



**Fun, Learning
and Achievement**

 **RoseRegeneration**



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Future Land Use Survey

National Federation of
Young Farmers' Clubs



Introduction



In June 2021, the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (NFYFC) launched a survey, 'Future Land Use'. Funded by Defra and led by the NFYFC and Rose Regeneration, the survey provided young people living and working in rural areas, next generation farmers and land managers with an opportunity to share their views on the future of land use, now and into the future. The survey was promoted at Cereals 2021 and the emerging results were shared with the AGRI Steering Group in September and November 2021.

This report followed 12 months on from a survey of the same group entitled: "COVID-19 and a Post-Brexit Rural Future" and a number of insights into the key themes and issues raised during that survey flow through into the results from this survey. The process, where possible of comparing results from the two surveys provides particularly useful insights.

This report highlights the key issues facing young people living and working in rural areas and their views of what their future holds in terms of the evolving debate about land use. This report provides the NFYFC AGRI Steering Group with an up-to-date picture of what young people think. It also contains information which can be shared with Defra, Government and industry groups to provide them with insights into future land use and moving towards a new Agricultural Policy.

Charlotte Garbutt, YFC AGRI Chair 2022-23



Summary



To ensure that young people who live, study or work in rural areas are given an opportunity to share key concerns about their rural future a survey was circulated by the NFYFC, YFCs and other bodies (e.g. national rural and farming support groups, next generation groups and organisations). Students, next generation farmers, land managers and those working within allied industries were encouraged to share their views.

The survey had 10 introductory questions including detail about the individuals and their situation. Respondents were then invited, in return for the

opportunity to enter a competition for a prize, to answer a further 19 questions exploring their views in more detail. The survey opened in June 2021 and closed in January 2022. It elicited 486 responses. The preceding survey: “COVID-19 and a Post-Brexit Rural Future” ran for a period of 4 months from May to August 2020. This survey generated 528 responses.

It covered the following themes set out in column 1 of the following table which have a range of read across links to the themes in the 2020 survey referenced in column 2 of the table:

2021 Survey	2020 Survey
Land Use	Farming
Skills	Skills
New Entrants to Farming	Housing
Labour	Services
Change	The future
Brexit/Covid	Covid-19

Key findings

A table summarising the key findings emerging from the survey with a more detailed highlighting of respondents' views on key issues is set out

below, showing a high level comparison in the characteristics of respondents compared to the 2020 survey:

2021 Survey	2020 Survey
486 responses	528 responses
Average age: 23 years	Average age: 24 years
70% of the sample are Young Farmers' Club members	78% of the sample are Young Farmers' Club members
Respondents are from a wide geography, including 8% from Wales	Respondents are from a wide geography, including 10% from Wales
68% work or live in a farming household	61% work in farming
16% are students	20% are students

Key findings



- The most significant motivation for respondents thinking about land use was **food production (40%)**.
- 39% of respondents were uncertain about the future in terms of **the 7-year transition away from EU-based system to England schemes**.
- A slim majority (53%) of respondents felt they **understood the proposed changes in land use. Approaching 60% of respondents were unsure of how the policy changes would affect them**.
- The three most significant factors which should influence future land use were identified as **food production, biodiversity and conservation, and net zero/carbon capture**.
- In terms of **sustainable land use** respondents identified improved farm productivity and investment through grants as top priorities.
- In relation to skills **Innovation, grants, efficiency and diversification were the most popular responses** identified.
- Over 70% of respondents thought it would be **difficult or impossible for new entrants** to enter the farming industry.
- Almost 50% of respondents felt that the public had a **low regard for farmers and agricultural production**.
- 43% of respondents identified **ongoing labour supply challenges**.
- Only a third (32%) of respondents felt that there are **relevant training and development opportunities across England for people wanting to get into farming or land management**.

“More important now than ever for the UK to be able to survive by itself without reliance on any other countries, with the pandemic and Brexit, this is shown to be massively important.”

“It may be possible to receive training, but to put that training into practice is incredibly difficult when there is limited and insecure access to land and high start up costs.”

- The biggest challenges and opportunities facing farming were identified as respectively: **increasing efficiency, collaborating, diversification and adapting to climate change**.
- Respondents felt that the greatest impact of Brexit and Covid was to put greater emphasis **on the environmental management and animal welfare track record of farmers**.
- The greatest future policy priorities identified for land management were: **food security, balancing environmental and food production costs and the opportunity for respondents to both live and work in the countryside**.

Detailed results



Sample Characteristics

The mean age of respondents was 23 years and the median was 22. This indicates that the mean is a representative indicator of the age of those completing the survey with relatively few outliers at the far ends of the age spectrum as either very young or very old

respondents. 70% were members of a young farmers club. Where respondents specified their location they came from a widely distributed range of settings broadly comparable with the 2020 survey on the basis set out in the table below:

Location	2021	2020
Yorkshire & Humber	28	31
Yorkshire	28	31
West Midlands	61	79
Herefordshire	13	17
Warwickshire	10	5
Worcestershire	8	11
Shropshire	14	29
Staffordshire	16	17
South West	83	95
Cornwall	19	20
Gloucestershire	11	10
Somerset	14	18
Dorset	9	4
Devon	21	27
Wiltshire	9	16
South East	36	55
Berkshire	3	3
Buckinghamshire	2	4
Hampshire	7	14
Sussex	4	10
Oxfordshire	8	10
Kent	10	13
Surrey	2	1
East	34	44
Bedfordshire	4	6
Cambridgeshire	6	6
Essex	4	10
Norfolk	12	16
Suffolk	6	6

Location	2021	2020
East Midlands	60	69
Derbyshire	14	11
Rutland	2	1
Northamptonshire	5	15
Lincolnshire	15	20
Leicestershire	14	9
Nottinghamshire	10	13
North East	19	34
Durham	5	9
Northumberland	14	25
North West	33	31
Cheshire	1	1
Cumbria	18	15
Lancashire	14	15
Wales		47
Wales Non-Specific	6	22
Gwent	1	4
Ceredigion	3	5
Camarthernshire	2	2
Clwyd	0	4
Brecknock	3	4
Glamorgan	3	6
England	25	22
UK	11	9

Short survey responses



Introduction

It was decided that it would be useful to generate a reasonable response to the survey, against a background of reported survey fatigue amongst the client group, through a short survey focused on the primary questions about land use for which views were

sought. The responses to this part of the survey were sustained at approaching 500 responses. They decline in terms of responses to the longer survey question responses to approaching 400 responses to most questions.

Housing

68% of respondents work or live in a farming household. 8% identified that they were best described

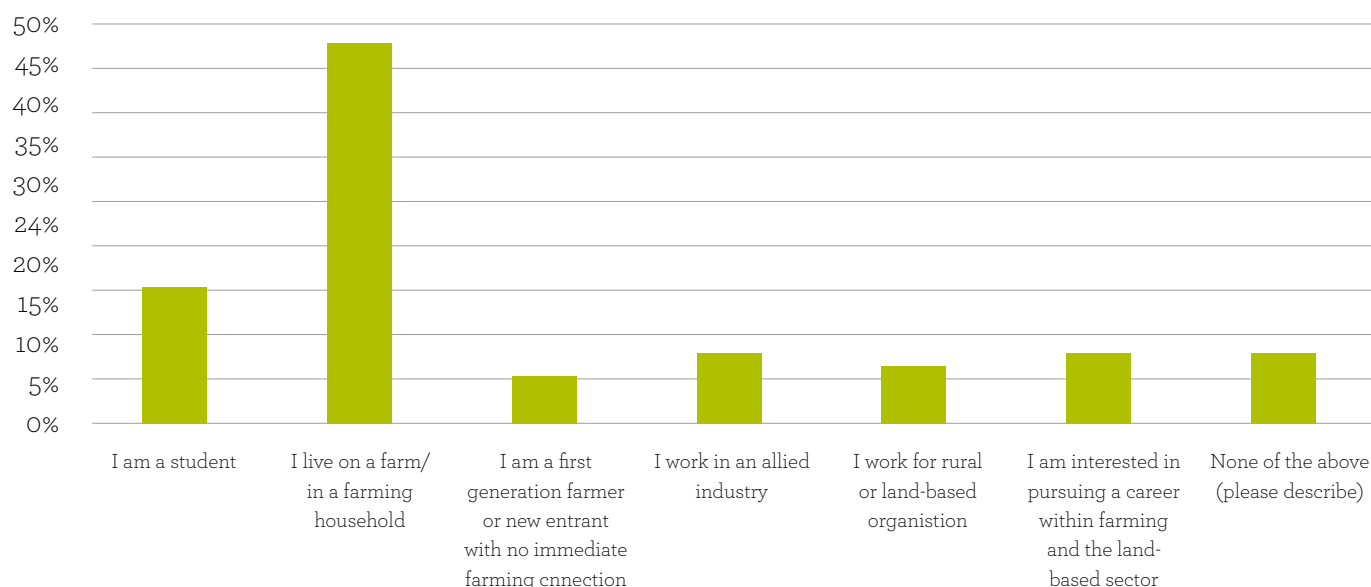
as interested in pursuing a career within farming and the land based sector.

