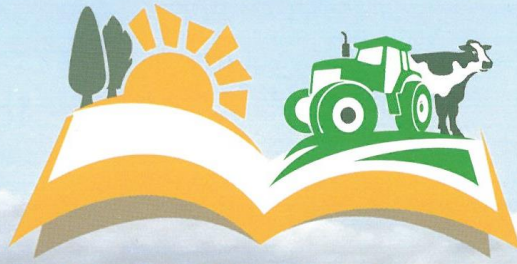
For further information contact the Natural England Enquiry Service on 0300 060 0863 or e-mail [enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk).

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**APPENDIX KCC3**  
**Extracts from John Nix Pocketbook for**  
**Farm Management**



# NIX FARM MANAGEMENT POCKETBOOK

**2025** 55<sup>TH</sup>  
EDITION

The most comprehensive business information in British agriculture

*Graham Redman*



## WHEAT

**Feed Winter Wheat**

Production level	Low	Average	High	
Yield: t/ha (t/ac)	7.1 (2.9)	8.3 (3.4)	9.5 (3.8)	
	£	£	£	£/t
Grain at £190/t	1,349	1,577 (639)	1,805 (731)	
Straw in Swath	188 (76)	188 (76)	188 (76)	
<b>Total Output</b>	<b>1,537 (622)</b>	<b>1,765 (715)</b>	<b>1,993 (807)</b>	<b>213</b>
Variable Costs £/ha (£/ac) :				
Seed.....		82 (33)		10
Fertiliser.....		295 (119)		36
Sprays.....		278 (112)		33
<b>Total Variable Costs</b>		<b>655 (265)</b>		<b>79</b>
<b>Gross Margin £/ha (ac)</b>	<b>882 (357)</b>	<b>1110 (449)</b>	<b>1,338 (542)</b>	<b>134</b>

Fertiliser Basis 8.3t/ha				Seed:	prays £/ha:		
Nutrient	Kg/t	Kg/Ha	£/Ha	£/t C2	£515	Herbicides	£121
N	23	190	£184	Kg/Ha	175	Fungicides	£110
P	7.0	58	£58	% HSS	30%	Insecticides	£3
K	10.5	87	£52	£/t HSS	£354	PGRs	£16
						Other	£27

1. *Yields.* The average yield is for all winter feed wheat, i.e. all varieties and 1<sup>st</sup> and subsequent wheats. See over for First and Second Wheats. The yield used for feed and milling wheats including spring varieties is 8.18t/ha (overall 10-year average *Defra*).

The table below offers a weighted estimate of yield variations according to wheat type based on a national yield of 8.4t/ha. Percentages compare yield categories with 'all wheat'. These yields are used in the gross margins.

*Calculation of spread of 'average yields depending on wheat type –*

	Yield					
	Adjustment	Winter	1st WW	2nd WW	spring	Total
t/ha		101%	102%	93%	85%	100%
Total	100%	8.27	8.40	7.61		<b>8.18</b>
Feed	101%	8.35	8.48	7.69		8.27
Bread	93%	7.69	7.81	7.08	6.02	7.61
Biscuit	99%	8.18	8.32	7.54		8.10

2. *Straw* is sold in the swath. Assuming 1 hectare is worth 2.5 tonnes baled straw at 4.2t/ha. So £75/tonne baled = £188/ha for winter wheat.
3. *Seed* is costed with a single purpose dressing. Up to a third of growers require additional seed treatments, specifically to suppress BYDV. This can add £170/t of seed (£30/ha). This has not been added in the gross margins.
4. This schedule does not account for severe *grass weed infestations* such as Black Grass or Sterile Brome. Costs associated with managing such problems can amount to up to £190/hectare additional agrochemical costs. Yield losses increase as infestation rises:



**APPENDIX KCC4**  
**Extracts Cereal and OSR Production**  
**2023**



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> [Cereal and oilseed rape production](#)

[Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural  
Affairs](#)

National statistics

# Cereal and oilseed production in the United Kingdom 2023

Updated 21 December 2023

**Contents**

[Key points](#)

[Section 1: Area, yield and production](#)

[Section 2 Methodology: Final estimates of 2023 UK cereal and oilseed production](#)

[Section 3: What you need to know about this release](#)





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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cereal-and-oilseed-rape-production/cereal-and-oilseed-production-in-the-united-kingdom-2023>

This release contains the final estimate of UK 2023 cereal and oilseed harvest.

