

Green Party reaction to Rishi Sunak's food and farming summit



16 May 2023

Responding to today's food and farming summit at Downing Street, co-leader of the Green Party, Adrian Ramsay, said:

"A food and farming summit is welcome at a time when food prices continue to soar [1]. Such a summit is something the Green Party called for over a year ago [2].

"However, with the emphasis on supermarkets and major food manufacturers, it feels like this summit is lacking the transformative vision that we need. The door to Number 10 seems blocked to many UK small scale farmers and food producers who have creative ideas on supplying healthy and affordable food while at the same time showing how agriculture can help tackle the climate and ecological emergency.

"The Green Party has long supported regenerative agriculture, farming that works with nature rather than against it. A major focus here should be building farming systems that capture carbon, whether through organic farming or agroforestry, as well as the restoration of peatlands.

"There is a growing public trend towards more plant-based diets which provide new opportunities for UK farmers as well as easing the climate pressure from meat and dairy production. We need a horticulture plan to replace the plan withdrawn last month, but focused on local production for local markets rather than the mechanised vegetable factories favoured by the supermarkets [3].

"We should be seizing this opportunity to look at the successful farming methods which capture carbon, improve soil quality and increase biodiversity."

Notes

1. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-65596502>
2. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2022/03/11/greens-call-for-emergency-food-security-summit/>
3. <https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/fruit-and-veg/horticulture-alliance-resigns-from-government-roundtable-ahead-of-sunak-summit/679218.article>

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