Fun, Learning and Achievement

LANTRA

RoseRegeneration

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

Route to Success Survey

National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs

Introduction

This is the third community-wide survey of the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (NFYFC) over the last three years.

The 2020 survey focused on the personal experiences of young people from farming backgrounds living in rural England, and the impact of the pandemic. The 2021 survey was themed around young people's views in relation to future land use. This latest survey, which was conducted with support from Defra and Lantra, focuses on the skills and training young people say they need to plan for a career in the land-based industries and their understanding of emerging policies.

All three surveys show a continuity of findings in terms of:

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

This report provides NFYFC's YFC AGRI Steering Group, Defra and Lantra with an insight into the skills and support young people say they require for a future in the industry.

Year on year, our surveys have indicated that new entrants are not getting the support they need to break into the industry. Listening to the voices of young farmers will ensure British farming does not miss out on their enthusiasm and talent.

Charlotte Garbutt, YFC AGRI Chair 2022-23

Overview

The sample for this survey is 511, which is 4% of all eligible members. This represents 95% certainty within a plus or minus 4.2% range (the confidence interval) in relation to the survey where all respondents completed any given question.

Details of the confidence interval for each response is set out in the tables below.

Read Across to Previous Surveys

2022 Survey (511)	2021 Survey (486)	2020 Survey (528)
Environment	Land Use	Farming
Skills	Skills	Skills
New Entrants to Farming	New Entrants to Farming	Housing
Labour	Labour	Services
Change	Change	The Future
Post EU	Brexit/Covid	Covid-19

Key Characteristics

A table summarising the key characteristics of the survey, showing a high level comparison to the 2020 and 2021 surveys is set out below:

2022 Survey	2021 Survey	2020 Survey
511 Responses	486 responses	528 responses
Average age: 22 years	Average age: 23 years	Average age: 24 years
81% of the sample are Young Farmer Club Members	70% of the sample are Young Farmer Club Members	78% of the sample are Young Farmer Club members
Respondents are from a wide geography including including 12% from Wales	Respondents are from a wide geography, including 8% from Wales	Respondents are from a wide geography, including 10% from Wales
45% work or live in a farming household	68% work or live in a farming household	61% work in farming
31% are students	16% are students	20% are students

Key findings

- **Career Profile** - In terms of current career profile there were three distinctively high areas of response: Interested in a land-based career; Next generation farmer working within a family business; Next generation farmer wanting to start your own enterprise (with farming/business experience)
- **Knowledge of emerging schemes** – only 10% of respondents felt they had a good understanding of emerging Defra land management schemes
- **Key Influences** – Soil health, water management and food production (all features of farm productivity) were identified as the most important areas to influence agriculture and land management, they scored much higher than the other options in this question.
- **Support Needs** – Grants were identified as the most important aspect of support required, business support, encouragement of new entrants and training were all also identified as important.
- **Understanding** – two thirds of respondents do not understand what the current agri-environment policy changes and the work that is underway mean for them. Written comment showed developing rather than established levels of knowledge about current agri-environment policy.
- **Developmental Needs** – Soil health and business management are the two areas, followed by financial management where respondents feel the greatest need for development. The most commonly rated areas where skills gaps are identified are: environmental, regulation, business management, land management, health and safety, finance and soil health.
- **Enterprise Interest** – Livestock was distinctively the highest area of enterprise interest (91%) followed by Arable (58%), diversification was low on the list at 21%
- **Training themes** – Animal health and welfare, soil testing and then health and safety were the three most important areas of training interest.
- **Green Finance Services** – there are universally low levels of awareness about green finance services
- **New Entrants** - 72% of respondents think it will be difficult or impossible for new entrants to move into farming
- **Current Barriers** – finance and land opportunities were identified as the main barriers facing new entrants with the time taken to establish a farm business cited as also important.
- **The three most important priorities for future policy** – were referenced as business viability, animal welfare and land availability followed closely by health and safety