Answer Choices	Responses	
I am a student	16.46%	79
I live on a farm / in a farming household	46.67%	224
I am a first generation farmer or new entrant with no immediate farming connections	5.21%	25
I work in an allied industry	8.75%	42
I work for a rural or land-based organisation	6.46%	31
I am interested in pursuing a career within farming and the land-based sector	8.33%	40
None of the above (please describe)	8.13%	39
	Answered	480

Short survey responses



Which of the following categories best describes your current situation?



Motivation for Thinking About Land Use

There were a mixed range of motivations for respondents thinking about land use. The highest proportion of respondents were interested in food production (40%). The second highest category of respondents were interested in services and young

people being able to live and work in the countryside (25%). This indicates a strong focus in the motivations of respondents towards farming and services issues as opposed to principal motivations around environmental issues or tourism.

Answer Choices	Responses	
I am interested in food production	40.42%	194
I am interested in land management	19.58%	94
I am interested in environmental issues (e.g. climate change, biodiversity)	12.92%	62
I am interested in how the countryside can be opened up to more visitors (e.g. tourism, recreation)	1.67%	8
I am interested in young people being able to live and work in the countryside (e.g. housing, jobs)	25.42%	122
	Answered	480

Short survey responses



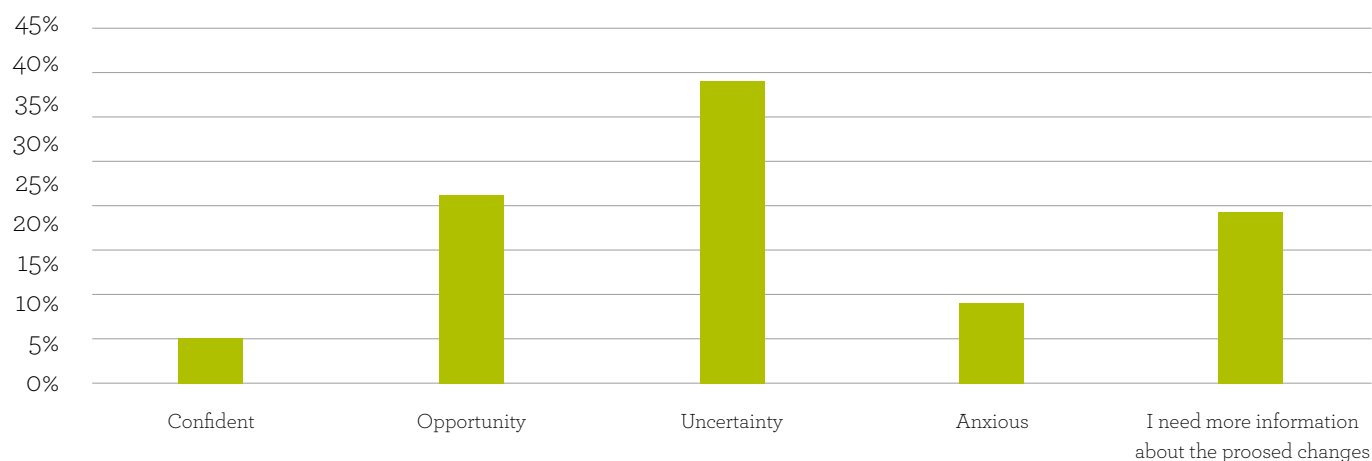
How does the 7-year transition away from EU-based system to England schemes make you feel?

Respondents had mixed views about the transition to England schemes away from the current EU-based system. Almost 20% felt that they needed more

information. Almost 40% of respondents were uncertain about the future and 27% saw the transition as an opportunity.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Confident	5.22%	25
Opportunity	26.72%	128
Uncertainty	39.46%	189
Anxious	8.98%	43
I need more information about the proposed changes	19.62%	94
	Answered	479

How does the 7-year transition away from EU-based system to England schemes make you feel?



Short survey responses

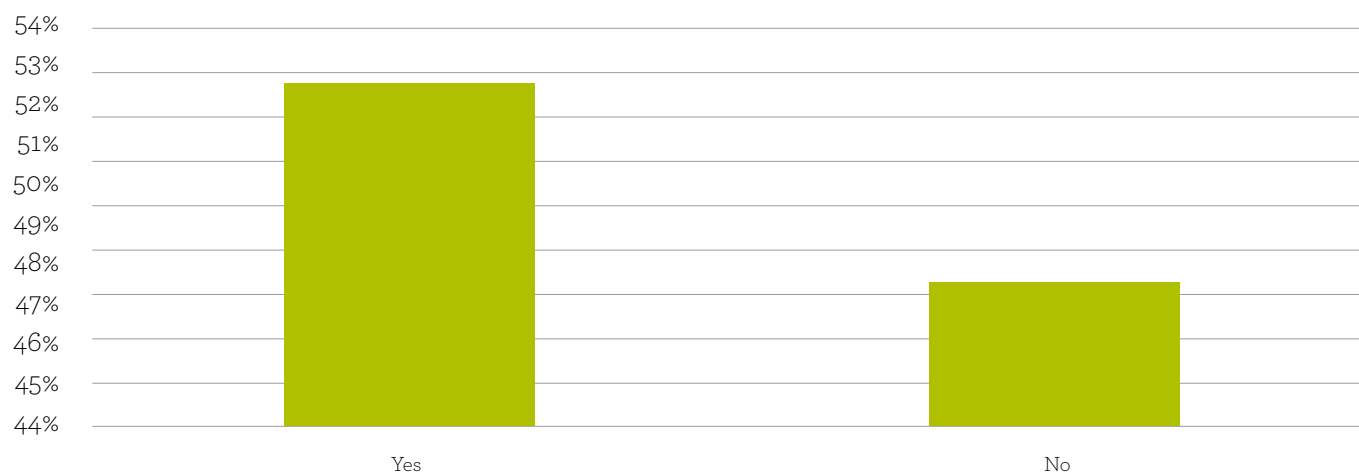


Do you understand proposed policy changes to future land use and the work that is underway?

Only a slim majority of respondents (53%) felt that they understood the proposed policy changes in land use.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	52.61%	252
No	47.39%	227
	Answered	479

Do you understand proposed policy changes to future land use and the work that is underway?



Short survey responses



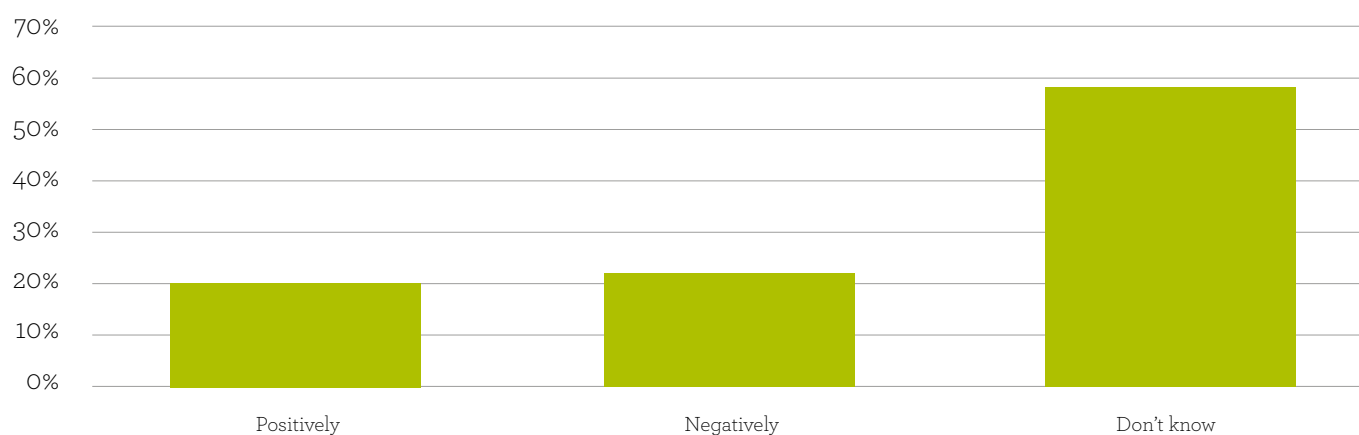
How do you think the proposed policy changes will affect you?