For detailed area, yield and production results by country and regions in England go to the [accompanying data set](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/crops) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/crops>).

Scotland and Northern Ireland have revised their area results for 2022. This release is re-issued to include the revised areas and as a result the United Kingdom area and yield results have been revised. The production data for 2022 is not revised. Overall, the effect of the revision to yields is small and in most cases the yields (t/ha) have remained virtually unchanged. Typically, the scale of revision is -1.0%.

## Key points

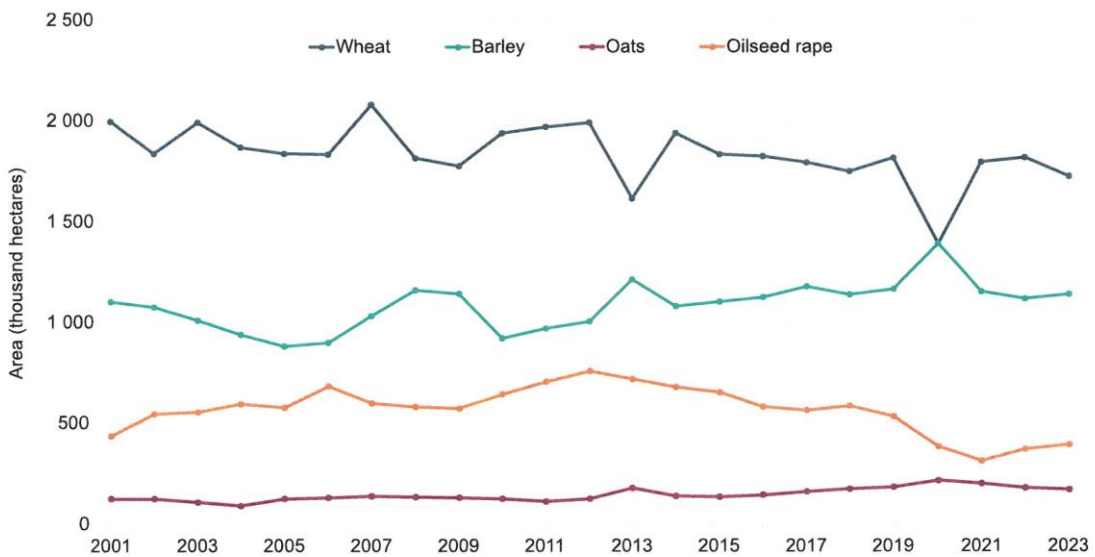
- All the main cereal crops saw reduced yields in 2023 compared to 2022 with areas also falling, except for barley, which saw increases in both winter and spring barley areas.
- The final estimate of the 2023 UK wheat harvest is 14 million tonnes, a decrease of 10% on 2022. This is due to decreases in both yield (-5.2% decrease to 8.1 tonnes per hectare) and area (-5.1% decrease to 1.7 million hectares).
- The final estimate of the 2023 UK barley harvest is just under 7.0 million tonnes, a decrease of 5.7% on 2022. This comprises a 9.9% fall in spring barley production and a 0.2% decrease in winter barley, entirely driven by falls in yield as both winter and spring barley areas saw increases.
- In 2023 oat production fell by 18% to 830 thousand tonnes. This is due to decreases in both area (-5.1% to 167 thousand hectares) and yield (-13% to 5.0 tonnes per hectare).
- Oilseed rape production decreased by 11% to 1.2 million tonnes in 2023. An increase in area of 7.2% was not enough to offset a lower yield down 17% from 2022.
- In 2023, the moisture content for many crops was above the standard 14.5% for cereals. In England the average for wheat was 15.1%, winter and spring barley both averaged 15% and oats 14.6%. The average moisture content for oilseed rape was 8.9%, just below the standard 9%. Data for other countries is not available.

## Section 1: Area, yield and production

The unseasonably wet and windy weather hindered the start of the harvest. Localised showers and heavy downpours throughout August caused further disruption, with progress varying throughout the United Kingdom. Conditions were milder in September, however some areas still had lengthy periods of wet weather.

