AGRI 2019

Spring is here, change is happening and let’s make sure we make our mark where and when we can.

It was always going to be an unusual year, but we’re forging ahead and making the most of piloting new events and resources for our YFC members, working with industry and making sure that Defra hears what it’s like for the next generation of farmers and rural dwellers.

We started some very useful conversations at the Take Control of Your Future event at Bakewell in February. The event brought together YFC members, conservationists, and representatives from the industry and Defra to take part in a series of workshops and discussions. Having the chance to talk about ideas for the new Environmental Land Management system development was welcomed and we look forward to many more opportunities in the future.

AGRI is very proud of its strong links with industry and YFCs’ part in spreading positive messages about food, farming and the environment. Farm safety will always remain high up on our list of priorities and our reps are happy to help raise awareness and bang the safety drum for all to follow.

Proud sponsors of the AGRI steering group

Siân Pritchard is managing director of KUHN Farm Machinery and an active supporter of NFYFC AGRI. YFC members James Hutchinson, Kate Bennett and Anna Jones are part of Siân’s UK team. Look out for news of KUHN at shows and events throughout the year.

KUHN supports the AGRI steering group and its various activities, hosts YFC meetings and visits and will advertise your YFC events in local UK dealerships.
Chairman’s News

March has been and gone and we’re in unchartered waters! In this time of unprecedented political uncertainty, we’re helping to spread messages about EU exit. You can find a signposting page to the many government websites and this will be updated as and when we receive further information.

For those of you new to YFC, a reminder that NFYFC AGRI takes an active part in ensuring your YFC voices are heard. We also collaborate with other next generation groups so there’s a bit of power to our elbow when we make our case. Our close working relationship with the NFU Next Generation Forum continues and we are happy to extend our reach to others who are aiming for the same positive outcomes for young rural people. Our network of new county link representatives and NFYFC AGRI reps will help spread messages and feedback your thoughts and concerns.

Working with the Crop Protection Association allowed NFYFC AGRI to stage a Brexit and Beyond conference last year and make our own YFC video highlighting the role of an agronomist, explaining crop protection and future career opportunities. You can read more about George Baxter’s experience filming with AICC chairman Sean Sparling and look forward to watching the new video. This is just one of the many parts we play in helping to highlight what a great industry we work in and what’s on offer for young people.

Don’t forget to look up all the available training, events, courses, videos (on our dedicated NFYFC YouTube platform) and online guides that you can find from the NFYFC website and enjoy your YFC months ahead.

David Goodwin
NFYFC AGRI Chairman 2019-20

DIARY DATES

Spring 2019

May
12  NFYFC Annual General Meeting, Stareton Hall, Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire
16-18  Devon County Show, Devon County Showground, Westpoint, Clyst St Mary, Exeter, Devon
22  YFC LEAF Farm Visit, Clacks Farm, Wallingford

June
12-13  Cereals, Boothby Graffoe, Lincoln, Lincolnshire
13-16  BBC Good Food Show Summer, NEC, North Ave, Birmingham, West Midlands
14-16  Royal Three Counties Show, The Showground, Malvern, Worcestershire
15-16  Dales Festival of Food and Drink, Leyburn A684, Wensleydale, North Yorkshire

Useful Links

• Nuffield Farming Scholarship Trust – life changing scholarships that unlock individual potential and broaden horizons through study and travel overseas, with a view to developing farming and agricultural industries.

• Henry Plumb Foundation – awards grants and industry mentors.

• The Agri-Food Charities Partnership – AFCP’s overall aim is to promote education and research in agriculture and food production by supporting charities that are working in the discipline.

• The Worshipful Company of Farmers – grants and awards – the company supports a wide range of charitable initiatives.

• Apprenticeships – choosing a career or thinking about taking on an apprentice?

• Farming Connect’s Venture – is designed to match farmers and landowners who are looking to step back from the industry with new entrants looking for a way into farming.

• Smart Farming Guide – a useful guide for running YFC business development competitions and advice on setting up and running a successful business.

• Guide to Showing – for YFC members who would like an introduction to showing livestock. A Defra-supported project in association with the Rare Breeds Survival Trust.
News from the Rural Services Network

Rural services providers call on Government to seize opportunity to end “rural mainstreaming”

Rural services providers and community organisations across England are calling on the Government to produce an urgent comprehensive strategy for rural areas in preparation for Brexit, in light of a warning that people living in our towns and villages “simply cannot afford to wait any longer for politicians to take their concerns seriously and act on them”.

The call is the result of concern that deep-seated challenges to the sustainability of rural communities and service delivery in rural areas have been inadequately addressed by those in power for too long and the situation has become urgent. The significant outflow of people from rural areas to urban-based jobs continues to be a source of concern, like the prevailing sense that the potential of rural areas is being squandered, despite projections that unlocking their digital potential could add at least £12bn of extra productivity each year to the UK economy. Fuelling concern further is the fear that the UK’s exit from the EU will serve to compound these existing challenges, and others, not least as in many respects the current model is heavily reliant on EU policies and funding streams.

RSN is asking members to support this call by signing a petition [here](https://www.afcp.org.uk/).