Approaching 60% of respondents were unsure of how the policy changes would affect them, representing

great uncertainty about the future in terms of land use amongst the young farmer community.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Positively	20.42%	98
Negatively	21.25%	102
Don't know	58.33%	280
	Answered	480

How do you think the proposed policy changes will affect you?



Short survey responses



Factors which should influence future land use

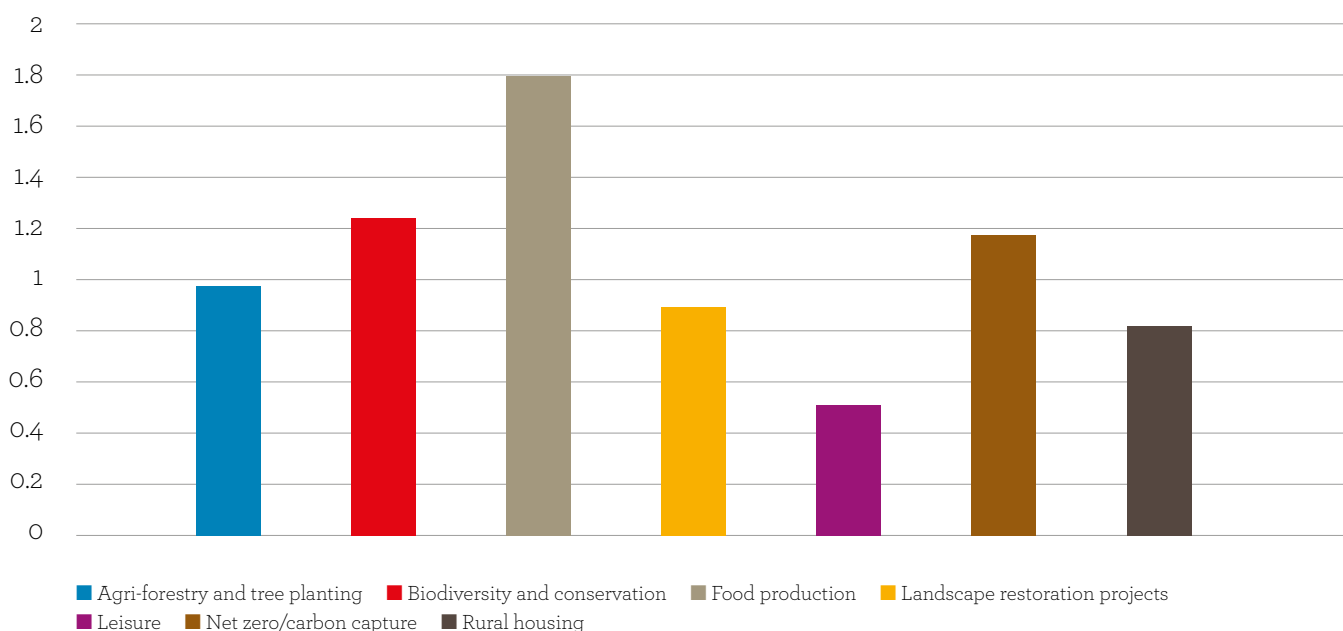
In response to the question: “Which of the following options is closest to your opinion of what should influence future land use?” respondents indicated that their highest priority (the lowest scores in the weighted averages below) were food production, biodiversity and conservation, and net zero/carbon capture.

Notwithstanding the traditional view that farmers may have a negative impact on the environment, this shows a significant positive interest amongst young farmers in relation to issues relating to environmental management.

Issue	1		2		3		Total	Weighted average
Agri-forestry and tree planting	20.95%	97	54.86%	254	24.19%	112	463	2.03
Biodiversity and conservation	42.28%	200	47.57%	225	10.15%	48	473	1.68
Food production	84.03%	400	10.50%	50	5.46%	26	476	1.21
Landscape restoration projects	18.06%	84	54.62%	254	27.31%	127	465	2.09
Leisure	7.41%	34	37.25%	171	55.34%	254	459	2.48
Net zero / carbon capture	32.69%	152	51.83%	241	15.48%	72	465	1.83
Rural housing	21.81%	101	38.01%	176	40.17%	186	463	2.18

The chart below inverts the weighted results to give an intuitive representation of the most important issues arising from the response to this question, with the

highest bars representing the greatest significance of the responses received.



Short survey responses



Sustainable Land Use

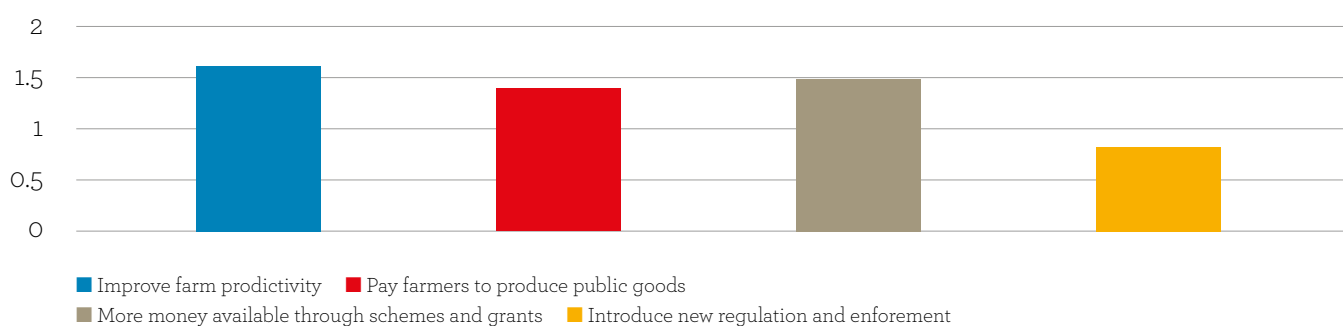
In response to the question: “What do you think can be done to manage land more sustainably?” respondents indicated that their highest priority (the lowest scores in the weighted averages below) were improve farm productivity and investment through grants. This commitment to investment and the increase of farm

productivity alongside the response to the preceding question above about land use indicate a strong theme around sustainable management of food production as the core commitment for young farmers responding to this survey.

Issue	1		2		3		Total	Weighted average
Improve farm productivity	66.18%	317	27.35%	131	6.47%	31	479	1.4
Pay farmers to produce public goods	48.31%	229	37.76%	179	13.92%	66	474	1.66
More money available through schemes and grants	61.95%	293	28.33%	134	9.73%	46	473	1.48
Introduce new regulation and enforcement	20.60%	96	43.13%	201	36.27%	169	466	2.16
							Answered	479

The chart below inverts the weighted results to give an intuitive representation of the most important issues arising from the response to this question, with the

highest bars representing the greatest significance of the responses received.



Short survey summary



Sustainable Land Use

We can infer three strong themes for the responses to the short survey:

Firstly **significant uncertainty** about what the change to a new non-EU regime will bring to the future of land use. This in some senses is not surprising in the current circumstances of considerable change from a settled pattern of policy within the wide framework of the Common Agriculture Policy for the last 50 years. Uncertainty is not good in terms of sustainable future planning and the fact that a significant number of respondents to this survey, from the next generation of farmers are not clear on how things will affect them is an issue which needs to be addressed. Even if it is not possible to approach the current situation with a great degree of certainty, a policy of profoundly involving young people in the development and shaping of future policy is one desirable approach, through involvement, to ensuring that uncertainty doesn't disempower future land managers and farmers.

Secondly a commitment to **food production**. In the face of an increased policy trajectory towards supporting farmers with a great emphasis on creating public goods rather than food it is important to note that there is a strong commitment amongst young people in our survey to food production. It may be that bearing in mind the deep farming roots of the majority of our respondents to food production that this is the case. It is important however to note that the cohort of young people with the greatest insights and expertise in food production remain committed to food production.

