

Press release: More than 44,000 responses to future farming consultation

In the last week alone, nearly 20,000 responses were submitted to the [‘Health & Harmony’](#) consultation which closed on Tuesday 8 May, with farmers, food producers and environmentalists sharing their views on everything from the support we give to farmers and food producers to the broader direction of policy post-Brexit when it comes to the natural world.

Throughout the 10 week consultation, Defra hosted 17 events across the country alongside groups including the National Trust, NFU and the Eden Project, to hear first-hand from more than 1,250 representatives of the UK’s food and farming sectors.

The Environment Secretary Michael Gove said:

It’s great news that so many people have responded so enthusiastically to our consultation. Leaving the European Union gives us the opportunity to improve the support we give to Britain’s farmers. We can make farming more productive, improve the quality of the food we eat and enhance our natural environment. We’ll reflect on the many thoughtful ideas put forward in response to our consultation and bring forward our plans for legislation later this year.

The consultation included proposals to redirect payments under the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) which are based on the amount of land farmed, to a new system of paying farmers public money for public goods, principally their work to enhance the environment. It highlighted a number of public goods which could be supported such as biodiversity, high animal welfare standards and improved soil health.

A recent WWF poll, undertaken by Populus, found that [91 per cent of the UK public want to see farmers paid to protect nature](#).

Responses to the consultation will now be analysed carefully and the Government will publish a response shortly.