



Meet the Speakers

Wednesday 4 November 2024

Hexham Auction Mart

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Gavin Lane, CLA President



Gavin grew up on his family farm on the edge of King's Lynn in Norfolk. At 25, he started farming on a contract farming arrangement with his father and now owns and farms land on two separate arable farms, both with large countryside stewardship schemes and using regenerative farming practices. He is involved with a family residential property portfolio and with his wife, Jane, has diversified into a holiday cottage letting business.

Within the CLA, he was chair of Business & Rural Economy Committee (BREC), chair of the Norfolk Branch and was previously chair of Agriculture and Land Use and also sat on Policy Committee.

He has also chaired the Education Committee of the Worshipful Company of Farmers and is a Nuffield Scholar.

Tom Bradshaw, NFU President



Tom farms in partnership with his wife, Emily, and his parents in North Essex. Alongside a small owned farm they run a larger contract farming business growing a range of combinable crops across 950 hectares in North East Essex.

The home farm is based around arable production but has also diversified into equestrian and renewables.

Tom has represented the NFU from Local Branch Chairman through to Chair of the National Combinable Crops Board.

Tom was elected to the position of NFU President in February 2024 and re-elected in February 2026.

George Dunn, TFA CEO



After studying at Nottingham and Reading Universities, George worked for the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries & Food and the Country Landowners Association before joining the Tenant Farmers Association (TFA) as Chief Executive in January 1997. He was Chair of the Farming Community Network between 2010 and 2015 and has been a trustee of the Arthur Rank Centre. He is currently a specialist governance volunteer for the National Trust in respect of its let estate.

George served on the Tenancy Reform Industry Group for over 20 years, was a member of the Rock Review Group on Agricultural Tenancies and continues as a member of the Welsh Government Tenancy Working Group as well as the Welsh Ministerial Roundtable on the development of the Sustainable Farming Scheme. Outside of TFA, he is on the leadership team of his local church.

In 2022, George was the recipient of the Farmers Weekly Lifetime Achievement Award and in 2023, he received the British Farming Award for his outstanding contribution to the agricultural industry. He was made an honorary Doctor of Laws by Harper Adams University in 2024.

Adam Bedford, Commercial Director, GSC Grays



In October this year, Adam took up the position of GSC Grays as their Commercial Director.

Prior to his new role, he was Collaborative Projects Director at Fera Science, leading the development of partnerships that bring together farmers, growers, industry and scientists to tackle complex challenges across agriculture, food and the environment. His work focused on translating high-quality science into practical, real-world solutions through collaboration and shared ownership of outcomes.

Adam has a strong foundation in agricultural policy and practice, having held senior roles within the NFU, including Director of the British Agriculture Bureau in Brussels and North East Regional Director, giving me deep insight into policy development, regulation and stakeholder engagement at both national and European levels.

Anna Jones, Rural Affairs Journalist



Anna Jones is a rural affairs journalist, author, educator, and founder of Just Farmers™ Community Interest Company. She's also a farmer's daughter from the Welsh Borders.

She produced and directed BBC One's Countryfile, Channel 4's Our Dream Farm with Matt Baker and is a familiar voice on Radio 4's Farming Today and On Your Farm. In 2025, Anna drove across the Midwest of America listening to the views of rural communities on President Trump for the Radio 4 documentary Corn Belt People.

Anna founded Just Farmers™ after completing a Nuffield Farming Scholarship looking at the coverage of agriculture in the mainstream media. She developed her own training model to give farmers and growers the practical skills and confidence to tell their own stories, in their own words. Anna now travels the UK delivering storytelling courses and giving talks to a wide range of organisations.

Anna's mission to improve the national conversation around rural issues, agriculture and the environment inspired her book Divide: The relationship crisis between town and country, published by Kyle Books in 2022.

Jonathan Eckley, Director of International Trade, AHDB



With more than 25 years' experience within the livestock sector, Jonathan takes the lead on international market development activity with the AHDB export team for the red meat sectors and is responsible for ensuring AHDB's work adds real value throughout the supply chain.

