

Making the case for better food supply chain and infrastructure

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Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming

Beyond the farmgate

Unlocking the path to farmer-focused supply chains and climate-friendly, agroecological food systems



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Sustain is

- An Alliance of over 110 organisations focusing on:
 - Agroecological farming and agricultural policy
 - Local food and short supply chains
 - Food poverty, the right to food and children's food
 - Health related to food



Who we are



Surveyed 500 farmers

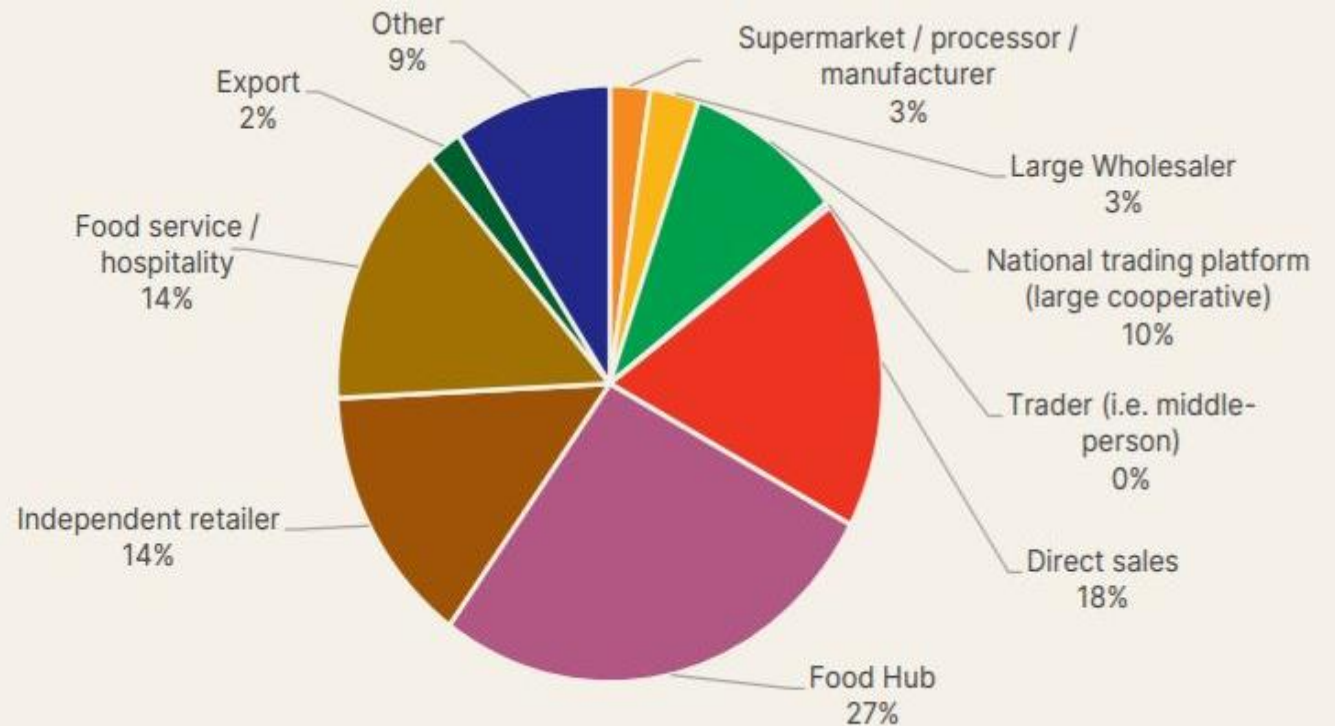
- Representative sample of English and Welsh agriculture
- large, medium, small,
- arable, livestock, poultry, pigs, dairy, horticulture, and mixed farms.

86% of the survey respondents currently supply a supermarket, processor or manufacturer, with only 12% using direct sales to the customer.