Thirdly a clear sense of **environmental integrity** in the way the survey respondents would like to see the landscape managed in future. The commitments to increasing farm productivity whilst recognising the importance of bio-diversity and following sound environmental management principles suggest that this latest generation of farmers are committed to a clear “middle way” which straddles the importance of food production and strong environmental management.

Longer Survey Responses

Approaching 80% of respondents to the short survey continued with the longer survey. This provides more detailed insights in the view of respondents to the wider

issues around land management from their perspective. It also provides scope for some comparison with responses given to the 2020 survey which preceded this survey.



Longer survey responses



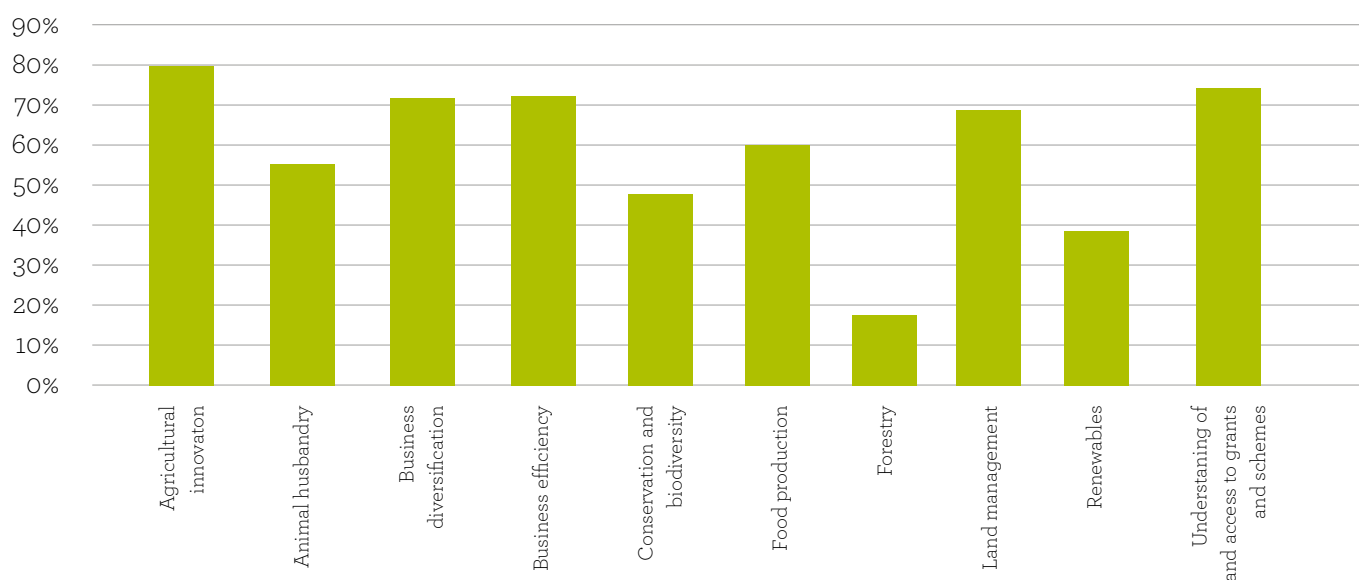
Skills

In response to the question: what do you think are the main skills future farmers will need to succeed? Innovation, grants, efficiency and diversification were the most popular responses. These responses all point to the commitment of the respondents to continuing to farm progressively as their core agenda going forward. These responses chime strongly with the answers to

the question: What are the skills you think people will need to work in farming in the next 5 years? From the 2020 survey where the highest responses were: financial management, a knowledge of food production and an awareness of customer demand and technical and business skills training. Details from this survey are set out in the table below:

Answer	%	Number
Agricultural innovation	79.89%	282
Understanding of and access to grants and schemes	73.37%	259
Business efficiency	72.80%	257
Business diversification	71.95%	254
Land management	69.12%	244
Food production	60.06%	212
Animal husbandry	54.67%	193
Conservation and biodiversity	48.16%	170
Renewables	39.09%	138
Forestry	17.00%	60

What do you think are the main skills future farmers will need to succeed



Longer survey responses



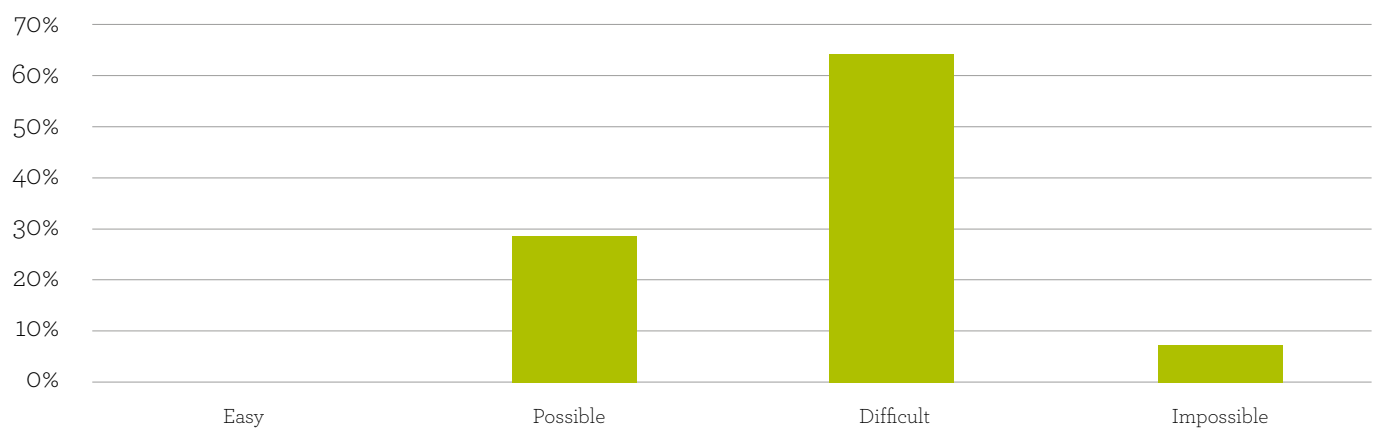
Sustainable Land Use

In response to the question: Looking to the future, how easy do you think it is likely to be for new entrants to move into farming or existing next generation to progress? Respondents indicated that they felt it would be either difficult or impossible for people to achieve

this. This broadly consistent with the 2020 survey where 63% of respondents felt it would be more difficult over the next 5 years for new entrants to join the farming industry.

Answer	%	Number
Easy	0.00%	0
Possible	28.61%	101
Difficult	64.59%	228
Impossible	6.80%	24

What do you think are the main skills future farmers will need to succeed



Longer survey responses



Vox Pops – we have set out below a balanced selection of wider narrative comments provided about this issue:

1. Increasing challenges with politicians, the general public and celebrities not understanding the importance of farming and its values. The public just want food at the cheapest price and have no care for sustainable etc farming until it affects them/it is too late. More policies and regulations in place with less help.

2. I still think farming is viewed as a poor career choice in the education system, with rural colleges closing this will only get worse. Farming is still a “closed” industry where its hard to get a good foothold without previous experience/background.

3. Subsidisation is a barrier to productivity and promotes stagnation of an industry. Look at the New Zealand model, with the removal of subsidies (overnight) productivity vastly increased. My biggest area of concern is the way that rampant housebuilding is negatively effecting the cost or (to buy or rent) land in most areas of the country (particularly where I am too). Access to land is a problem for those that see economies of scale as a way to progress.

4. It is a very skilled industry where the younger generation do not want to work when there are easier jobs available. The future of agriculture does not look attractive to new entrants when there are a lot of negative changes coming in the future.

5. There is already a lack of opportunity for new entrants. There is a huge decline in County Farms and limited opportunities for new entrants to be granted tenancies and secure funding to set up a viable agricultural business. I cannot see this improving without major reforms and change in thinking.

6. When my grandad started farming on his own at the same age I am now he made a living of 12 cows 40 sheep 10 pigs 1000 hens to day you need 300 cows, 1000 sheep, 2000 pigs and 32000 laying hens start up cost are considerably more

7. The movement away from direct payments is going to create opportunities for new entrants/ young farmers as existing businesses which are unable to adapt and move forward will be unable to survive. However conflicting ideas for land use have potential to add significant barriers to future farming businesses, particularly the idea of net zero and carbon credits, as this is attracting large corporate companies to buy large areas of farm land to be planted into forestry in order to claim they are carbon neutral, whilst not changing any of their existing practices.