Detailed results

Sample Characteristics

The mean age of respondents was 22 years and the median was 20. 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. 81% were members of a young farmers club and almost a third (31%) were students. This is a significantly higher proportion than the previous two surveys. Less than half (45%) lived or worked on a farm. This is a significant lower proportion that the previous surveys. Both the high incidence of students and the lower incidence of farm based respondents reflects our deeper focus that the previous two surveys on environmental as opposed to wider farming agenda. Where respondents specified their location they came from a widely distributed range of settings broadly comparable with the previous two surveys, with a significant increase in representation from Wales, the West Midlands and South West on the basis set out in the table below:

Location	2022	2021	2020
Yorkshire & Humber	**27**	**28**	**31**
Yorkshire	27	28	31
West Midlands	**84**	**61**	**79**
Herefordshire	27	13	17
Warwickshire	16	10	5
Worcestershire	6	8	11
Shropshire	26	14	29
Staffordshire	9	16	17
South West	**99**	**83**	**95**
Cornwall	16	19	20
Gloucestershire	14	11	10
Somerset	24	14	18
Dorset	10	9	4
Devon	26	21	27
Wiltshire	9	9	16
South East	**36**	**36**	**55**
Berkshire	0	3	3
Buckinghamshire	7	2	4
Hampshire	2	7	14
Sussex	6	4	10
Oxfordshire	9	8	10
Kent	10	10	13
Surrey	2	2	1
East	**34**	**34**	**44**
Bedfordshire	12	4	6
Cambridgeshire	4	6	6
Essex	6	4	10
Norfolk	6	12	16
Suffolk	6	6	6
East Midlands	**49**	**60**	**69**
Derbyshire	10	14	11
Rutland	4	2	1
Northamptonshire	1	5	15
Lincolnshire	18	15	20
Leicestershire	12	14	9
Notthinghamshire	4	10	13
North East	**17**	**19**	**34**
Durham	3	5	9
Northumberland	14	14	25
North West	**27**	**33**	**31**
Cheshire	6	1	1
Cumbria	12	18	15
Lancashire	9	14	15
Wales	**60**	**18**	**47**
Wales Non-Specific	25	6	22
Gwent	13	1	4
Ceredigion	0	3	5
Camarthernshire	3	2	2
Clwyd	2	0	4
Brecknock	4	3	4
Glamorgan	2	3	6
Monmouthshire	5	0	0
Powys	**6**	**0**	**0**
England	**33**	**25**	**22**
UK	**12**	**11**	**9**

2021 survey comparisons

More widely and in more detail in terms of comparisons with 2021:

- **Land use:** In the 2021 survey the most significant motivation for respondents thinking about land use was food production (40%). In the 2022 survey the most significant motivation for respondents thinking about agri-environment policy was an intertest in working in agriculture and land management (59%)
- **Transition:** In the 2021 survey 39% of respondents were uncertain about the future in terms of the 7-year transition away from EU-based system to England schemes. In 2022 58% of respondents felt uncertain or anxious about the transition away from EU-based to England schemes.
- **Understanding Change:** In 2021 a slim majority (53%) of respondents felt they understood the proposed changes in land use. In 2022 79% had some understanding of this but only 10% felt they had a good understanding. In 2021 approaching 60% of respondents were unsure of how the policy changes would affect them. In 2022 39% were unsure.
- **Future Policy Development:** In 2021 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 2022 respondents identified them as: food production, soil health and water management.
- **Skills:** In 2021 in relation to skills Innovation, grants, efficiency and diversification were the most popular responses identified. In 2022 the most significant gaps in training provision were identified as: environment, regulation and business management.
- **New Entrants:** In 2021 over 70% of respondents thought it would be difficult or impossible for new entrants to enter the farming industry. In 2022 72% of respondents had this view.

More widely analysing the narratives offered by survey respondents we discern more pessimism, more frustration with regulation and sustained concern about the prospects for new entrants to the profession. This needs to be filtered through the lens of the changes at an international level linked to economic downturn of the last 12 months.

Detailed responses

Personal Motivation - The two highest scores for thinking agri-environment policy were: I am interested in working in agriculture and land management and I am interested in farmland being managed to produce more food there was a distinctive gap between these two responses and the other options:

Which of the following categories best describes your personal motivation for thinking about agri-environment policy? Please rank on a scale of 1-3 where 1 is the most important influence and 3 is the least important influence.