What farmers prefer

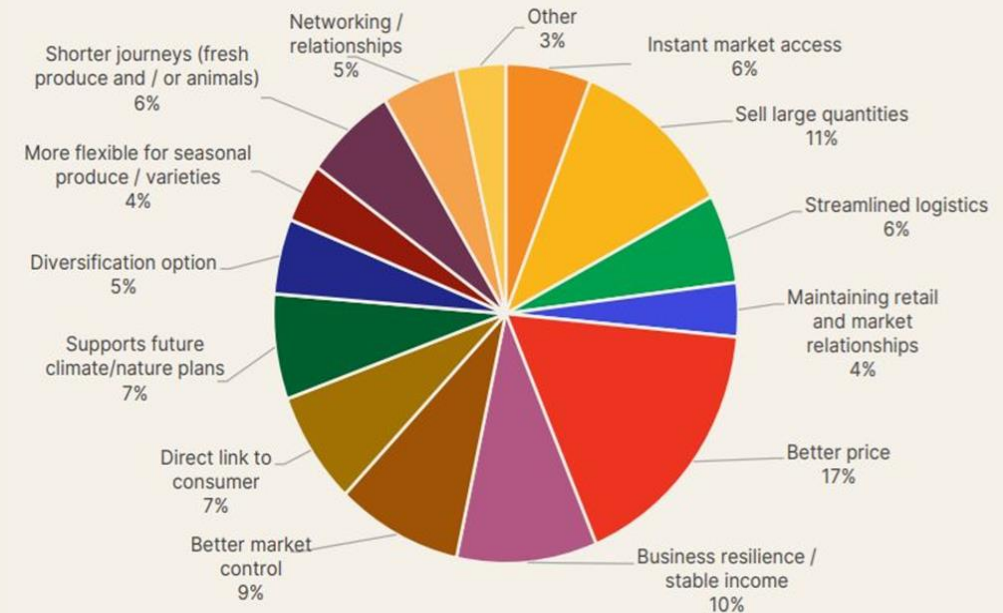
- 5% of farmers surveyed want to supply supermarkets
- Most would prefer:
 - Food hubs
 - Direct sales
 - Independent retailers
 - Food service (caterers, hospitality)

Farmers want to diversify their markets, but why?



What are the benefits?

- Key outcomes for farmers:
 - Fair and better price for produce – 75%
 - Able to sell significant quantities of produce – 49%
 - A more resilient business – 42%
 - Rewarded for delivering more for climate and nature – 30%



But one pioneer said “*changing supply chain has supported all of the above.*”

What are the barriers?

“There’s not easy access to affordable finance for farmers.”

Survey respondent

- No access to affordable finance – 48%
- Lack of time and know-how to do marketing – 44%
- No local markets – 39%
- No local infrastructure – 30%

“There’s no local processing anymore.” Survey respondent



Advice is needed – changing times, digital, etc

44% of respondents said time and knowledge, including on digital marketing tools, were a barrier to moving into different supply chains and markets.

"There are no advisors educating us how to change markets or funds to do it. I wouldn't know where to start."

"Finding new markets that haven't already got a supplier is hard."



Why this matters

Farmers and growers should be paid fairly and rewarded for delivering public goods (climate, nature, water, air, access etc.) via private and public rewards.

All citizens should have access to affordable, healthy and sustainably produced food.

Resilient supply chains and markets that better withstand economic and environmental shocks, and not offshoring more (40% currently).

