AGRI 2019

Brexit has been delayed yet again and a General Election called for 12 December. This is a good time to speak to MPs of all parties during the run-up to the election and explain your food, farming and environmental issues.

Our regional YFC talks to Defra events started on 29 October in East Riding of Yorkshire but the remaining events scheduled for 2019 have been postponed due to the General Election. A meeting with the Farming Minister on 7 November to share our thoughts on future farming and environmental policy has also been postponed until after the election.

We are delivering the first three of five business and tenancy training events in Derbyshire, Oxford and Herefordshire during November. This is the time to take full advantage of opportunities for skills, training and networking.

Fingers crossed for good weather at the beginning of February for our new AGRI event Fit in or Fade Out! If you haven’t visited Daylesford in Gloucestershire, you’re in for a farming and food treat.

We look forward to delivering a host of events in the next few months and highlighting our farming and rural issues to all who will listen!
Chairman’s News

I’ve had several recent opportunities to represent YFCs and our future in farming and rural life.

You already know that Defra will be coming to your own regions for dedicated events, but I have had two opportunities to speak to a large gathering of Defra representatives. It certainly makes me feel that I have done something useful by explaining the practicalities of farming, the issues that we deal with and why this is so important for policy-makers to consider.

The NFU held a workshop for UK next generation farmers in September to consider Net Zero - reaching zero emissions by 2040 - and future plans for industry skills, training and professionalism. There was a healthy gathering of YFC members from England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland who shared their ideas for future road maps. I have been plagued with HS2 issues and in regular contact with my MP who has been representing my concerns. Now is the time to share your views!

AGRI vice chairman George Baxter, AGRI South West rep Tom Pope and I were set to travel to London in November to meet the Farming Minister George Eustice. You might have noticed the support the Minister gave us during National Young Farmers’ Week and we hoped to have some good conversation about TB, the beef industry and future policy plans. Unfortunately the General Election was called and some of our AGRI plans have been postponed.

The YFC talks to Defra events started well in East Riding of Yorkshire in October. As mentioned, a bit of re-scheduling is now needed, but it was a great start!

Don’t forget to share any views, suggestions or concerns with your AGRI rep (contact details from the NFYFC website or at the end of the newsletter) or get in touch with the AGRI contact at NFYFC.

David Goodwin
NFYFC AGRI Chairman 2019-20

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#AGRI News

DIARY DATES

November 2019

8    NFYFC/Savills Business and Tenancy Training, Mount Cook, Derbyshire
12   NFYFC/Savills Business and Tenancy Training, Savills Oxford
15   NFYFC/Savills Business and Tenancy Training, Hereford FYFC (first of five events)
16-17 Stockjudging, English Winter Fair, Staffs
22-24 Equipped, Chairman’s Weekend, Staffs

YFC talks to Defra regional events

Scheduled events for November and December are now postponed until Jan/Feb 2020

January 2020

20    Cumbria – Penrith Rugby Club, Winters Park, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 8RQ
23    Northumberland - Lough House Farm, Northumber, NE61 6EB
27    South East – Sparsholt College, Winchester SO21 2NE

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 apprenticeship?
• 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 in to 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.
OFC Scholars

There was strong competition for NFYFC scholarship places making the Worshipful Company of Farmers (WCF) sponsorship choice particularly difficult, but Emily Smith and Georgina Radmore have been awarded 2020 Oxford Farming Conference (OFC) scholarships.

The OFC scholars’ experience begins at an orientation day on 7 November in Scunthorpe, with a day hosted by McDonald’s, including invited speakers.

Scholars can meet others on the programme, explore the conference theme and understand how they can make an active and effective contribution to the conference. As well as the main conference sessions, specific scholar events give everyone a chance to meet and discuss the industry and subjects raised at the conference.

News from the Rural Services Network

Rural Housing Week 2019 huge success

Rural Housing Week ran from 1 to 5 July this year, generating a huge amount of activity and putting rural housing firmly in the spotlight.

The National Housing Federation has put together a highlights page to their website telling the story of the week through key events, published blogs and some of the case studies published by housing associations.