	1		2		3		Total
I am interested in farmland being managed in environmentally sustainable ways	43.59%	221	45.36%	230	11.05%	56	507
I am interested in farmland being managed to produce more food	58.27%	296	25.20%	128	16.54%	84	508
I am interested in environmental issues (e.g. climate change, biodiversity)	34.19%	173	49.41%	250	16.40%	83	506
I am interested in working in agriculture and land management	59.13%	298	17.86%	90	23.02%	116	504
I need to determine what skills or training I will need for my business or future career	44.31%	222	38.72%	194	16.97%	85	501
						Answered	**508**

Career Profile - In terms of current career profile there were three distinctively high areas of response: Interested in a land-based career;

Next generation farmer working within a family business; Next generation farmer wanting to start your own enterprise (with farming/business experience)

Please indicate your current career profile:

	Responses	
Interested in a land-based career	34.00%	171
Interested in an ecological career	4.77%	24
Prospective ‘land-based’ new entrant wanting to start your own business	7.95%	40
Next generation farmer working within a family business	28.43%	143
Next generation farmer wanting to start your own enterprise (with farming/business experience)	24.85%	125
	Answered	**503**

Detailed responses

● **Transition –** There is significant uncertainty and a clear need for more information relating to the transition from EU-based schemes

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

	Responses	
Confident	11.93%	47
Uncertain	49.75%	196
Anxious	8.88%	35
I need more information about the proposed changes	29.44%	116
	Answered	**394**

● **Knowledge of emerging schemes** – only 10% of respondents felt they had a good understanding of emerging Defra land management schemes:

How well do you understand the emerging Defra schemes to reward farmers and land managers for delivering environmental outcomes, and how they will affect you?

	Responses	
I have a good understanding of the schemes and how they will affect me	10.13%	40
I have a some understanding of the schemes and how they will affect me, buy I need more information	68.86%	272
I have no understanding of the schemes or how they will affect me	21.01%	83
	Answered	**395**

Detailed responses

● **Current Impact – 75%** of respondents were either not sure or felt the new environment schemes were not affecting them at all, whilst this is a high percentage it is perhaps not to be unexpected at this stage of a transition to a new system. More people felt they were being positively than negatively affected.

How are these environmental schemes currently affecting you?

	Responses	
Positively	14.14%	56
Negatively	10.86%	43
Not at all	35.61%	141
Not sure	39.39%	156
	Answered	**396**

● **Key Influences – Soil health, water management and food production (all features of farm productivity)** were identified as the most important areas to influence agriculture and land management, they scored much higher than the other options in this question.

What do you think are the most important things that should influence agriculture and land management? Please rank on a scale of 1-3 where 1 is the most important influence and 3 is the least important influence.

	1		2		3		Total
Agroforestry and tree planting	20.30%	80	56.60%	223	23.10%	91	394
Biodiversity and conservation	34.35%	135	53.94%	212	11.70%	46	393
Soil health	70.96%	281	18.43%	73	10.61%	42	396
Water management	61.64%	241	30.69%	120	7.67%	30	391
Food production	71.14%	281	17.97%	71	10.89%	43	395
Landscape restoration projects	20.72%	81	54.99%	215	24.30%	95	391
Net zero / carbon capture	25.06%	98	60.10%	235	14.83%	58	391
Diversification	35.04%	137	51.92%	203	13.04%	51	391
Development of land	27.81%	109	40.56%	159	31.63%	124	392
						Answered	**508**

Confidence Interval 4.9 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 4.9% in relation to 95% certainty

Support needs

Support Needs – Grants were identified as the most important aspect of support required, business support, encouragement of new entrants and training were all also identified as important.

What support do farmers and land managers need to deliver more environmental outcomes? Please rank on a scale of 1-3 where 1 is the most important management option and 3 is the least important option.

	1		2		3		Total	Weighted Average (inverse)
Make farmers more aware of business support tools	54.45%	214	37.40%	147	8.14%	32	393	1.46
More money available through Government funded schemes and grants	67.94%	267	19.85%	78	12.21%	48	393	1.56
Access to green finance tailored to farmers and land managers	40.71%	160	48.09%	189	11.20%	44	393	1.3
Training to develop new skills	54.20%	213	34.10%	134	11.70%	46	393	1.42
Encourage entrants into the industry with new ideas and business models	56.12%	220	32.14%	126	11.73%	46	392	1.44
Introduce new regulation and enforcement	20.72%	81	50.64%	198	28.64%	112	391	0.92
						Answered	**508**	

Confidence Interval 4.9 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 4.9% in relation to 95% certainty

Sources of information

● **Sources of information – Government and the trade press** were identified as distinctively more important than any other sources of information about agri-environment policy including industry bodies.