8. Small farms are failing and being converted into housing. Rather than young people having the chance to take them over. There are no new opportunities to take on new farms that aren't passed through generations.

Longer survey responses



Food security

In response to the question: How important – on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 is most important and 5 is the least important) - do you think food security is likely to be in the future? By food security we mean the ability of the UK to produce the food its population needs to consume, respondents came out in a small majority to

identify its importance providing a mean score of 2.66 out of 5. This result was given a stronger emphasis in the results for the final survey question on priorities for future policy design where it was given the greatest importance.

Vox Pops – we have set out below a balanced selection of wider narrative comments provided about this issue:

1. More important now more than ever for the UK to be able to survive by itself without reliance on any other countries, with the pandemic and Brexit, this is shown to be massively important. This would mean we would have more control over food prices and food growing practices and chemicals. With a growing population, we need to be able to provide for more of the population using our own resources.

2. The Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated the importance of shopping local when supermarkets were out of stock. This has to some extent encouraged consumers to support local businesses and most have continued to do so.

3. Extreme climate events are already affecting food production in other parts of the world, and countries are going to look after themselves before exporting to the UK which is a vulnerable position for the UK to be in. Once land is lost to other ventures like renewables/housing/forestry, its hard to get back to further improve food security.

4. We need to buy local. There is a direct correlation between higher food miles and higher pollution rates. We need to do more to reduce the amount of carbon and methane we produce. Also we will can guarantee what is being put on our food, hopefully no chemicals!

5. To be environmentally friendly we must produce our own food.

6. We will have to depend on other countries at some point. Whilst it is very important to feed our own country, with the ever growing population, we may not be able to keep up with it forever.

7. I believe the government is going to be pushing us towards using the countryside as a playground and for carbon recapture and driving out farming to other countries. Looking at the bill to bring common land into government ownership and recent talk of government making farmers pay for carbon recapture.

8. The pandemic has shown a willingness to buy local, people need to be reliant on their local producers without a virus forcing them to.



Longer survey responses



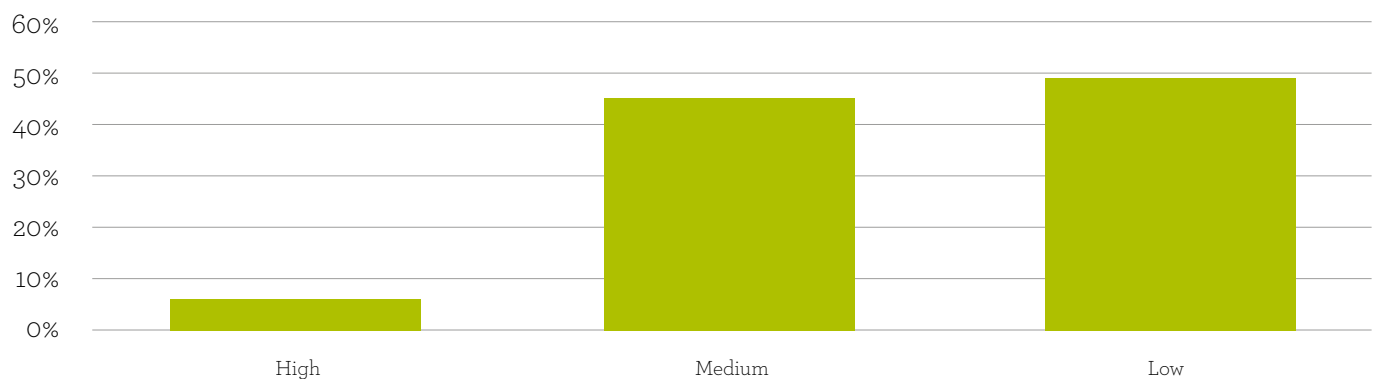
Public Attitudes

In response to the question: “What level of regard do you think the general public has for farmers and wider agricultural production in the UK?” almost 50% of respondents felt that this was low. This appears to be part of a growing trend associated with the

sector being characterised as responsible for negative climate impacts and a growing series of negative views associated with livestock rearing and meat consumption.

Answer	%	Number
High	5.38%	19
Medium	45.04%	159
Low	49.58%	175
	Answered	353

What level of regard do you think the general public has for farmers and wider agricultural production in the UK?



Longer survey responses



Vox Pops – we have set out below a balanced selection of wider narrative comments provided about this issue:

1. A lot of people are becoming more aware of the importance of farming, however the majority of people have never experienced a farming life, or even been in a field. The general consumer merely wants the cheapest product without looking or caring about how it got to the shelf. It is impossible to survive in that time of climate. With the increasing awareness of Veganism, it will be hard for farmers to show the positive side.

2. Farmers seem to get a lot of blame for pollution, which seems unfair. People also seem to complain about tractors or livestock on the road. There often seem to be people complaining about livestock health and hygiene too but much appears to be down to misinformation and pictures from other more intensive systems.

3. I think there still isn't enough education around farming and its importance to the population - they should be valued in a similar way to the NHS - but in my experience some farmers/agricultural institutions can be too traditional and sometimes difficult to deal with - so there is work to be done.

4. The general public are not always aware of food production and have a low regard for rural communities who are the main producers of food - everyone in the country has a job to do and rural communities are at the bottom of this, in relation to their abilities (to feed the nation from the bottom up) and for people perception of their abilities.

5. I think British produce is seen as positive and high quality however pressure groups (such as vegans) in the media create a misinformed impression on agriculture.

6. I think the public can see what farmers are doing for wildlife, renewables etc, but climate breakdown denial, polluting rivers does farmers no favours. The meat sector needs to be very careful how it responds to the latest IPCC report with regard to methane.

7. Generally farming only gets bad press in the media with the CLA and NFU not doing enough for us. Clarkson's Farm has had more influence on the public in one series than 10 years of the NFU and CLA combined.

8. Nobody thanks or respects farmers because they don't understand how it all works and they solely base their opinions and knowledge on social media.

Longer survey responses



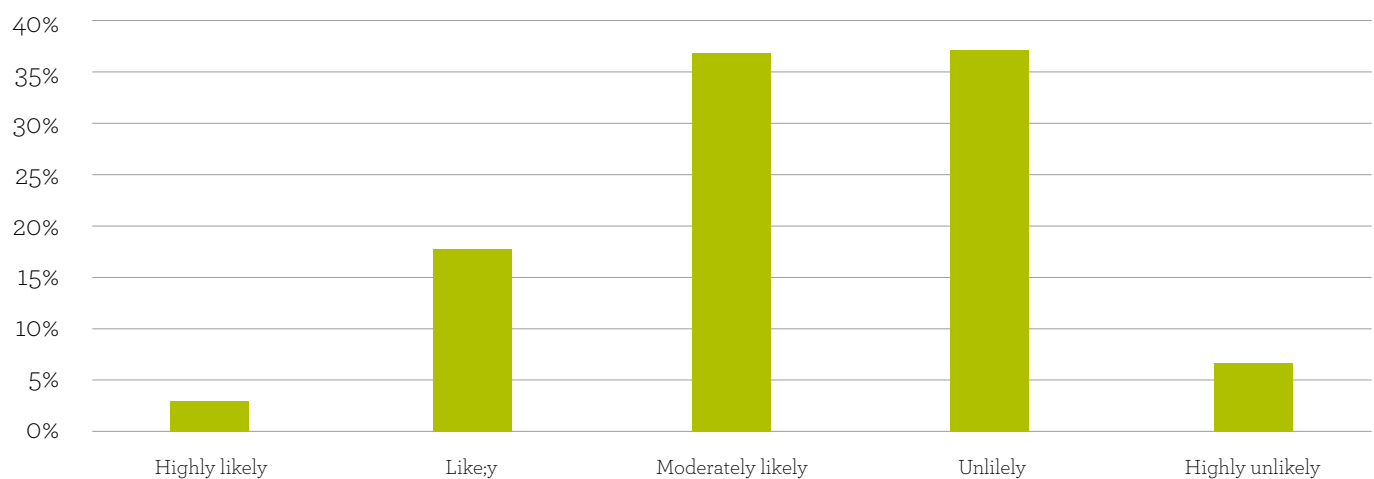
Labour supply

43% of respondents to the survey felt it was unlikely or highly unlikely that agriculture will be able to have the labour it needs. This is very consistent with the wider

reporting from across the sector about the challenges, post Brexit of recruiting labour within the land management sector.

