



Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

Dame Angela Eagle MP
Minister for Food Security and Rural Affairs

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Alistair Carmichael MP
Chair, Environment Food and
Rural Affairs Committee
Committee Office
House of Commons
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16 February 2026

Dear Alistair,

Thank you for your letter of 28 January 2026. I valued the opportunity to engage with the Committee. Please find my responses below to your follow-up questions.

Nature-positive pathways for the agri-food sector

We need the support of the private sector in order to make progress in meeting our environmental targets. However, businesses tell us that clarity is missing on how they can specifically contribute to our statutory goals.

The Nature Positive Pathways programme emulates the successful model for the climate transition. It is being spearheaded by industry and will set the tangible actions business can take and at what pace. Agri-food is one of the first sectors being explored, with an aim to publish a first draft of the pathway towards the end of 2026.

These pathways can also feed into corporate transition plans, on which the Government recently consulted.

Food strategy development

The Food Strategy Advisory Board (FSAB) is an independent expert advisory group that brings together representatives from the food and drink system to inform the strategic direction of the UK Government's future food strategy. It is a small group of senior leaders who have been appointed based on their individual experience to reflect the diversity of the sector. Members are appointed in a personal professional capacity – not to represent their organisation.

To reflect the breadth of the farming sector, Peter Kendall and Julian Marks have now been appointed to FSAB, bringing their expertise in arable, poultry and horticultural farming. A list of members, terms of reference, and minutes is on GOV.UK.

The food strategy uses a broad range of forums to engage on policy, including online webinars, roundtables, direct conversations with stakeholders and discussions with trade associations.

Farmers and food businesses will also now have a stronger voice at the heart of the Government through a new Farming and Food Partnership Board. This Board will bring together government, farmers and the food industry to boost farm profitability, identify emerging challenges, and develop practical solutions together. The FSAB will complement this new board. The FSAB have consistently advised on the need for a focus on domestic production within a successful food strategy.

Future farming policy

We expect to be able to share full details and guidance regarding the new SFI offer in the spring, in time for farmers, growers, and land managers to prepare for the opening of the first application window this Summer.

We plan to begin promotional engagement activities from publication. This will include a series of advisory webinars, and direct outreach through agricultural shows and events. As with previous iterations of SFI, these events provide us the opportunity to have in-depth conversations and respond to queries. We will also work closely with our stakeholders to equip them with the information they need to promote Environmental Land Management schemes, including SFI, to their members.

The farming sector is facing unprecedented challenges that threaten both its long-term viability and environmental sustainability. We are working with farmers, farming and environmental organisations to develop the Farming Roadmap, which will set the course of farming in England for the next 25 years.

Our aim is to maintain food production, meet our environmental outcomes, and deliver a thriving and profitable farming sector. It will set out how farming will, must and can evolve in response to changing markets, technologies, and environmental pressures - and how government will support that transition. It seeks to present an honest picture of the current realities in farming, while outlining how the system can adapt and evolve to meet future needs.

The Roadmap will be published later this year (2026).

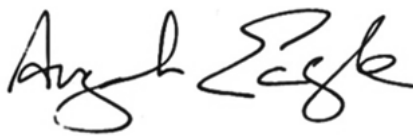
Reforms to APR and BPR

The Government published an updated tax information and impact note on 9 January 2026. It is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-agricultural-property-relief-and-business-property-relief/agricultural-property-relief-and-business-property-relief-changes.

As it states, around 85 per cent of all estates claiming agricultural property relief in 2026-27, including those that also claim for business property relief, are forecast to not pay any

more inheritance tax as a result of the reforms. This is calculated using the same methodology for previous analysis. Based on administrative data from actual claims, HMRC forecast that 1,320 estates are expected to claim agricultural property relief, or agricultural property relief and business property relief, in 2026-27. Up to 185 estates of these estates are expected to pay more inheritance tax as a result of these reforms, which is 14 per cent of such estates making claims.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Angela Eagle', written in a cursive style.

DAME ANGELA EAGLE MP