The latest rural supply figures were released at the start of Rural Housing Week which showed an increase in the number of new homes built compared to last year, including more than 1,000 social rent homes. This was great and timely news in demonstrating the hard work, and ambition, of rural housing associations.

The 5-star plan for rural housing was re-launched at the national Rural Housing Conference. Two years on from the original launch of the plan, it’s clear that it is having an impact, with the target of increasing rural delivery by six per cent being met last year. This re-launch aims to build on this and seek the full support of the rural housing sector. You can read the 5-star plan for rural housing here.

What does the future hold for food?

You may be aware that the former Defra Secretary of State Michael Gove tasked Henry Dimbleby to conduct a year-long review, and to set out his recommendations within six months of its completion. From this, the plan is for the government to publish an ambitious, multi-disciplinary National Food Strategy, the first of its kind for 75 years, in the form of a White Paper.

Mr Dimbleby and his team have been speaking to people from across the food chain, from farmers to chefs. They have consulted experts from around the world, as well as those whose voices are seldom heard, but who have personal experience of the failings of our food system.

The review will be built on rigorous evidence and analysis; but the answers to some of the most important questions cannot be mathematically calculated. What do we want our countryside to look like? As our understanding of animal sentience increases, how should we prioritise the welfare of livestock? What role should the government play to protect us from our “bad” dietary choices?

The call for evidence was open for all members of the public who had an interest in expressing their views. NFYFC AGRI submitted a response highlighting the very practical example of the cookery competitions that so many YFC members take part in and enjoy. It’s a great way to learn about nutrition, sourcing local food, teamwork, food hygiene and cooking skills.
#YFC AGRI
Invites you to a day of farming heaven!

Harsh but fair, AGRI vice chairman George Baxter explains why he chose a controversial title for the new February AGRI event at Daylesford.

“It’s a time of change in farming and we really need to make sure that we are continually contributing to the on-going policy conversations. Not with all the usual suspects but with those who have different views and will challenge and communicate their ideas.

“We have something for everyone on 5 February including a farm walk, themed discussion workshops and debate on future food and farming. We hope we’ll see you at Daylesford next February.”

Fit in or Fade Out!
Where are we going and how do we get there?

Daylesford near Kingham, Gloucestershire, GL56 0YG
Wednesday, 5 February 2020

If you’re happy to talk about farming, food, change, sustainability, good business practice, innovation, tackling climate change and forging your own future - this day is for you!

#YFC AGRI offers you a one-day farming experience to visit, chew the fat, hear new ideas and meet old friends and make new ones.

Held at the stunning Daylesford Organic Farm grounds in Gloucestershire, one of the most sustainable farms in the UK that grows, farms, produces and sells food according to its sustainable principles, and in harmony with the environment.

You can join the day at various stages to suit you. Enjoy a farm and business visit, take part in dedicated workshops led by a range of industry leaders and be involved in the day’s concluding debate.

Don’t forget the Daylesford food and shop experience to complete your day!

Full details will be published on Eventbrite in December for you to secure your place

Provisional Programme

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.30 am</td>
<td>Arrive/coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-12.30 pm</td>
<td>Welcome and Daylesford Farm visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.30 pm</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.30 pm</td>
<td>Introduction – NFYFC, Daylesford</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.45 pm</td>
<td>Group workshops x 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.30 pm</td>
<td>Discussion groups’ feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.45 pm</td>
<td>Daylesford Horticulture Enterprise visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:15 pm</td>
<td>Tea</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30 pm</td>
<td>Short film</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:45 pm</td>
<td>Panel debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:45 pm</td>
<td>Panel debate</td>
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Supported by

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
Next generation of farmers unite in climate change ambition

Two Lancashire YFC members travelled down to Stoneleigh Park in September to represent English next generation farmers at a UK conference hosted by the NFU.

Stephen Taylor and James Jackson represented YFCs in climate change talks with the UK’s four farming next generation forums who discussed how they can work together towards a lower carbon future.

The workshop, which followed the NFU’s publication of its Achieving Net Zero report, considered what the industry’s young farmers can do, what opportunities may arise in the future and what barriers will need to be overcome.