## Areas

**Figure 1: United Kingdom crop areas**

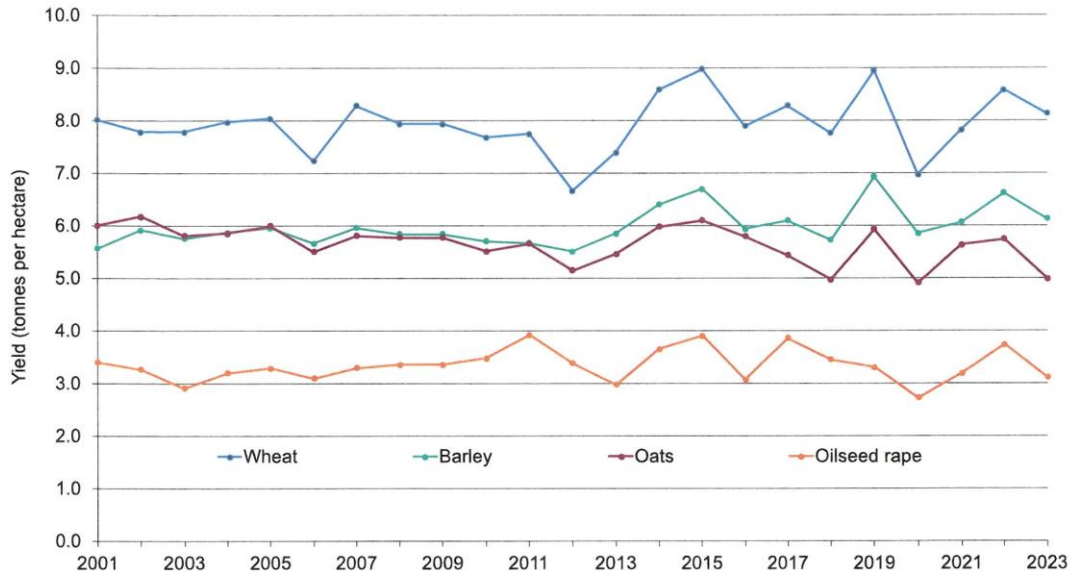


In 2023 wheat area decreased by 5.1% to 1.7 million hectares. This is possibly due to farmers favouring planting barley and oilseed rape which both saw increases in area in 2023 to just over 1.1 million hectares and 391 thousand hectares respectively. The area of oats decreased to 167 thousand hectares.

[Download the full dataset \(https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cereal-and-oilseed-rape-production\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cereal-and-oilseed-rape-production)

## Yields

**Figure 2: United Kingdom crop yields**



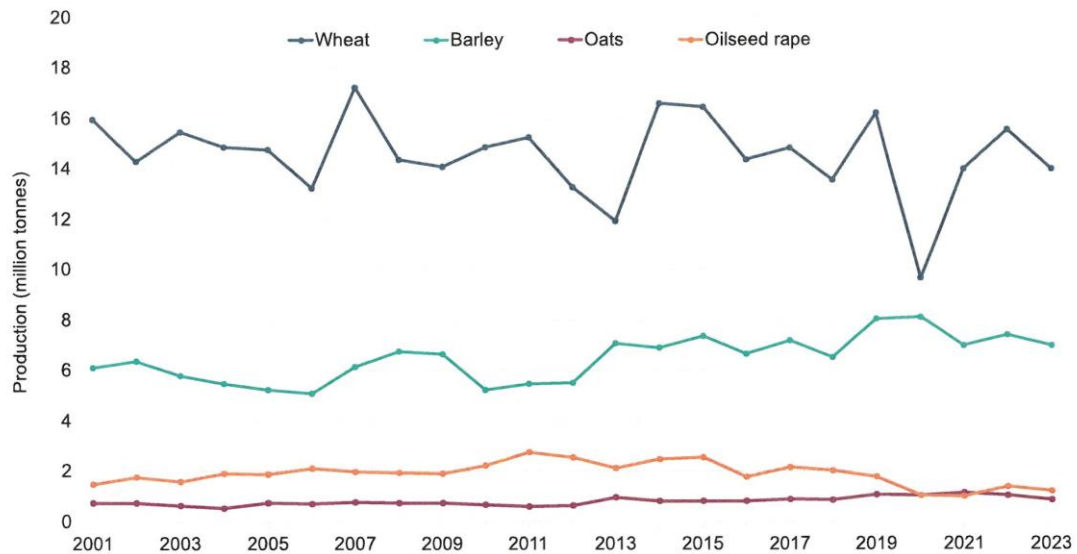
UK main cereal crops and oilseed rape all showed decreases in 2023 (see Figure 2).

