

FOOD CHOICES

REDUCING FOOD IMPACTS

We all have a role to play in reducing food waste and eating more plant-rich diets. We can also support local farmers, recognising their efforts to farm sustainably and provide quality food with low food miles.



Think about the meals provided at your church and how you can reduce waste and emissions.



Could your church be part of a project to reduce food waste and provide food for people in need, even growing food together on church land?



Find out more about local farmers, what they can offer and any support they need. Tenant farmers are facing many climate and sustainability challenges. See the Wildlife Trusts' 'Help farmers help nature toolkit'.

PITFALLS TO AVOID



Rather than blaming farmers for pollution, pesticides or nature depletion, we need to work together to tackle these issues. Recognising farmers' expertise and knowledge of their land is vital in finding solutions to environmental problems.



Blanket solutions such as landscape-scale tree-planting or rewilding are not the best approaches for most productive agricultural land.



We need sustainable food production but agroforestry, soil management and better hedges and margins can improve carbon sequestration and support wildlife alongside farming.

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REDUCING FOOD WASTE

GAMLINGAY FOOD PROJECT, CAMBS

Gamlingay Baptist Church and nearby St Mary the Virgin jointly run a project providing food parcels and a community fridge for those in need. They collect food that would be wasted from local shops and supermarkets and give it away from their community fridge and freezer. They also invite local people to share food they have grown or other donations.



LOCAL COMMUNITY

FALMOUTH, DIOCESE OF TRURO

The Diocese of Truro Glebe Management committee considers environmental credentials of applicants when they're looking for new tenants. One area of glebe land near Falmouth had previously been used for intensive potato cropping, with high levels of run-off.

It is now let to the Falmouth Food Co-op who, through their group 'Loveland' and with the consent of the diocese, have implemented a range of organic, low food-mileage, sustainable vegetable crop growing. They are also experimenting with grains which will be appropriate as the climate changes.



Michael Greet, Glebe Estate Manager for Diocese of Truro, (Savills) said:

'The Diocese of Truro were early advocates of considering environmental credentials alongside other factors in considering new tenancies. As well as requiring applicants to explain their soil health, cropping methods and nature plans, the Diocese has to balance against the Church Property Measure 'best value' requirements.

In this particular case there was a unique opportunity to grant a tenancy that met all the requirements and all being well will be a long-term partnership.'



CLIMATE ACTION GROUP FARM PROJECT

FFERMWYR YR WNION PROJECT, GWYNEDD

Farmer and Nature Friendly Farming Network Wales Manager Rhys Evans said:



The Church in Wales hosted a summit on Restoring Welsh Rivers in November 2024. Environmental impacts from agriculture were a key theme, including a presentation from Rhys Evans on Ffermwr Yr Wnion's Climate Action Group Farm Project.

Ten farms in the Wnion catchment are working together to address flood risk and water quality. They have planted 7km of hedgerows with over 50,000 trees, and blocked man-made drains on upland peatland to restore this vital habitat.

They have established flood pools which can also become sources of water in times of drought. Increasing hedgerow habitat and controlling invasive species are additionally good for local biodiversity.

'The work being done by each farmer not only yields positive results for water and flood protection but also delivers benefits for biodiversity, pollinators, and air quality and helps tackle climate change.

On a more personal level, the project also increases our sense of well-being as farmers – we take pride in knowing that our little corner of the world is helping to address some very serious issues.'



PLANNING

ASSESSING YOUR LAND

Regional and national Church bodies sometimes own considerable areas of land. Steps to improving the environmental credentials of this land include mapping your land and creating a land management plan. The Diocese of Oxford share how they went about the mapping task in the CofE document: [Managing Glebe Land for Climate and Biodiversity](#).

Land farmed by tenants is less controlled by the landowners but they have scope to review letting agreements as these are renewed and require more environmental improvements.

Farm carbon audits can be encouraged and incentivised by landowners, allowing tenants to baseline emissions and choose the methods of emissions reduction which fit with their business model. Farm Carbon Toolkit, Agrecalc and Cool Farm Alliance are now working together to harmonise their methodologies and outputs.

FABULOUS FARMERS

Functional AgroBiodiversity is a set of measures which enhance biodiversity on farms. These include crop rotation, field margin management and non-inversion tillage. More information about the methods and successful implementation in UK and EU farms is available on the [FABulous Farmers website](#).

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NATIONAL CHURCH

C of E CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

The Church of England Church Commissioners own around 82,000 acres of agricultural land, let to tenant farmers. They have featured a number of positive case studies in their 'In Conversation with' series. Richard Castle's farm on the Rochester Estate is working with the RSPB and Natural England to enhance natural marshes. They use conservation agriculture methods, improving the soil, and have 60 acres of solar power on the land they own. We need to see wider support of these approaches.