“We would like to see all our produce being sold to local consumers who would be able to better appreciate its provenance and character as a result of seeing the system in operation on some of their favourite countryside walks.” Survey respondent

BUILDING COMMUNITY WEALTH

Economic

An increase of market share to just 10% could create 200,000 more jobs

For every £1 spent there are £3 in economic and environmental returns

For every £10 spent on a fruit/veg box, £25 is spent in the local area compared to £14 via supermarket

Examples of better supply chains

Proof of concept

Sean Ruffell at Organic North,
Better Food Traders network

Hodmedod's in 2012 to supply
grains, pulses, flour and other products
from British farms

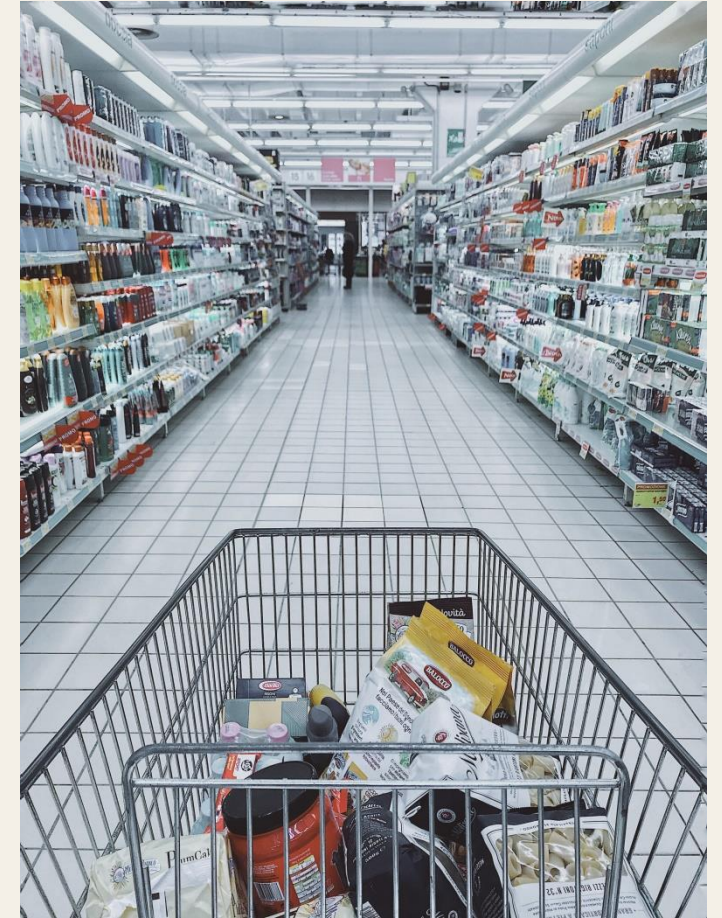
Pipers Farm, an online butcher and
shop business & a marketplace for 30
local producers

Strong connections between producer
and citizen helps people understand
the realities of food and farming

What else?

- 55% were interested in joining a cooperative
- 25% said they would consider joining a cooperative
- Many farmers said they wanted to make changes but felt there is too much risk at the moment linked to:
 - Supply chain disruption
 - New trade deals undermining British farming
 - Lack of support for smaller scale farming from Government
 - Regulation of supply chains needed to stop abusive practices

One respondent said “*the supermarkets have wiped out most of the competition*”



What next?

1. **Develop Growth Action Plan(s)** to increase the market share of farmer-focused supply chains and local and regional food systems to 25% by 2035
2. **Provide a new finance** mechanism (a Local Food Fund of at least £500 million per year) to build new infrastructure and supply chains
3. Ensure that **Local Enterprise Partnerships** (LEPs) and other financiers support farmer focused supply chain investment
4. **Expand on existing funding** (i.e. the Future Farm Resilience, levelling up funds) to provide more affordable business and marketing advice and data gathering
5. **Local Food and Farming Planning Framework** that explicitly supports a transition to agroecology, farmer-focused supply chains and local food systems.

Plus Roll out of the **dynamic procurement** model to 30% of contracts by 2025 to increase routes to market for local farmers, growers and producers.

Where next?

White Paper – include our key asks in Defra's responses to the NFS

Cross departmental work on levelling up via good food systems

Local strategies – public, private, blended investment in more local and new infrastructure. LEPs etc

COP27 – food and farming delivering climate mitigation – will only happen if farmers can transition



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Thank you

The case for local food:
building better local food systems
to benefit society and nature



rspb giving
nature
a home

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