[Download the full dataset \(https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cereal-and-oilseed-rape-production\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cereal-and-oilseed-rape-production)

## Production

Figure 3: United Kingdom crop production





Production for the UK 2023 harvest decreased for all the main cereals and oilseed rape, driven by the decrease in yields seen for all the crops and reduction in area for most. Wheat is still the predominant crop with production of 14 million tonnes (a decrease of 10% on 2022). This is a result of a decrease in both yield (5.2% decrease to 8.1 tonnes per hectare) and area by 5.1% to 1.7 million hectares.

The 2023 UK barley harvest is just under 7.0 million tonnes, a decrease of 5.7% on 2022. This comprised of a 9.9% decrease in spring barley to 3.8 million tonnes and a 0.2% decrease in winter barley to 3.2 million tonnes. Whilst both spring and winter barley areas saw increases this was not enough to offset a fall in yields (10% decrease to 5.5 tonnes per hectare and 4.5% decrease to 7.0 tonnes per hectare respectively).

Oats production fell by 18% to 830 tonnes, falling to its lowest level since 2016. This was driven by decreases in both area and yield. Area decreased by 5.1% to 167 thousand hectares and yield decreased by 13% to 5.0 tonnes per hectare.

Oilseed rape production is 1.2 million tonnes, down 11% on 2022. The 7.2% increase in area was not enough to offset the 17% decrease in yield from 3.7 tonnes per hectare to 3.1 tonnes per hectare.

[Download the full dataset \(https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cereal-and-oilseed-rape-production\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cereal-and-oilseed-rape-production)

**Appendix KCC5**  
**Defra Press Release December 2022**

# Food supply and food security

[Defra Press Office](#), 6 December 2022 - [Weekly stories](#)



There has been some coverage of calls by the National Farmers Union (NFU) for more government support for farmers to safeguard the nation's food supplies.

We understand that farmers are facing increasing costs as a result of the impacts of the conflict in Ukraine and global economic shocks including the spike in oil and gas prices, and have announced a range of measures throughout the course of the year to help mitigate these challenges and support industry.

The UK's food supply chain remains resilient, with supply from diverse sources guaranteeing a high level of food security.

## **A Government spokesperson said:**

“ The UK has a large and highly resilient food supply chain. Our high degree of food security is built on supply from diverse sources; strong domestic production as well as imports through stable trade routes. The government is in regular contact with the food and farming industries to ensure they are well



prepared for a range of scenarios, and we continue to take all the necessary steps to ensure people across the country have the food they need.”

To support the food and farming industry in the face of these pressures, the government has:

- Brought forward 50% of direct payments earlier this year to help farmers with cashflow
- Delayed proposed changes in the use of urea fertiliser back in March to help farmers manage costs and give them more time to adapt
- Brought forward New slurry storage grants which will help farmers reduce their reliance on artificial fertilisers
- Continued progress of the roll out of the Sustainable Farming Incentive scheme, and over 4000 applications have now been started. This pays farmers for actions, including improving soil health, which will reduce dependence on manufactured fertilisers which are linked to gas prices
- Removed the 25% tariff on US maize imports, which are a key ingredient for animal feed
- Brought in The Energy Bill Relief scheme, meaning businesses will be paying less than half of predicted wholesale energy costs this winter
- Cut fuel duty for petrol and diesel by 5p per litre across the UK until March 2023
- Reduced employer national insurance by increasing the Employment Allowance
- Put the brakes on bill increases by freezing the business rates multiplier - worth £9.3 billion over the next five years.
- Relaxed marketing rules so that farmers who breed turkeys, geese or ducks for their meat have the option to slaughter their flocks early and freeze these products
- Brought in Swifter compensation payments to farmers affected by avian influenza
- And earlier this year we confirmed the release of an extra 10,000 visas under the Seasonal Worker Visa Route, with 2,000 of these going to the poultry sector, meaning in total 40,000 visas are available for seasonal workers in 2022 to help ensure businesses have the workforce they need

The Food and Farming Minister met representatives from the UK egg sector on 6 December to discuss the challenges that the industry is currently facing. This is part of our regular and close engagement with the sector.

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**Tags:** [direct payments](#), [farming](#), [food security](#), [food supply](#), [gas prices](#)

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