Are you an existing or budding agricultural journalist?

The British Guild of Agricultural Journalists (BGAJ) represents editors and journalists, broadcasters, photographers and PR/marketing specialists working in agriculture, commercial horticulture and other rural industries.

BJAG also offers an annual training award aimed at graduating students keen to find full-time work in the agricultural and horticultural media. The award is also available for journalists or public relations staff who have less than 12 months’ practical work experience. Membership also includes Annual Congress tours professional development, writing and photography awards, a farming media centre directory and networking and social events.

Exit from the EU

Government continues to make preparations for Brexit and many government web pages are available to help everyone through the next few months.

- Brexit – Latest information and guidance on the UK exiting the EU
- The farming sector and preparing for EU Exit
- Prepare for EU Exit if you live in the UK
- Environment – EU Exit guidance
- Education, training and skills – EU Exit guidance
- Employing EU seasonal workers after the UK leaves the EU

You can also find information, business and planning advice for many of your farming Brexit questions from AHDB.

We’ll continue to liaise with government and industry to help keep you informed of news.
Farm Safety is high on the YFC agenda with lots of opportunities for training, campaigning and competitions.

Your YFC action helps to fulfil some of the Farm Safety Foundation’s aims of raising awareness of farm safety among young farmers and young people moving into agriculture as well as challenging and changing attitudes towards risk taking.

NFYFC has a long association with this topic and NFYFC Chief Officer James Eckley is a member of the Agricultural Industry Advisory Council (AIAC) and the Farm Safety Partnership. Organisations involved in the partnership co-ordinate and deliver activities to increase safety awareness.

Farm Safety Week is an initiative led by the Farm Safety Foundation and supported by the Farm Safety Partnership, the Health & Safety Executive, Health & Safety Executive for Northern Ireland and the Health & Safety Authority, Ireland. It ensures that everyone is reminded of vital safety messages and can join in and be advocates for their industry. Yellow Wellies is the popular public/communications face of the Farm Safety Foundation, set up by NFU Mutual. Farm safety campaign themes for the rest of 2019 are:

- Livestock – April-June
- Children – July-September
- Falls from height – October-December

The Farm Safety Foundation has tips, blogs and invaluable advice guides. You can follow Yellow Wellies on Twitter @yellowwelleisUK. Further news and social media assets will be available from the NFYFC website for the 2019 NFYFC Farm Safety Week later in the year.

Training tools for YFCs are available from the suite of NFYFC Curve modules – Farm Safety or Rural Plus – and you and your club members can help spread helpful industry messages.

Everyone can play their part in making a real difference to future farm safety.

The South West Area AGRI team ensured they flew the farm safety flag during a weekend of YFC celebration, competitions and fun in Weymouth. Chaired by Devon and NFYFC AGRI member Gareth Hutchings, there was some stimulating discussion and debate at the annual South West AGRI Forum.

HM Principal Inspector Jo Fitzgerald shared her invaluable experience on farm safety good practice and said: “It is always great to see the next generation of people who are, or will be, working in agriculture and their enthusiasm is infectious.

“Devon FYFC has already done some fantastic work on raising the profile of PTO guarding and it is good to know that there is a real desire to challenge some of the practical issues that members identified as potentially getting in the way of cracking this issue.”

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) website has a range of safety information for agriculture and its downloadable document What a good farm looks like is available in English and Welsh. This guide helps farmers understand the common risks to health and safety on farms and what steps to take to control common risks, help prevent accidents and ill health on your farm.

HSE Inspectors will also look at the topics covered in this guide when they visit farms to check that risks are being controlled in these areas.

Finally, taking time to read Nuffield Farming scholar Jude McCann’s report – Protecting the Farm’s Greatest Asset: Increasing Resilience and Knowledge Transfer – could certainly help give a perspective of safety and well-being. Jude’s report explores the fact that family farms are the heart of our countryside and farmers’ health must be priority. His project identifies interventions that can enable knowledge exchange and build resilience for farmers and farm businesses.
YFC Update

Next on the AGRI list of regional events is a farm visit on to Clacks Farm, which is part of Crowmarsh Battle Farms Ltd, in Wallingford, Oxfordshire on Thursday Wednesday 22 May, 6.30-8.30 pm. Join fellow YFC members for a visit and chat about all things AGRI including diversification projects, conservation and arable farming.

You can see the company’s whole farm approach, where rotations, the selective use of inputs and efficient use of resources is balanced with planned environmental management to make a truly sustainable business.

The Chamberlain family has been farming at Benson for over 100 years and Philip Chamberlain is the third generation to run the family business. The farm is an all-arable enterprise of 1,300 acres. Conservation management has always been seen as complementary to profitable arable farming and Crowmarsh Battle Farm follows LEAF – Linking Environment and Farming – and Integrated Farm Management (IFM) principles.

The evening will be a great opportunity to further the future environmental land management scheme conversation started at the YFC AGRI Take Control of Your Future event at Bakewell in February. There are 20 places for this free event – just sign up for a place on Eventbrite so that we know who’s coming. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Spreading the message about crop protection and agronomy

It wasn’t quite Hollywood, but a Lincolnshire arable farm was the filming location backdrop for some serious chat about crop protection!