Jonathan joined the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board's economics department in 2006 where he has grown his expertise across the livestock sectors. For the last 12 years, Jonathan has focused on supporting British meat exporters to develop their business on global markets, with a particular focus on working in Asia and the MENA regions. This included organising outward missions to far-flung destinations to explore potential opportunities and helping to showcase the UK's high-quality produce to key participants in international markets.

Jonathan's role involves promoting pork, beef and lamb from the UK to key markets through a coordinated and targeted export programme, including attendance at leading international trade shows, outward and inward market missions and integrated PR campaigns.

The Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) is a statutory levy board, funded by farmers and processors in the supply chain. The AHDB inspires British farmers, growers and wider industry to succeed in a rapidly changing world to be more competitive and resilient. A key role

Freddie Humfrey, Head of Grain Trading at ADM Agriculture

Freddie Humfrey has spent over 12 years in the UK grain trading industry, having started his career at Gleadell Agriculture as what he describes as a “glorified tea boy.” Fortunately, someone eventually let him near a trading screen, and he went on to spend seven years specialising in wheat trading, with various adventures along the way in barley, oats, oilseed rape and a few of the more unusual crops grown on British farms.

Freddie is now Head of Grain Trading & Logistics at ADM Agriculture, where he oversees the trading, risk management, procurement and execution of the combinable crops flowing through the business. Operating nationwide, ADM Agriculture is the UK's second-largest grain trader by volume, connecting British farmers with domestic processors and export markets.

Although a separate business, ADM Agriculture is closely connected to ADM's wider UK operations, including the Erith oilseed crushing plant, the largest single-site facility of its kind in Europe, and ADM Milling, the UK's second-largest flour miller.

Freddie holds a BSc in Physical Geography, where his dissertation focused on the impact of weather on UK wheat yields.

Jamie Leslie, mixed farmer, Scholland Farm, Shetland



Jamie Leslie, I farm in partnership with my Dad at Scholland Farm in Shetland. I am the 6th generation here so a pretty traditional family farm however I try most days to not farm too traditionally!

We run 130 suckler cows, mainly Angus and around a third of them are Pedigrees. We also lamb around 500 ewes, they're a mix of Romney, Lleyn and Texel genetics. Most of our stock are sold store throughout late Summer and Autumn.

We grow a few crops purely to use as winter feed Spring barley, beet, kale and silage.

Cattle and sheep are rotationally grazed all summer, predominately in a leader follower system and we utilise a lot of deferred grass for cows all winter.

Overall, we are trying to farm profitably with a handle on inputs whilst striving to push productivity.

Alix Ritchie, Director at Farmstrong Scotland and Perthshire Farmer



Alix Ritchie is Director of Farmstrong Scotland, the charity dedicated to improving the wellbeing of Scotland's farming and crofting communities.

Alongside leading the charity, she farms at Montalt Farm, a family cattle and sheep enterprise in Perthshire, Scotland.

Before joining Farmstrong Scotland, Alix worked in a range of agricultural roles including with Quality Meat Scotland, RHET and the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC). Her work is driven by a passion for strengthening rural communities, educating people about food and farming and helping farmers and crofters feel good and function well.

A 2026 Nuffield Farming Scholar, Alix is researching how stronger social wellbeing can help agricultural communities thrive. Through her international

David Cross, West Norfolk farmer

David Cross is a Norfolk farmer and advocate of regenerative agriculture who, alongside his wife Mhari Cross, manages a 550-hectare mixed farm at Fring and Sedgeford.

Drawing on his livestock farming background, he has led the transition from a traditional arable system to one focused on soil health, rotational grazing and sustainable livestock production. The farm now supports sheep, native-breed cattle and pasture-fed laying hens, whose eggs are marketed under the Glovers Farm Eggs brand.

An enthusiastic adopter of science-led farming, David also works with the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board (AHDB) as a monitor farmer, helping to trial innovative approaches that improve both environmental and commercial outcomes.

Joe Nelles, livestock farmer

Thistleyhaugh Farm near Morpeth

He farms at Thistleyhaugh Farm near Morpeth and has been a speaker/panellist at agricultural events such as the Northern Farming Conference and featured in farming publications regarding business succession and livestock management.

Joe plays for Morpeth RFC (including senior/Reivers squads), with official player sponsorship from Thistleyhaugh Farm for the 2026/27 season. He also previously played junior rugby league with the Cramlington Rockets.