Answer	%	Number
Highly likely	2.28%	8
Likely	17.66%	62
Moderately likely	37.04%	130
Unlikely	36.75%	129
Highly unlikely	6.27%	22

Going forward, how likely do you think agriculture will have the labour it needs?



Longer survey responses



Vox Pops – we have set out below a balanced selection of wider narrative comments provided about this issue:

1. Agri-robotics is advancing rapidly and may decrease the need to import large quantities of seasonal foreign labour

2. Despite the challenges, there are more young people who want to start a career in agriculture and there are many jobs available, from machinery salesmen and mechanics to herdsman etc, etc

3. Labour is available outside of the UK, just needs a good system!

4. People can earn more money doing less hours in other industries and other sectors of agriculture so fewer young people want to do farm labouring jobs. In order to retain staff farms must allow people to do higher skilled jobs and then in turn pay them more which increases production costs in some cases. The reduction in European labourers post Brexit has further increased the demand for labourers for agriculture and other sectors.

5. As long as there is an incentive for people to work within agriculture then we should be okay. Get rid of the farming subsidy and increase food prices by 30%.

6. Personally I feel like farming is a dying trade, its hard work, its not glamorous, it doesn't pay well and it requires people to work every day. I think because of this not many people look to go into it as vocation. Land purchase is expensive which I feel further puts people off, as such I feel its a closed industry and seems like its only really accessible to those that a "born" into it.

7. As there are not many young people coming into the dairy side of farming as a lot of them just want to drive tractors. I can see the dairy industry having a big hit as it is already hard to find staff.

8. It will be tighter with stricter border control, but with technology advancements and time to work out how to make it possible I believe that seasonal workers will still be available

Longer survey responses



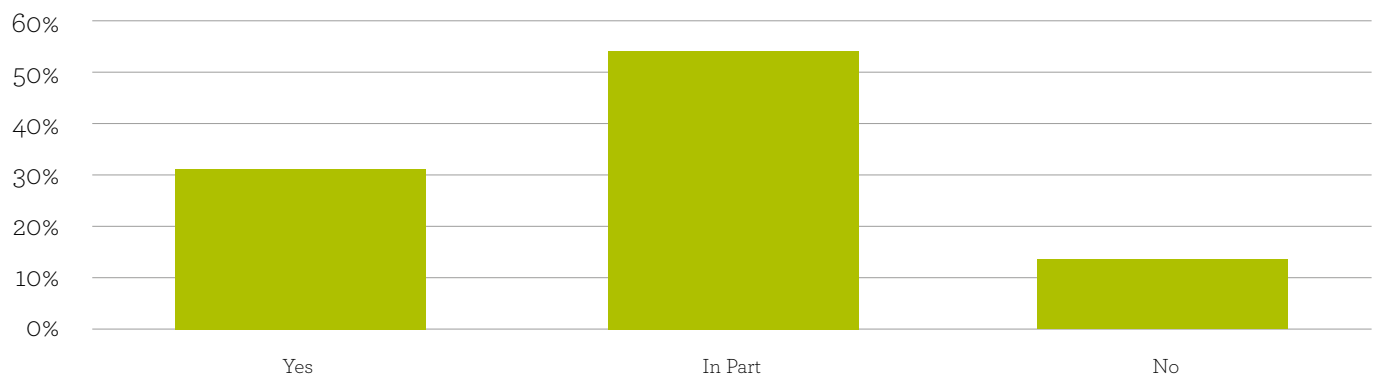
Training and Development

In response to the question: “Do you think there are relevant training and development opportunities across England for people wanting to get into farming or land management?” respondents were somewhat equivocal with only 32% answering straightforwardly “Yes”. If we take the view from 68% of respondents to

the 2020 survey that over the next 5 years people will need to undertake further skills training in the industry this response highlights the need for a renewed emphasis on supporting the skills development of those based in, or seeking to enter the industry.

Answer	%	Number
Yes	32.10%	113
In Part	54.26%	191
No	13.64%	48
	Answered	352

Do you think there are relevant training and development opportunities across England for people wanting to get into farming or land management?



Longer survey responses



Vox Pops – we have set out below a balanced selection of wider narrative comments provided about this issue:

1. Farming and agriculture needs to be taught in schools so that there is at least some awareness. Health and safety is expected in farms, but is not taught and farmers are given little support to develop these skills especially with added pressures.

2. There is, with colleges and degrees etc, but they are and 'all or nothing approach' so more training for people who are new/unsure would be better.

3. It is so beneficial to have projects like LEAF to aid agricultural education, but the uptake on this is still not large enough. An agriculture GCSE or more education in schools would be beneficial to give opportunities and information to young people in schools that are largely an untapped prospect for the future of agriculture.

4. There are many courses ran throughout the UK by agricultural colleges and universities also supermarkets run courses I my self have just finished the Tesco future farmer courses and I would highly recommend it to everyone.

5. I believe the training opportunities exist, although there is no clear pathway in farming and it remains a notoriously difficult sector to enter from the outside. For example, it may be possible to receive training, but to put that training into practice is incredibly difficult when there is limited and insecure access to land and high start up costs.

6. Because of a lack of government funding for training opportunities and then a lack of jobs going forward.

7. There are a lot of colleges but it is the unskilled workers that are needed.

8. I feel like there are great opportunities at college and university level but after that I believe the opportunity for continued development is minimal.

Longer survey responses



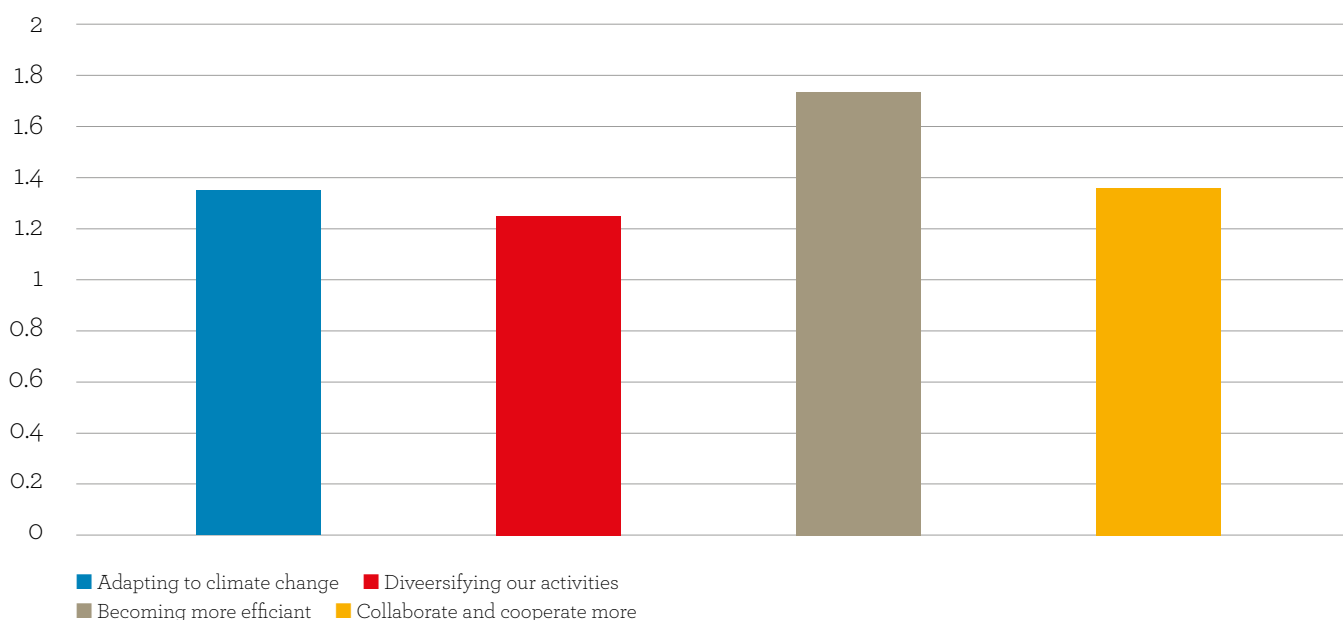
Challenges and Opportunities

In response to the question: “Which of the following should we do to use land most effectively to make the best of the new challenges and opportunities we are facing in farming?” participants identified becoming more efficient as the first priority. Collaboration was the second most important with relatively little overall difference across all four options but with adapting to climate change and diversification coming third and

fourth respectively. The responses to this question are broadly consistent with the responses to the 2020 survey where in response to the question: What are the skills you think people will need to work in farming in the next 5 years? The highest rated answers were a knowledge of food production and customer demand, financial management and practical and business skills.