AGRI Vice Chairman and Cambridgeshire FYFC Chairman George Baxter got together with Sean Sparling, fellow agronomist and AICC Chairman, to film a new video explaining the ins and outs of their day job and its significance in food production.

George said: “It’s great to share some collective knowledge of our work, spread important and accurate messages about the industry and hopefully inspire people making future career considerations.

“Our collaboration with the Crop Protection Association means we can produce yet another resource for YFCs and it was good to have the project supported by an industry professional of Sean’s calibre.”

Crop Protection Association

The Crop Protection Association (CPA) is the key voice of the UK plant science industry – putting a fresh perspective on the essential role of crop protection in safeguarding our food supply, protecting the environment and improving our quality of life. CPA is made up of 25 member companies representing 96% of the UK market.

Its members develop and manufacture innovative products and agricultural technologies that help farmers grow healthy crops, protecting our food supply against the pests, weeds and diseases that would otherwise cause us to lose between 30-40% of our food.

As well as agriculture and horticulture its members also provide solutions for home and garden use, helping improve our lawns, vegetable plots and ornamentals, and for use in the amenity sector maintaining our transport and public infrastructure, from roads and railways, to parks, golf courses and sports grounds.
AHDB and AGRI

AHDB chief strategy officer Tom Hind joined the last NFYFC AGRI meeting to give a presentation on Brexit, skills and the Livestock Improvement Programme. He explained his work creating strategy with the six sector boards to provide a service for farmers and growers.

AHDB’s role is to inspire farmers to succeed concentrating on export; productivity; data and digital; inspiring farm excellence; Brexit and domestic market. Work is demonstrated at a series of monitor farms and a wealth of material for helping farmers prepare and understand the implications of Brexit (Horizon reports) is available from the AHDB website comprising: regulatory framework; policy; labour and trade.

You will already be aware of the AHDB Know What You’re Looking At! guides for YFC stockjudging training and competitions and the online Guide to Stockjudging video. Tom has asked all YFC members for feedback on the following questions:

• What do you think the industry will look like in 5-10 years?
• What will businesses need to succeed?
• Where can AHDB make the biggest difference for you and your business?
• How can AHDB work more closely with NFYFC?

Send in your answers to sarah.palmer@nfyfc.org.uk

A reminder of club programming opportunities for YFCs

AHDB is happy to provide talks for YFC clubs or offer an invitation to all of its open events and the opportunity for tailored visits for local clubs or national groups – just contact sarah.palmer@nfyfc.org.uk to register your interest or for further details.

LEAF Demonstration Farms are working, commercial farms practising Integrated Farm Management (IFM). Visit the link to pinpoint a farm in your area. This is a great option if you’re planning your new programme or want somewhere to visit when you organise a club exchange.

Countryside Classroom helps teachers to find resources, places to visit and school support relating to the themes of food, farming and the natural environment. The site contains a range of quality assured educational content from hundreds of contributors including components from the NFYFC Future Farming Curve module. You can use the many NFYFC resources to help YFC members share positive and informative messages about British food and farming.

Oxford Farming Conference (OFC) – Message from the 2020 Director

Matthew Naylor, flower farmer, Farmers Weekly columnist, and OFC Chair for 2020, gives an insight into putting on one of the leading agricultural events and his vision for next year's conference. He’s also encouraging applications for new directors.

Matthew advises: “I can wholeheartedly recommend the role of director to anyone thinking of applying. It is hard work – if you apply thinking the role is an honorary one, the committee will smell you a mile off – but it is also very fulfilling. The experience that you gain from collective endeavour with intelligent people is enormous. The social aspect of the job is joyful. The council needs new directors with the courage to keep making the changes that we have started. Ideally, we want people with different experiences from the norm to keep the conference fresh and relevant to modern society.”

OFC Director applications are now open for the term 2021-2023 and further details are available.
Reforming agricultural tenancies in England

Defra has published an open consultation on Reforming agricultural tenancies in England.

Defra is asking us to share thoughts about plans for reforming agricultural tenancy law in England and the changes aimed to make agricultural tenancies fit for the future, allowing tenants and landlords to adapt to changes such as accessing new schemes.

The consultation contents are available here and AGRI will share further thoughts and information as the consultation process progresses.

Make sure you find out and share what news, courses, events and training are currently available from the NFYFC website.

Playing your part in succession.....

NFYFC has a long history of working with both Savills and Siân Bushell Associates. From farm business development competitions, tenancy and succession training to the Smart Farming Guide, both organisations have been by our side for the last ten years.

Now more than ever, young rural people need to have smart skills for their future personal, YFC and career development. Planning and communicating equates to being resilient for the future.

The new ‘Ready and Resilient’ training module will help YFC members describe the process and skills needed to begin the conversation regarding succession planning.

We’ll be holding some pilot events to make sure we have a tried and tested formula for the final component of our succession resources which include: SmartFarmingGuide, We Really Need to Talk video and the Ready and Resilient training module for YFCs.