

Dame Chi Onwurah MP

Chair, House of Commons Science, Innovation and Technology Committee

Sent via email

21 July 2026

Dear Chair,

Follow up to the Innovation and global food security hearing on 7 July 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to give evidence to your Committee on 7 July as part of your inquiry into Innovation and global food security.

This note provides additional information in response to issues raised during the oral evidence session. It begins with a brief summary to help frame the evidence presented. The remainder of the document is divided into two parts: information directly requested by the Committee in its follow-up correspondence and additional information relating to areas discussed during the oral evidence session where Committee members requested further evidence and UKRI undertook to provide further information.

Summary

UK innovation and commercialisation in agri-food

UKRI investment in agriculture research and innovation supports an end-to-end innovation ecosystem from the generation of new knowledge and technology development through to commercialisation, alongside investment in skills and R&I infrastructures.

Our approach recognises the opportunity for research and innovation to simultaneously advance global food security outcomes and UK economic growth. Agri-tech is one tool for delivering this, using innovations such as precision breeding, AI, robotics, and smart sensors to improve productivity, resilience, and sustainability across food systems in the UK and internationally. Agri-tech also has a key role in supporting technology development and providing opportunities for innovative new companies to start, scale, and stay. For example, Tropic Biosciences, which focuses on gene editing in rice and bananas in Central and South America and Asia, received UKI2S funding from UKRI and has raised \$105 million in Series C financing this year.

Over the current Spending Review period, around 50% of UKRI's total investment will support targeted R&D addressing strategic government and societal priorities (bucket 2) and innovative companies (bucket 3)¹. This will be delivered primarily through a suite of 15 UKRI Priority Programmes, which include **Food and Animal & Plant Health** and **Agri-Tech**, which have been set up to enable seamless working across buckets 2 and 3. Within these programmes we are taking a choiceful and targeted approach to investments, leveraging substantive investment from the private sector and delivering economic and societal outcomes. Robust monitoring, evaluation, and learning will be an integral component of these priority programmes from the outset, and will assess progress against intended outcomes, including commercialisation outcomes, adoption, economic impacts, and wider societal benefits.

Place and Farming Profitability

Regional growth is critical to the UK's long-term success. Impact is often greatest where investment is focused and coordinated around distinctive local strengths, such as regional assets, deep-rooted industrial and innovation capabilities, and strong local partnerships. Within this ecosystem, BBSRC's strategically supported institutes and campuses have a key role in anchoring regional agri-food clusters, as well as driving national connectivity. In addition, the UKRI Local Innovation Partnerships Fund (LIPF) will enable joint working with local partnerships of civic leaders, businesses, and universities to co-create place-based investment portfolios that build on each region's R&I strengths and priority sectors as identified by the regions themselves. For example, LIPF investment in Greater Lincolnshire will help advance the region's priority clusters in agri-tech and defence sectors.

The Farming Profitability Review² highlighted the need for stronger coordination across government, research, and industry to create a more seamless innovation system, ensuring that research priorities are aligned with the practical challenges facing farmers and that innovations are adopted on-farm. Through the UKRI priority programmes and LIPF we are working closely with national and local government, farmers, industry, academia, and other

¹ [Budget allocations for UK Research and Innovation – UKRI](#)

² [Farming Profitability Review 2025: an independent review - GOV.UK](#)

stakeholders to co-design and co-deliver research and innovation to address shared strategic priorities.

Global Food Security

UKRI recognises food and nutrition security as a key global challenge, requiring people to have reliable access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food. We support research and innovation across the agri-food system to help address the interconnected challenges of food and nutrition security, climate change, environmental sustainability, productivity, and resilience. This includes soils, crops, and livestock through to food processing, manufacturing, diets, and health outcomes. Our support spans the range of foods needed for healthy, balanced diets, recognising that food security depends not only on calories, but also on the availability and accessibility of diverse, nutritious foods that support good health, physical and cognitive development, and immune system function.

Through responsive and strategically targeted investment, and by partnerships with institutes, HEIs, governments, industry, and NGOs, we seek to maximise the impact of our investment on food security outcomes. This includes international engagement to tackle global challenges, where we focus on partnerships with the greatest mutual scientific and strategic benefit, working across Europe, North America, Asia, and Australia and through participation in global initiatives such as the CGIAR centres; Tetrapartite, the Global Wheat Initiative, and European Partnerships in Horizon Europe.

A clear government-led vision for global food security is an important foundation for shaping the research and innovation needed to help deliver it. UKRI is currently developing a Strategic Action Plan on Food, which will articulate the key role of research and innovation in delivering the government's priorities. To maximise its impact, however, this would benefit from a clear and choiceful articulation from government of its priorities that extends beyond the UK Government Food Strategy for England, alongside a targeted set of actions. As global food security challenges span multiple departments and policy domains, a coordinated, cross-government approach will be essential in ensuring that any future strategy will both improve lives and drive economic growth both in the UK and abroad.

Information formally requested by the Committee

Geographic distribution of agri-tech SMEs in the UK

1. Analysis undertaken using the Beauhurst company database identified **241 active UK agri-tech SMEs**. Companies were identified using Beauhurst's internal Agri-Tech sector classification and SME designation, expanded with a company size filter of fewer than 250 employees where SME designation was unknown. Beauhurst uses the European Commission definition of SME, so companies must have fewer than 250 employees and a turnover of less than €50m or a balance sheet under €43m. Beauhurst is a private data platform that tracks high-growth businesses and the wider innovation ecosystem in the UK and Germany, for which UKRI has licences.

