

‘Growing the future’
Prospecting for innovative approaches to food, farming and the environment

Thursday 29th March 10:00

at

Oxstalls Campus University of Gloucestershire

Background

- ‘If we started from the perspective of what we need to meet the challenges of the twenty first century what would new policies on food, farming and the environment look like?’
- Focus is on what we want to achieve in terms of food production, trade, resilient landscapes and healthy communities.
- Requires a focus on issues of adaptation and social, economic and environmental resilience across all aspects of food, farming and environment.

Main Aim for workshop

The workshop is an attempt to ensure that the policy rethink presented by Brexit is grasped so that food, farming and environment policy is fit for the challenges that lie ahead in the next 70 years. The outputs from the workshop will be discussed in a range of forums within and outside the county, including the RSA commission and the Gloucestershire 2050 Big Conversation.

Programme: Morning

10:30 – Welcome – Stephen Marsden, Vice Chancellor, University of Gloucestershire

10:35 - Professor Janet Dwyer (CCRI) *Rural policy priorities for the next 40 years (confirmed)*

The next few years of planning and piloting will most likely set the course for UK agricultural policy into the 2020s and beyond – the workshop offers a valuable opportunity for Gloucestershire to set out some key ground-rules and goals for that process. We won’t know the outcome of Brexit for some time to come, but we can still discuss what is most important to protect and develop, for future farming and the management of rural land. This workshop provides a timely opportunity to bring together all those who have a stake in the future of Gloucestershire’s rural areas, to help ensure a positive future for food, farming, the countryside and our local communities.

Key aspects to consider and initial responses from:

10:45 - Sue Pritchard (Director, Food, Farming and Countryside Commission) The need for and potential of rural policy) *(confirmed)*

11:00 - Professor Tim Lang (Centre for Food Policy, City University of London) The need for an inclusive trade and food strategy *(confirmed)*

11:15 - Dr Damian Maye (CCRI) ‘Everyday Brexits’ and current experiences *(confirmed)*

11:25 - Questions and Discussion

12:05 - Something to Chew on ...

- George Dunn, Tenant farmers Association *(confirmed)* ‘family farms and security’
- Joy Carey, Sustainable Food Systems Planning (tbc) ‘social and environmental value of food’
- Henry Robinson, Ex-President of the CLA *(confirmed)* ‘role for the market’

Discussions and lunch (12:15 – 13:15) – to be arranged with Baxter Storey

Programme: Afternoon

13:15 – 14:00 Run 1 – all rooms booked in TC block.

14:00 – 14:45 Run 2 – all rooms booked in TC block.

- Each workshop to run twice, focus on 1 area and arrive at agreed outcomes

Workshop 1: Trade issues (led by Sarah Baker (AHDB), supported by Professor Janet Dwyer (CCRI) and Dr Allan Butler (RAU).

The trading relationships that the UK establishes after Brexit will be critically important for all farming but particularly sheep and cattle farmers, of whom we have many in Gloucestershire and the South-West of England. Discussing what we might face for ongoing trade with the EU and its knock-on implications for trading with other countries could help farmers, and others who care about rural areas, to navigate more successfully through the next few years. It is important to make sure that the people negotiating our future trade deals think about how these could affect the countryside and its precious natural and cultural capital.

Workshop 2: Managing market uncertainty (led by market practitioners, supported by Dr Damian Maye, Dr Hannah Chiswell and Dr James Kirwan (CCRI))

Agricultural markets have always been characterised by uncertainty. Nevertheless, agricultural sectors are likely to become more volatile and market-orientated in the future, with much less state intervention. This workshop seeks to identify arrangements that can enable producers in different sectors to manage market uncertainty. Examples will be used to review how these issues are perceived and managed by farmers at present and the potential for risk management tools in the future. Participants will be encouraged to share their experiences and reflections.

Workshop 3: Food and energy futures (led by market practitioners and supported by Dr Matt Reed and Dr Dan Keech (CCRI))

This workshop seeks to generate a discussion on food and energy related topics. Changes in urban and rural relations. Changes in technology such as renewable energy, ultrafast broadband and robots on farms point to a time when rural areas will have a very different relationship to urban areas. How do we think those changes might impact in this area and what can we do, or are already doing, to be ready for them?

Workshop 4: Land, biodiversity and water management (led by Jonathan Brunyee (RAU/PFL), supported by Chris Short and Jane Mills (CCRI))

This workshop will consider the opportunities for a collaborative and integrated approach to land management and biodiversity, highlighted by examples from within Gloucestershire. Is it feasible to integrate biodiversity needs with those of food production and still meet demand? What will our resilient landscapes and vibrant communities look like in 40 year's time? Will they be able to meet the demands of our society?

Workshop 5: Social value and Wellbeing (lead by Roger Mortlock (GWT), supported by Professor Paul Courtney and Dr John Powell)

A number of commentators are noting the opportunity that Brexit affords for the delivery of social value through the re-framing of policies to take more account quality of life, the environment and the unique contexts of our rural communities. The delivery of improved health and well-being for rural stakeholders is implicit to this across a number of policy domains. The workshop will provide opportunity to discuss

the remit of social value in a policy context, and to suggest ways in which it might play a more central role in the post Brexit rural policy debate.

14:45 **Tea** break and prepare for plenary.

15:00 Plenary: Three main points from the 5 workshops

Discussion and 'Five word feedback' from delegates

15:30 Panel Discussion: David Drew MP (Labour), Simon Pickering (Green Party) Sue Pritchard (FF Commission) and Julie Girling MEP (Conservative),

15:50 Next steps

16:00 Close