NFU next generation forum chairman Simon Gadd and AGRI steering group member said: “Climate change is arguably one of the greatest challenges of our time and as the future of the industry we need to take it upon ourselves to start our journey towards net zero now.

“We took part in breakout sessions and within our teams we came up with practical solutions on a short, medium and long term basis on how we could hit net zero by 2040. There were a lot of challenging concerns but these were outnumbered by good ideas and solutions.”

NFYFC Welcomes South Korean Visitors

NFYFC was delighted to welcome delegates from EPIS (South Korea Agency of Education, Promotion and Information Service in Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) who came on a fact-finding visit to the UK.

The visitors were keen to learn more about the YFC organisation and its role in rural and farming communities to help with their future work and activities in South Korea.

NFYFC’s chief officer James Eckley said: “It’s always very encouraging to give presentations to delegates from other countries who want to hear about YFC achievements and the structure of the organisation.

“The South Korean delegates were interested to hear how young people learn about agriculture, maintain a social network and contribute positively to their rural communities. We were delighted to host the visit and share the YFC story.”
Ernie’s Exchange

Tom ‘Ernie’ Richards, Herefordshire sheep farmer, county chairman and man with a mission!

If your club is considering a club exchange experience Ernie’s Exchange could be just the opportunity you are looking for!

Need some programme ideas?

Visit the AGRI page and see the AGRI Library

Want to have a conversation about succession? Read an article in the Farmers Club newsletter about our AGRI debate at Cereals this year and don’t forget to use the new Ready and Resilient Curve module.

RBST - Rare Breeds Survival Trust has a great track record of working with YFCs. You can find an introductory guide to showing or the results of some fantastic collaboration at this year’s cookery finals. Contact the RBST team to ask for information or YFC talks.

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.

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@nfyc.org.uk to register your interest or for further details.

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.

bTB-can you help industry by sharing messages to reduce the spread and impacts of this devastating disease?

Defra is currently analysing the effectiveness and awareness of information and tools available to help farmers protect their livestock from TB. We know bTB is an animal disease we’d all like to see eradicated due to its devastating consequences. Can we help to raise awareness and highlight the impact of this disease on farmers and their families and share information on what they can do to protect their herds?

There’s lots of relevant information available on the biosecurity section of the TB Hub and if you’re busy thinking of ideas to fill your club programme, could bTB prevention be a topic to cover? The website has a wealth of information, videos and podcasts, as well as useful advice which can also help to stimulate conversation for those affected by or working with the threat of bTB outbreaks.

You’ll find information ranging from statistics, practical guidance such as the interactive bTB map (iTB) and other useful links. Inviting an appropriate industry speaker and using the topic for speaking and debating competitions would all help the effort to raise awareness and tackle the effects of bTB.

iTB – interactive map of bovine TB breakdowns in England and Wales
TBhub – The home of UK TB information
Achieving net-zero
With over 70% of the UK being agricultural land, the Nature Friendly Farming Network (NFFN) believes our sector can play a key role in reducing UK carbon emissions and reversing wildlife declines with the right support.

The NFFN has published a report demonstrating, through farmer case studies and surveys, the potential for farming systems that are sustainable both for farming and the environment.

Food and farming needs to change on a large scale to support a sustainable future for us all. However, over 90% of farmers surveyed think that the farming industry is currently ill-equipped and under-resourced to build the movement and transition to sustainable food production, at scale.

Interested in finding out more? The NFFN has produced a guide on practical ways farmers can help achieve net-zero carbon targets.

What might Brexit mean for your community?
Will it happen, won’t it? Deal or no-deal? The B word hasn’t gone away and neither have the implications that come with it. But we don’t know what they are yet. By the time this newsletter reaches you, everything might have changed – or stayed the same.

It’s always good to remain positive but it’s also sensible to be aware of any possible fall-out from changes in policy and keep a listening ear for your friends, family and rural community.

Many organisations have prepared guides for businesses based on the information released by government and we have our own dedicated website page to help signpost to the most relevant information. There’s also a mention of the farming help groups who are putting extra effort into their work in anticipation.

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If you would like to raise any AGRI matters with the steering group or would like further information, please contact your Area reps or NFYFC.