

More funding for sustainable farm-based proteins, as George Eustice visits innovative farm

Speaking at the [Devon County Show](#), Environment Secretary, George Eustice, will announce further funding for research projects that will help boost farmers' businesses and help improve the environmental impact of farming.

The recent [Food Strategy](#) committed to spend £270 million on research and development in the [Farming Innovation Programme](#) up to 2029. This Programme is designed to bring together farmers, growers, businesses and researchers for collaborative, industry-led research and development that will drive up the productivity, profitability and resilience of England's farming sectors, whilst helping to improve the environment.

The Environment Secretary will confirm that in July, £12.5m from the Farming Innovation Programme will be set aside for research and development focused on 'sustainable farm-based proteins', in partnership with UKRI this funding will be made available for farmers, growers, businesses and academics to collaborate on projects that seek to improve the efficiency and sustainability of farm-based protein production, including protein crops like beans and peas and traditional livestock production, in order to help boost domestic production of healthy and sustainable food.

This might be achieved through the development of new methane reducing feeds and supplements, or the breeding of new sustainable and resilient crops and livestock.

The Environment Secretary will also showcase an example of innovative technology that is helping farmers capture the methane from slurry stores and turn it into biomethane, creating an additional income stream for farmers. Bennamann in Truro, Cornwall has pioneered this innovative approach building on world-leading science to help livestock farms of any size to cover their manure slurry lagoons, capture the fugitive emissions they produce, establish energy independence and improve business profitability through lower bills and sales of high value biomethane.

Environment Secretary, George Eustice, said:

Improving farm profitability and tackling environmental challenges requires us to allow the natural cycle of life to operate fully. Rather than seeing farm wastes like slurry as a problem and a cost, we need to start recognising that they are actually a resource that could be monetised to boost farm incomes.

Cornwall has a long history of pioneering new technology and it is

at the forefront of new approaches that could revolutionise the way we manage farm yard manure to create a new income stream for farmers and generate a green fuel that significantly reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

Bennamann is working with the Local Authority and six of its farms to turn waste methane into biomethane. The biogas results from the anaerobic digestion of manure stored in the slurry lagoon on each farm, which can then be processed into a sustainable, commercially viable product as compressed gas or liquid fuel. That fuel will be able to power lorries and tractors, heat households and businesses, provide hot water and even charge electric vehicles. The Council plans to run its road maintenance vehicle fleet on this greener source of fuel. There is even a New Holland methane tractor in production, with Bennamann able to supply the tractor's fuel on farm at a fixed period discounted price from the waste on farm.

For a 150 head dairy farm, the system creates biomethane worth approximately £30,000 in additional income for the dairy farm and it removes about half of the methane generated by the herd, making a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.