Where do you go to find information about agri-environment policy? Please tick all that apply.

	Responses	
Government website (e.g. Defra)	73.58%	78
Industry bodies (e.g. NFU, CLA, TFA, NFYFC)	44.34%	47
Farming charities (e.g. FCN, PCF)	22.64%	24
Professional development or assurance schemes	9.43%	10
Universities and research institutes	25.47%	27
Banks and lenders	0.00%	0
Professional services (land agent, business consultant)	19.81%	21
Family members	36.79%	39
Industry press (e.g. Farmers Guardian, Farmers Weekly)	58.49%	62
General press	11.32%	12
Other farmers	40.57%	43
Confidence Interval 9 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 9% in relation to 95% certainty	**Answered**	**106**

Scale of information

● **Scale of information available – a significant majority of respondents** felt that there was not enough information and advice available on agri-environment policy. Representative comments from respondents set out below show a clear consensus that the information was hard to access, hard to interpret and needs to be presented in a range of formats to meet the needs of different categories of readers, for example different generations, categories of farm worker and levels of literacy and numeracy.

Feedback

Too much policy and disorganised layout when trying to explain it causing confusion amongst farmers

I feel as though the dos and the don't need to be more visible and more of an explanation as to the effect of farming and how treat can be made more healthy.

Sometimes information overload, so can be confusing to know what we are eligible to do and not

There's information out there but it's not put into simple words for farmers to understand, nobody wants big fancy words.

I feel as though you have to know about it to ask for deeper understanding, rather than information being given out anyway

I feel as though the younger generation needs to be more informed. But as well the older generation farmers who need to be informed on the new regulations being put in place

There is but sometimes it can be hard to find so it doesn't help incentivise people to understand it if the information is hard to find in the first place

It is difficult to make sense of. There should be easy access to simple, understandable information regarding agri environment policy, the pros/cons which it can have to the environment and business, and ways of introducing more things on farm to comply with it.

Funding

I think farmers would be willing to be more environmentally friendly if it increased their finances

Is there enough information and advice available on agri-environment policy?

	Yes	No
Yes	39.73%	116
No	59.93%	175
Additional comments:		31

Confidence Interval 5.7 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 5.7% in relation to 95% certainty

- **Understanding – two thirds of respondents do not** understand what the current agri-environment policy changes and the work that is underway mean for them. Written comment showed developing rather than established levels of knowledge current agri-environment policy.

Representative comments from respondents are set out below:

Awareness
- It is currently unclear what the changes will be and what this will mean for younger farmers
- Very confusing on how the policy is supposed to help both parties.
- They are reducing the money we get and want more back from us for it the money is going to land agents and carbon con firms

Current experience
- The proposed agreements that affect us have not been finalised and current proposals will decimate our family business and benefit no one
- Partly. We are a small farm in the midlands so will hopefully have the ability to go with most of the schemes. I think farms that are strictly hill or arable will struggle more

Do you understand what the current agri-environment policy changes and the work that is underway mean for you?

	Yes	No
Yes	32.88%	96
No	66.44%	194
Additional comments:		20
Confidence Interval 4.9 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 4.9% in relation to 95% certainty	**Answered**	**290**

Skills requirements

● **New Skills – only 10% feel** there will be no need for new skills to farm and manage land in line with the new agri-environment policy

Will you, or the business you work in, need to acquire new skills to farm and manage land in line with new agri-environment policy?

