



PRESS RELEASE

02/06/25

Sow confused? Younger Brits surprisingly disconnected from farming

- One in five Brits believe farming is essential to tackling climate change
- A quarter of Brits think people need to be born into a farming family to become a farmer – rising to almost a third among Gen Z
- Despite lack of knowledge, nearly a third of Brits would consider a career in farming or the agri-food industry
- Open Farm Sunday is set to dispel myths and cultivate connections between the public and farmers.

Young Brits might be passionate about the environment¹, but when it comes to farming many are yet to suss out the lay of the land.

Agriculture plays a key role in combatting climate change², but only one in five (19%) of 18-24-year-olds are aware of its importance on the matter.

The new research ahead of Open Farm Sunday 2025 – farming's annual open day - reveals a surprising disconnect between younger Brits perceived values and their view of farming in the UK today, but also a desire to connect and know more.

Despite being digitally savvy themselves, Gen Z are the least likely to know British farms use technology such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), drones, and robotics.

Only 15% were aware AI is already being used in crop management, and fewer than a quarter (23%) knew GPS is used to help with planting or that robotic systems were used in dairy farming (22%).

Just over a third (35%) think farming is becoming more innovative and tech driven. Increasingly precision agriculture, AI integration, and automation technologies are being implemented across the country.

The research also shows one in three (37%) of these young Brits believe you have to be born into a farming family to become a farmer, reinforcing outdated views of the industry as being closed off.

Even with these misconceptions, 90% of Gen Z adults agree that 'farming is relevant to their lives'. Indeed, more than a third (34%) say that they have at one point in their lives thought about farming as a career and nearly half (46%) say it's a profession they'd consider now.

First generation farmer, **Jake Freestone, Farm Manager at Overbury Enterprises**, says: *"Farming is an incredibly rewarding job, but it's one that many people don't fully understand."*

¹ 18% of Gen Z say "Environmental impact" is what matters most when buying fresh food

² [Agri-climate report 2023 - GOV.UK](https://gov.uk/agriculture/agri-climate-report-2023)

“What we do goes far beyond producing food, we’re working on the front line of sustainability, biodiversity, and climate resilience every day.

“We need the next generation to engage with modern farming to see that many of these issues are being tackled”.

Managed by the environmental charity LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming), Open Farm Sunday returns for its 19th year on Sunday 8th June 2025. The day offers everyone a unique opportunity to connect with farmers and explore the world of sustainable food and farming, and the vital role it plays in their everyday lives.

By welcoming the public onto farms and showcasing the journey of food from farm to table and the care that goes into farming with nature, Open Farm Sunday helps consumers to build a deeper appreciation for where their food comes from, and importantly the farmers who produce it.

Annabel Shackleton, LEAF's Open Farm Sunday Manager adds: *“Gen Z’s credentials when it comes to caring about the environment are second to none.*

“But one area where it seems they are yet to make the link is farming.

“Agriculture plays a vital role in tackling climate change, protecting and farming with nature, and feeding the nation sustainably.

“Open Farm Sunday is all about breaking down barriers and creating connections, challenging outdated perceptions, and showing everyone, just how innovative, diverse and forward-looking farming really is.”

The research also unearthed what one question Gen Z’s would ask a farmer if they could:

- What their job is like day-to-day (**16%**)
- How they became a farmer (**9%**)
- What are the big issues for farming in the future (**20%**).

Open Farm Sunday 2025 gives farmers the chance to bring to life how they work with nature and harness technology to produce food with care for the environment.

ENDS

Notes to editor:

Mortar Research carried out a survey targeting adults in the UK. The sample was nationally representative of gender, age, and region.

The survey asked respondents about their perceptions of farmers / farming in the UK. Respondents were incentivised and each provided opt-in consent in line with MRS and GDPR guidelines.

This survey was taken by a total of 2,019 respondents on both mobile and desktop devices. All were based in the UK. The study ran on 15th-16th May 2025

Keep up to date with all the Open Farm Sunday news and join in the online conversations using #OFS25:

- Website: www.farmsunday.org
 - Facebook: @LEAFOpenFarmSunday
 - Twitter: @OpenFarmSunday
 - Instagram: @OpenFarmSunday
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- Open Farm Sunday is managed by LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) – the charity that promotes and supports more sustainable farming to create a resilient food and farming system for future generations. LEAF is a registered charity no: 1045781 <https://leaf.eco/>
 - Open Farm Sunday is the farming industry's annual open day, now in its 19th year. Our vision is to connect farmers with their communities by inspiring public appreciation for sustainable farming practices that nurture nature, produce food you can trust, whilst protecting and enhancing the environment. Since the first Open Farm Sunday in 2006, over 3.25 million people have visited OFS on-farm events.
 - With special thanks to our Open Farm Sunday principal sponsors: AHDB, Arla Foods, BASF, Coop, Defra, Frontier Agriculture, John Deere, LEAF Marque, M&S, McDonald's, NFU, Sainsbury's, Tesco, and Waitrose.
 - Open Farm Sunday 2025 will take place on 8th June. Farmers are asked to register to host an event at www.farmsunday.org. Nearer the time, visitors will be able to search for a farm to visit at www.farmsunday.org.
 - To contact the Open Farm Sunday team directly, email: OpenFarmSunday@leaf.eco or call 07912463151