Issue	1		2		3		Total	Weighted average
Adapting to climate change	45.30%	159	43.87%	154	10.83%	38	351	1.66
Diversifying our activities	37.36%	130	51.15%	178	11.49%	40	348	1.74
Becoming more efficient	77.05%	272	18.13%	64	4.82%	17	353	1.28
Collaborate and cooperate more	45.09%	156	46.53%	161	8.38%	29	346	1.63
							Answered	353

The chart below inverts the weighted results to give an intuitive representation of the most important issues arising from the response to this question, with the highest bars representing the greatest significance of the responses received.



Longer survey responses



Vox Pops – we have set out below a balanced selection of wider narrative comments provided about this issue:

1. Regenerative soil - doing something now before it is too late.

2. Reduce inputs and farm more efficiently and diversify.

3. Maximise efficiency in terms of yield/ cropping/ improving soil health/ co2 emissions/ carbon sequestration/ mixed farming etc.

4. Collaboration between farmers alongside government bodies.

5. Be mindful of grants, advice and other opportunities given to farmers and attend events where possible on these topics. Engaging with groups like the NFU and NFYFC AGRI are excellent resources and forms of support for farmers which should be made the most of.

6. Stop planting trees on quality land that already sequesters carbon. Make people realise you cant live being a vegan as there is no manure to fertilize crops.

7. Remove the right to roam. Train dog walkers to control their dogs. Educate from a young age where food comes from and how it is produced. Stop retailers from dictating buying prices. Stop paying for set aside or unused land schemes.

8. Farmers often stick to what they know and continue each year. If we can broaden their spectrums then you could see a huge increase in land efficiency.



Longer survey responses



Brexit/Covid

In response to the question: “What do you think the long term impacts of Brexit and COVID-19 are on the future of land use in the context of farming?” there were a close range of answers and none of the options was very distinctively able to be singled out as the most

significant. In line with a recognition of the negative image issues facing the industry putting a greater emphasis on the environmental management and animal welfare track record of farmers was identified as the most important issue.

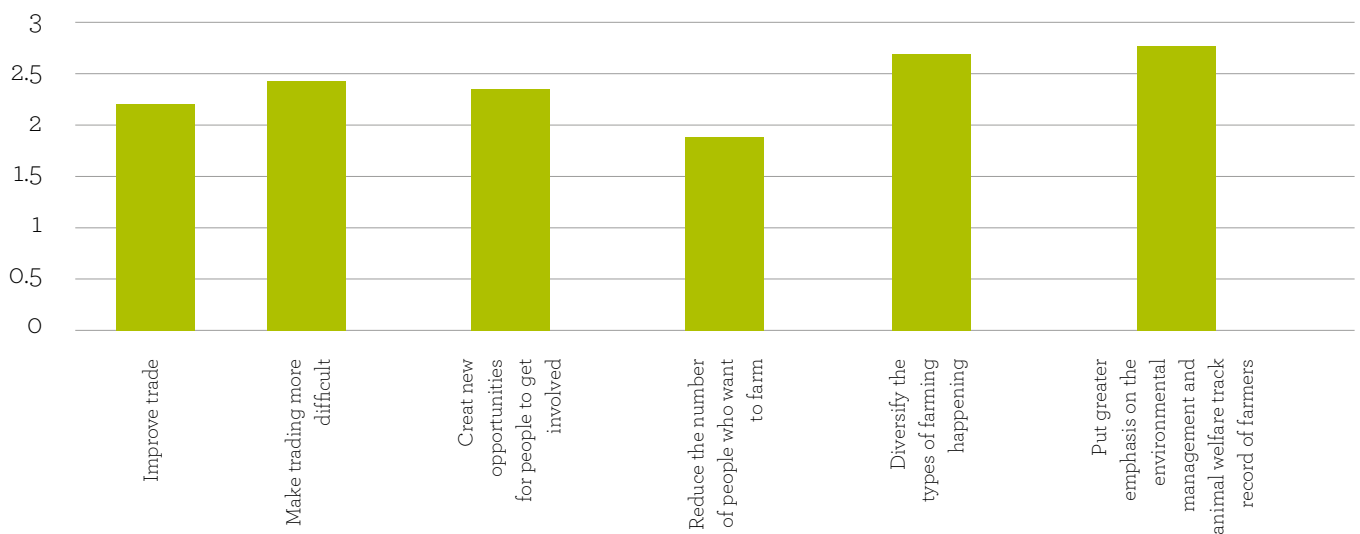
Issue	1		2		3		4		5		Total	Weighted average
Improve trade	14.90%	52	24.36%	85	37.25%	130	14.90%	52	8.60%	30	349	2.78
Make trading more difficult	22.48%	78	24.21%	84	32.85%	114	14.41%	50	6.05%	21	347	2.57
Create new opportunities for people to get involved	18.05%	63	27.79%	97	33.52%	117	14.04%	49	6.59%	23	349	2.63
Reduce the number of people who want to farm	12.97%	45	20.17%	70	26.80%	93	23.34%	81	16.71%	58	347	3.11
Diversify the types of farming happening	23.21%	81	36.68%	128	28.08%	98	8.31%	29	3.72%	13	349	2.33
Put greater emphasis on the environmental management and animal welfare track record of farmers	29.71%	104	32.29%	113	23.71%	83	10.29%	36	4.00%	14	350	2.27

Longer survey responses



The chart below inverts the weighted results to give an intuitive representation of the most important issues arising from the response to this question, with the highest bars representing the greatest significance of the responses received. Interestingly a minority of respondents felt that the impact would be to reduce the number of people who want to farm. This reflects the duality of on the one hand the negative view of the impact of farming on climate change and

around livestock production from some sectors of the community alongside the enduring image of rural places and land based activities as in many areas of popular sentiment. The view also needs to be balanced with the slim majority of respondents who felt that the changes would provide opportunities for people to get involved in land management but weighed against the significant pessimism about the scope for new people to enter farming specifically as a profession.



Longer survey responses



Vox Pops – we have set out below a balanced selection of wider narrative comments provided about this issue:

1. Actually livestock prices have held up much better than anticipated particularly sheep trade although input costs are up lately with fert and fuel getting particularly dear.

2. Covid has made people appreciate where their food comes from. An opportunity for British Farmers to promote and better connect with their customers.

3. The government need to do more, they need to prioritise farmers and British produce. Supermarkets should pay fair prices and be made to only import if it isn't available here and then it should be slightly more expensive.

4. Covid showed many people that they could shop local and it was the better way forward.

5. Farmers are going to have to produce food cheaper to compete with new imports.

6. Brexit has been a huge problem for farming as a whole, with very little upside and COVID has further added to the difficulties by distracting people from the issues as much as delaying supply of goods and materials.

7. Working conditions/pay in the sector need to improve. There should be more jobs in food - the price of food is too cheap, but low income families are forced to eat poorly. Something is inherently wrong. Society should not need food banks.

8. Can't say Brexit impact until trade deals are finalised. Covid has shown how lonely and isolated a lot of farmers are, I know many that saw no one or left the farm for the whole of lockdown and said this was not unusual. Also showed how many have poor internet access to keep in touch.

Longer survey responses



Future Policy Priorities

In response to the question: “If you were designing policy for the future of farming how important is each of these to you on a scale of 1-5 where 1 is the most important option and 5 is the least important option?” the most important issues identified were food security, balancing environmental and food production costs and the opportunity for respondents to both live

and work in the countryside. All three issues have a significant read across to responses in the 2020 survey where respondents were asked: If you would like to work in farming or land management in the next 5 years, what are the main challenges that you will face? The responses to this question are set out below the summary of the results for the 2021 survey.