	Yes	No
Yes	50.68%	148
No	10.27%	30
Don't know	39.04%	114
Confidence Interval 4.9 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 4.9% in relation to 95% certainty	**Answered**	**292**

● **Developmental Needs – Soil health and business management** are the two areas, followed by **financial management** where respondents feel the greatest need for development

Which areas do you need development in to deliver agri-environment activities and outcomes? Please tick all that apply

	Responses	
Business management	54.72%	58
Financial management	44.34%	47
HR and people management	12.26%	13
Conservation and wildlife	40.57%	43
Soil Health	60.38%	64
Creating and managing wildlife habitats	35.85%	38
Trees planting and woodland management	34.91%	37
Water and Air quality and Pollution Regulations including Nutrient Management Plans	37.74%	40
Carbon Auditing and decarbonisation training	35.85%	38
Biosecurity	34.91%	37
Ecology	30.19%	32
Other (please specify)	2.83%	3
Confidence Interval 9 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 9% in relation to 95% certainty	**Answered**	**106**

Skills requirements

What do you consider to be significant gaps in skills or training provision? Please list:

Answered	219
Skipped	292

Confidence Interval 9.6 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 9.6% in relation to 95% certainty

We have summarised the main areas identified below. The most popular areas where skills gaps were identified are: environmental, regulation, business management, land management, health and safety, finance and soil health.

- Environment x 24
- Regulation x 19
- Business Management x14
- Land management x11
- Health and Safety x9
- Finance x8
- Soil Health x8
- Lack of information and access to training x4
- New entrants x3
- Carbon capture x2
- Diversification x2
- Heavy machinery x2
- Livestock x2
- Water managementx2
- Woodland Management x2
- Carbon auditing
- Spraying
- Succession Planning

Comments

- Not enough focus on improving the sustainability of the agricultural industry as a whole. Unless you go to college or university there isn't enough training opportunities for farmers to learn enough skills to improve the sustainability of the agricultural sector
- I need everything to be simplified to make it easier to understand and be able to put into practical use
- I believe that the guide through the YF program is more of a social other than a guide and assistance in farming such as lambing and cattle farming. Big gap in food production and more focused on arable
- Regenerative agriculture courses and literature. A lot of books on farm-wide regen practices are based in America, and it would be good to have more literature based in the UK which is then specific to our wildlife and climate.
- Short skills-based courses at higher levels for adults already working in the sector
- Qualifications cost far too much
- Local training for traditional farming families

Enterprises and training

● Finance and training enterprise Interest – **Livestock was distinctively the highest area** of enterprise interest (91%) followed by Arable (58%), **diversification was low** on the list at 21%

Which enterprises are you interested in?

	Responses	
Arable	57.55%	61
Livestock	90.57%	96
Horticulture	4.72%	5
Viticulture	0.94%	1
Fisheries	3.77%	4
Forestry	25.47%	27
Nature and conservation	17.92%	19
Diversification	20.75%	22
Other	3.77%	4
	Answered	**105**

● **Training themes – Animal health and welfare, soil testing and then health and safety** were the three most important areas of training interest

What training for farmers and land managers helps to deliver emerging policy activities and outcomes?

	Responses	
Health and safety	50.48%	53
Animal health and welfare	70.48%	74
Productivity	38.10%	40
Tree planting	20.00%	21
Woodland management	26.67%	28
Soil testing	60.00%	63
Data capture and analysis	33.33%	35
Carbon auditing and decarbonisation	31.43%	33
Creating and managing wildlife habitats	23.81%	25
Managing pests	33.33%	35
Air and water quality management	39.05%	41
Energy efficiency	35.24%	37
Confidence Interval 9.6 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 9.6% in relation to 95% certainty	**Answered**	**105**

Biggest gaps

What do you consider to be the biggest gaps – 201 responses:

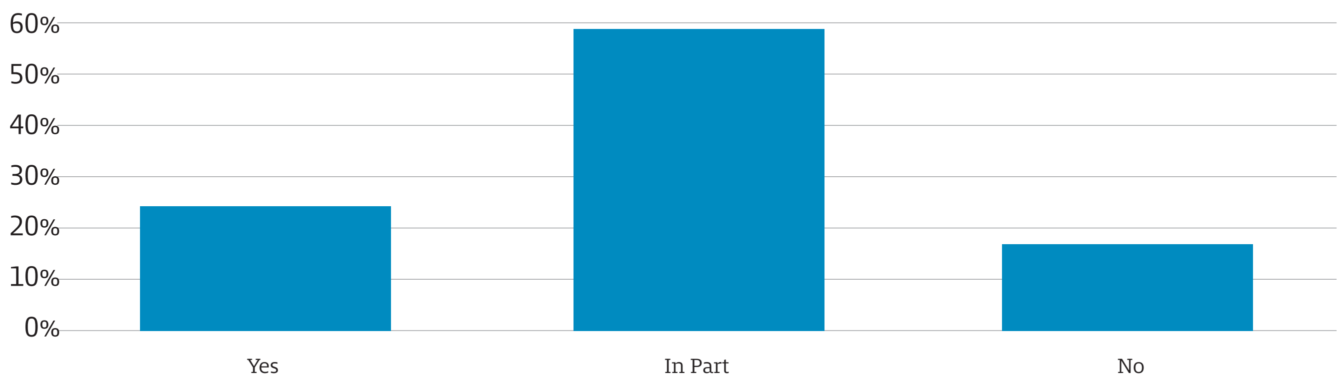
The areas identified as the biggest gaps for farmers and land managers helping to deliver policy outcomes were: regulation, health and safety, environmental management and finance

- Regulation x17
- Health and safety x13
- Environmental management x11
- Finance x 10
- Productivity x6
- New entrants x5
- Managing pests x6
- Soil healthx5
- Livestock management x5
- Energy efficiency x5
- Diversification x5
- Land managementx4
- Data analysis at a non-complex, accessible level x 4
- Communication/PR x4
- Carbon auditing x 4
- Woodland management x3
- Succession planning x2
- Family farms x2
- Change management x2
- Spraying
- Carbon management
- Carbon credits
- Animal welfare

Idiosyncratic comments:
- Available training and funding
- Awareness of mental health
- Education of farmers as to why it may benefit them
- Understanding technology and using it to its full capacity. Tech is also expensive which is a barrier for many.

- **Eco-systems Services – less than a quarter o**f respondents are confident that they understand what this concept means

Do you understand what ecosystem services mean?



Eco-system services

● **Selling Ecosystem services – a third** of respondents did not feel farmers have sufficient information about selling eco-system services

Do farmers and land managers have sufficient information about selling ecosystem services?

	Responses	
Yes	8.25%	24
In part	56.36%	164
No	35.40%	103
Confidence Interval 5.7 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 5.7% in relation to 95% certainty	**Answered**	**291**

● **Green Finance Services –** there are **universally low levels** of awareness about green finance services

How familiar are you with the following green finance services? Please rank on a scale of 1-3 where 1 is the most familiar/currently using and 3 is the least familiar:

	1		2		3		Total	Weighted Average (inverse)
Carbon Planner	13.33%	14	34.29%	36	52.38%	55	105	0.61
Green Loans	13.21%	14	42.45%	45	44.34%	47	106	0.69
Climate ESG and Sustainable Finance	9.52%	10	37.14%	39	53.33%	56	105	0.56
Green Initiatives for Business	13.46%	14	50.96%	53	35.58%	37	104	0.78
Green bonds	10.58%	11	32.69%	34	56.73%	59	104	0.54
Green-tagged loans	7.84%	8	30.39%	31	61.76%	63	102	0.46
Green investment funds	12.75%	13	35.29%	36	51.96%	53	102	0.61
Climate risk insurance	16.50%	17	37.86%	39	45.63%	47	103	0.71
Confidence Interval 9.6 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 9.6% in relation to 95% certainty							**Answered**	**508**

Green finance

Sources of advice on green finance services – Government website and industry bodies were distinctively the main two areas where respondents would go for advice

Where would you go to find out more about green finance services? Please tick all that apply

	Responses	
Banks and lenders	21.90%	23
Government website	61.90%	65
Industry bodies (e.g. NFU, CLA, TFA, NFYFC)	54.29%	57
Professional services (land agent, business consultant)	43.81%	46
Industry press (e.g. Farmers Guardian, Farmers Weekly)	38.10%	40
General press	6.67%	7
Other farmers	40.00%	42
Confidence Interval 9.6 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 9.6% in relation to 95% certainty	**Answered**	**105**

New Entrants - 72% of respondents think it will be difficult or impossible for new entrants to move into farming

Looking to the future, how easy do you think it will be for new entrants to move into farming, or for the next generation to progress?

	Responses	
Easy	1.73%	5
Possible	25.95%	75
Difficult	60.55%	175
Impossible	11.76%	34
Confidence Interval 5.7 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 5.7% in relation to 95% certainty	**Answered**	**289**

New entrants

● **Reasons for New Entrant Pessimism – challenges around finance and access to land** were referenced as the main impediments facing new entrants, **skills training and practical experience** were cited as important challenges.

Please qualify your answer by determining reasons and tick all that apply:

	Responses	
Need for more practical experience	48.45%	141
Need for more academic qualifications	18.56%	54
Need for more skills and training	46.05%	134
Access to land	77.32%	225
Access to finance	70.79%	206
Existing agricultural tenancy law	21.99%	64
Lack of business knowledge and skills	27.49%	80
Competition from existing farmers	39.52%	115
Existing farmers not retiring	37.80%	110
Infrastructure (e.g. broadband, transport)	17.87%	52
Planning system	17.53%	51
Tax system	25.77%	75
Confidence Interval 5.7 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 5.7% in relation to 95% certainty	**Answered**	**291**

● **Current Barriers – finance and land opportunities** were identified as the main barriers facing new entrants with **the time taken to establish a farm business** cited as also important.

What are the current barriers that new entrants and next generation farmers face? Please tick all that apply.

	Responses	
Lack of technical knowledge and skills	28.03%	81
Time taken to establish a farm business	58.13%	168
Finance opportunities	75.78%	219
Land opportunities	75.78%	219
Business opportunities	41.87%	121
Domestic and work balance	28.72%	83
Other (please specify)	6.92%	20
Confidence Interval 5.7 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 5.7% in relation to 95% certainty	**Answered**	**289**

Future policy

● **The three most important priorities for future policy –** were referenced as business viability, animal welfare and land availability followed closely by health and safety

If you were designing policy for the future of farming, which of the following options are most important to you? Please rate your top three (1 = most important)

	Score (inverse)
Business viability	2.46
Labour availability	4.21
Water catchment	5.68
Animal welfare	2.51
Health and Safety	4.43
Access to the countryside and tourism	7.45
Climate change	6.4
Diverse workforce	8.98
Biodiversity	7.95
Environmental management	7.24
Food security	5.91
Food production	5.68
Trade deals	8.59
Confidence Interval 5.7 – scope for a variance of plus or minus 5.7% in relation to 95% certainty	**289**

Concluding Comments

Having completed the set questions in the survey we asked respondents to provide any other views that had around the environmental gain agenda. They were asked to reflect on the support new entrants and existing next generation farmers need to have a future in the industry.

We have highlighted some of those comments below.

Environment

- I believe that agriculture needs to move in a more forward fashion and encourage new entrants to the industry and take into account the environment
- There is only a certain amount of farm land in the UK it is important that we have the correct people farming it with the correct main goals to produce sustainable food that will keep the country fed whilst looking after are soil and climate for future generations.

Finance

- Farming land seems to be converted into pony paddock or golf courses. Price of the land is shocking. How farmers can afford to buy/ rent the land to produce the food?
- Encourage share farming!
- Grants for existing farmers separate to new entrants to maximise new entrants applying and increasing farmers and production
- I feel there should be more of a start up grant as when most of the old generation retire it usually takes a lot of investment back into the farm
- I'm trying to start my own contracting business and it's so hard to get the funds to buy the equipment and get off the start line. Also the rising cost and uncertainty isn't making thinking any easier.