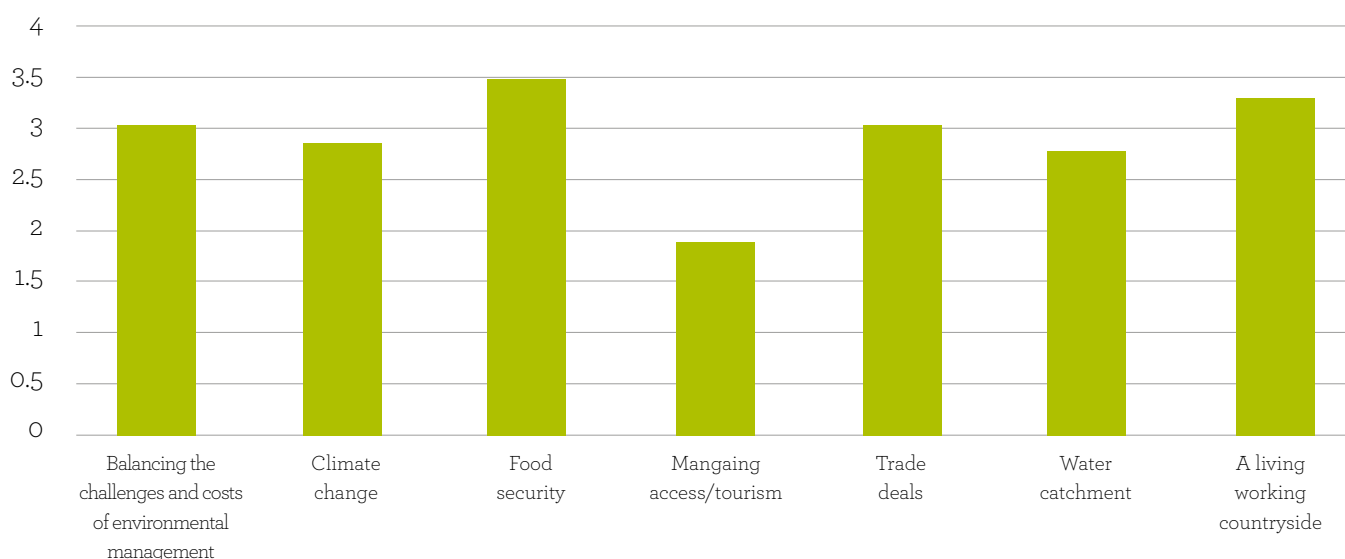
Issue	1		2		3		4		5		Total	Weighted average
Balancing the challenges and costs of environmental management	35.80%	126	41.19%	145	16.76%	59	2.84%	10	3.41%	12	352	1.97
Climate change	32.47%	113	34.48%	120	22.70%	79	4.60%	16	5.75%	20	348	2.17
Food security	67.61%	238	20.74%	73	6.53%	23	2.27%	8	2.84%	10	352	1.52
Managing access/ tourism	7.49%	26	23.63%	82	33.14%	115	20.17%	70	15.56%	54	347	3.13
Trade deals	39.49%	139	35.51%	125	16.48%	58	5.97%	21	2.56%	9	352	1.97
Water catchment	23.85%	83	43.39%	151	25.00%	87	5.75%	20	2.01%	7	348	2.19
A living working countryside	55.30%	193	26.93%	94	11.17%	39	2.87%	10	3.72%	13	349	1.73

Longer survey responses



The chart below inverts the weighted results to give an intuitive representation of the most important issues arising from the response to this question, with the highest bars representing the greatest significance of the responses received. Interestingly a minority of respondents felt that the impact would be to reduce the number of people who want to farm. This reflects the duality of on the one hand the negative view

of the impact of farming on climate change and around livestock production from some sectors of the community alongside the enduring image of rural places and land based activities as in many areas of popular sentiment. The view needs also to be balance with the slim majority of respondents who felt that the changes would provide



2020 survey results on the future of land management:

If you would like to work in farming or land management in the next 5 years, what are the main challenges that you will face? Please rank your answers below: where 1 is the most important challenge and 3 is of lesser importance.		Weighted Average
Starting a farm business		1.73
Developing and maintaining a profitable farm business		1.42
Understanding or meeting regulatory requirements from Government and other bodies		1.63
Technologies		1.87
Animal or crop health		1.53
Protecting the environment (e.g. water, soil, air, landscape)		1.6
Climate change mitigation		1.78
Attracting and retaining staff or contractors		2.03
Access to finance		1.45
Access to an affordable home		1.44
Answered		256
Skipped		272

Longer survey responses



Vox Pops – we have set out below a balanced selection of wider narrative comments provided about this issue:

1. Activities such as young farmers is such a great way to introduce new entrants

2. The future is exciting!

3. Current inflation and ever rising costs make future budgeting very uncertain. Makes investing in agriculture and farming businesses more difficult and unless produce prices for beef/ grain remain as high as they are currently then farming may become financially unviable.

4. Most farmers just want to farm, and do it well, because that's what they enjoy and are good at. They don't want to run tourist attractions etc but that's the way they are forced to secure a diversified income. With the inevitable climate change, a lot more emphasis should be placed on securing home grown produce with low food miles and enabling farmers to profit from what they're good at. Once land is lost to other enterprises, it is seldom gained back and we'll eventually rely too heavily on imports. We're in such good position to grow a large variety of the food we eat here, it'd be sad to see that lost.

5. Although many people want to and think it is best to go organic because "chemicals are bad for you" this will never grow enough food for everyone to eat especially considering the population is continuously growing.

6. Supermarkets have too much power. People will leave the industry and just plant trees or solar farms. They will keep a few animals and crops for themselves. Perhaps going back 150 years.

7. Until we 'solve' the fact that land and food crops are mainly commodities and are subject to market forces, we will not be able to have truly sustainable food systems. The food system is based on profit making, this has to change.

8. I would like to highlight the importance of adapting to and mitigating against the effects of climate change-like increasing carbon capture, reducing the methane emissions from ruminants and shifting our focus on renewable energy rather than energy produced using finite materials.

Conclusions



The results from this survey show strong linkages on key issues to the 2020 survey which focused on the personal experiences of young people from farming backgrounds living in rural England. It has provided a clear set of perspectives about the concerns, enthusiasms and thoughts of a very impressive cohort of young people. As a consequence of the nature of farming, which for many of our respondents is part of a pattern of lived experience from a very young age (in many farming families, farming and wider lifestyles are indivisible), the level of insight from a group with an average of 23 is astounding. Their perspective is perhaps best encompassed in one comment by the individual who described the future as – “Exciting but frightening.”

This cohort of farmers facing a national pandemic for the first time in 100 years and a new territorial basis for planning the first time in 50 years are facing more change, alongside the global shock of rising inflation than any group in living memory. Their views and priorities, looking through the lens of this survey and the one which preceded it are clear and involve:

- 1.** A commitment to food production, within progressive environmental standards
- 2.** A concern for food security
- 3.** An acknowledgement of huge barriers to access to farming for new entrants.



Conclusions



More widely and in more detail:

The most significant motivation for respondents thinking about land use was **food production (40%)**.

39% of respondents were uncertain about the future in terms of **the 7-year transition away from EU-based system to England schemes**.

A slim majority (53%) of respondents felt they **understood the proposed changes in land use**. Approaching 60% of respondents were **unsure of how the policy changes would affect them**.

The three most significant factors which should influence future land use were identified as **food production, biodiversity and conservation, and net zero/carbon capture**.

In terms of **sustainable land use** respondents identified improved farm productivity and investment through grants as top priorities.

In relation to skills, **innovation, grants, efficiency and diversification were the most popular responses** identified.

Over 70% of respondents thought it would be **difficult or impossible for new entrants** to enter the farming industry.

Almost 50% of respondents felt that the public had a **low regard for farmers and agricultural production**.

43% of respondents identified **ongoing labour supply challenges**.

Only a third (32%) of respondents felt that there are **relevant training and development opportunities across England for people wanting to get into farming or land management**

The biggest challenges and opportunities facing farming were identified as respectively: **increasing efficiency, collaborating, diversification and adapting to climate change**.

Respondents felt that the greatest impact of Brexit and Covid was to put greater emphasis **on the environmental management and animal welfare track record of farmers**.

The greatest future policy priorities identified for land management were: **food security, balancing environmental and food production costs and the opportunity for respondents to both live and work in the countryside**



**Fun, Learning
and Achievement**



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