Comments

New Entrants

- I think everyone deserves a shot at farming whoever it may be however the main challenges faced are actually entering the industry with incredibly high farm land prices and rising capital in farm machinery and tools. Also the lack of land is also a struggle as many generation farmers are not retiring meaning less land is up for grabs. There should be schemes in place to help people with entering the industry.
- Council tenancy agreements are too short for new entrants. Seven year time investment in a holding without any guarantee of being able to stay beyond that seven years is demoralising.
- Due to many big businesses buying the land etc it is very hard for any new starters to try and start a new business or expand an existing business.
- Extremely difficult for new entrants to enter the farming industry, particularly with the high costs and uncertainty surrounding food production at present.
- I think the biggest issue is landlords willing to offer opportunities to new entrants due to the "risk" factor and there not being the capital there straight away. Land Agents are now managing more private estates now and the current trend seems to be offering any smaller farm tenancies to current tenants on that estate to increase their land area. There needs to be written law that when a farm becomes available that younger tenants or new entrants are considered and offered a long enough tenancy to see a return on investment and ease pressure on the tenant.
- It can be a big risk for new entrants and the amount of paperwork/rules and regs to get your head around can be very difficult
- Need to be more opportunities for work that allow young people to apply with no experience and learn on the job in a physical environment with supportive colleagues helping
- New entrants need training in their chosen fields, advice needs to be given from people who are currently in that field and they need financial support. They also need to be made aware of the support available and the different grants and trade opportunities. Existing farmers need to be made more aware of the support that's available to them e.g added training, benefits of adding eco things to their farm, government grants.
- There is a stigma against new entrants into the industry especially those who have no experience - making training and information easier to find and more available would make it easier. Also a greater willingness to employ less experienced individuals who can learn as they work would help as that's how I came in to the industry

Comments

Wider comments

- More social opportunities for farmers to get together to learn new skills and learn ways to make the sector more sustainable
- People don't have enough opportunities to get into farming, neither knowing how to even start with no connections into the industry
- Don't limit support to someone who has land security - many of us work seasonal lets with successful businesses, but cannot access any funding or support, yet our costs and risks are far greater. Do not have a minimum average on it either, any size of business needs help, and do not specify exactly what to spend grants on - sometimes increasing numbers with quality stock is more important than another piece of shiny new equipment.
- I think that financial resources and poor work life balance deter many new entrants from farming- there is not enough financial and mental support available. Farming has a very high suicide rate and I think this is an important issue that needs to be addressed by the government, offering more support.
- Planting 10% of our Welsh land in trees would push a lot of farmers out of farming. Food production with a growing population has to be number one priority, in 10+ years the government will want more land back into agricultural food production – will end up doing a u turn if the population continues to grow. Buying British and not importing food we can grow in this country will help our carbon footprint. Education in schools is needed to teach children where our food actually comes from, i.e milk comes from a cow not a supermarket shelf! And how our food produced can be cooked to make healthier meals for families in the UK.
- Stereotypes about farming need to change and education into secondary schools about farming needs to be introduced.
- Support British producers less importing EU products. More support needed from suppliers and shops engaging the public to learn more about where food comes from
- There's many established ways of farming which work and work for a set area or farm which is now expected to change to meet the need but actually it's not meeting the demand and farmers don't get the financial benefit

Conclusions

There are some clear resonances between the results from this survey and those in 2020 and 2021 albeit they had different core themes.

Land use: In the 2021 survey the most significant motivation for respondents thinking about land use was f**ood production (40%)**. In the 2022 survey the most significant motivation for respondents thinking about agri-environment policy was an intertest in working in agriculture and land management **(59%)**

Transition: In the 2021 survey 39% of respondents were uncertain about the future in terms of **the 7-year transition away from EU-based system to England schemes**. In 2022 **58% of respondents felt uncertain or anxious** about the transition away from EU-based to England schemes.

Understanding Change: In 2021 a slim majority (53%) of respondents felt they **understood the proposed changes in land use**. In 2022 79% had some understanding of this but only 10% felt they had a good understanding. In 2021 approaching 60% of respondents were **unsure of how the policy changes would affect them**. In 2022 **39% were unsure**.

Future Policy Development: In 2021 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 2022 respondents identified them as: **food production, soil health and water management**.

Skills: In 2021 in relation to skills **Innovation, grants, efficiency and diversification were the most popular responses** identified. In 2022 the most significant gaps in training provision were identified as: **environment, regulation and business management**.

New Entrants: In 2021 over 70% of respondents thought it would be **difficult or impossible for new entrants** to enter the farming industry. In 2022 **72% of respondents** had this view.

More widely analysing the narratives offered by survey respondents we discern more pessimism, more frustration with regulation and sustained concern about the prospects for new entrants to the profession. This needs to be filtered through the lens of the changes at an international level linked to economic downturn of the last 12 months.

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