Table 1: Regional distribution of active UK agri-tech SMEs

Regions	SME Count
North West	17
North East	0
Yorkshire and The Humber	16
West Midlands	11
East Midlands	18
East of England	33
London	53
South West	23
South East	29
Northern Ireland	7
Wales	6
Scotland	28

2. **Table 1** presents the regional distribution of these companies based on their registered address.
3. It should be noted that estimates of agri-tech SME population will vary depending on the methodology and definitions used. Beauhurst's approach is designed to identify active agri-tech businesses using its proprietary sector classification, and may not capture companies which are operating across multiple sectors. Similarly, while companies may have a registered address in one location, the core of their research and innovation activities may be undertaken elsewhere in the UK.

4. As such, alternative datasets may identify a wider range of organisations participating in agri-tech innovation activity. For example, Innovate UK data show that organisations from all UK regions have participated in Innovate UK-supported agri-tech projects since FY2020/21, including 30 SMEs working in the North East (see **Table 2**).

Table 2: Regional distribution of SMEs participating in Innovate UK-supported agri-tech projects since FY2020/21.

Regions	SME Count
East Midlands	113
East of England	216
London	132
North East	30
North West	87
Northern Ireland	14
Scotland	83
South East	187
South West	171
Wales	67
West Midlands	124
Yorkshire and The Humber	116
Unknown	74

5. One example is Take Root Bio, a Darlington-based company developing modular space agriculture systems designed to produce a complete diet in controlled environments. They have been supported by Innovate UK primarily through the Defra ADOPT³ initiative.
6. These figures are not directly comparable with the Beauhurst estimates, as they report participation in Innovate UK-supported agri-tech activity by working location rather than the distribution of active agri-tech SMEs by registered address. They

³ [ADOPT Support Hub | FarmPEP](#)

therefore include organisations whose primary business activity is not classified as agri-tech (e.g., farming), organisations that are no longer active, or businesses undertaking agri-tech-related innovation as part of a broader set of objectives.

Information regarding the amount of venture capital that UK agri-tech SMEs are able to raise

1. The amount of venture capital that UK agri-tech SMEs are *able* to raise cannot be directly quantified. However, available data on venture capital successfully secured by UK agri-tech SMEs provides an indication of the sector's ability to attract external investment.
2. The most recent figures for UK agri-tech SME equity fundraising are US\$616M across 113 deals in 2024⁴, and US\$685M across 111 deals in 2025⁵. UK-based Wild Bioscience's \$60.4M Series A raise ranked fourth in the top 5 global ag biotech deals in 2025⁵.
3. Collectively, the 241 active UK agri-tech SMEs identified via Beauhurst have raised approximately £1 billion in external investment.

How much venture capital there is in global agricultural funding

1. According to *AgFunder's Global AgriFoodTech Investment Report 2026*⁵, global agrifoodtech funding reached \$16.2 billion in 2025 (-3% YOY). \$9 billion of this was directed toward upstream funding (+7% YOY), which encompasses subsectors such as ag biotechnology, bioenergy & biomaterials, novel farming systems, and innovative foods.

⁴ [AgFunder Global AgriFoodTech Investment Report 2025 - AgFunder](#)

⁵ [AgFunder Global AgriFoodTech Investment Report 2026 - AgFunder](#)

Additional information requested during the oral evidence session

UKRI and BBSRC investment in agricultural research and innovation

1. UKRI spend on research and development (R&D) related to agriculture (including Innovate UK institutional support for agri-tech centres) in 2025: **£266 million**.

2. The £266 million is split across UK ITL1 regions as seen in **Table 3** (figures are available in choropleth map format in **Annex 1**):

Table 3: UKRI Agriculture Portfolio Expenditure by UK ITL1 Region, 2025 (Calendar Year)

Region (UK ITL1)	Spend on Agriculture in 2025 (Calendar Year)
North East (England)	£2.63 million
North West (England)	£16.21 million
Yorkshire and the Humber	£28.91 million
East Midlands (England)	£12.32 million
West Midlands (England)	£7.38 million
East (England)	£59.62 million
London	£28.23 million
South East (England)	£41.51 million
South West (England)	£19.67 million
Wales	£8.81 million
Scotland	£36.75 million
Northern Ireland	£4.32 million

3. **Table 4** presents BBSRC's agricultural portfolio expenditure by UK ITL1 region between 2020/21 and 2024/25 (figures are available in choropleth map format in **Annex 1**):
4. Expenditure is distributed across all UK nations and regions, reflecting the location of research organisations and capabilities supported through BBSRC's agricultural portfolio. An important note is that expenditure is assigned according to the location of the lead organisation receiving funding. Many awards involve collaboration with partners across multiple regions and nations of the UK. As such, these figures should be interpreted as funding attributed to lead organisations rather than a complete representation of where all research activity takes place.

Table 4: BBSRC Agricultural Portfolio Expenditure by UK ITL1 Region, 2020/21–2024/25

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Spend Trend (Lowest / Highest)
East (England)	£45.4m	£40.5m	£39.3m	£43.9m	£44.5m	
East Midlands (England)	£2.0m	£3.0m	£4.3m	£5.1m	£4.6m	
London	£8.3m	£1.7m	£6.2m	£7.3m	£7.8m	
North East (England)	£1.3m	£1.5m	£1.3m	£1.6m	£1.5m	
North West (England)	£6.9m	£3.3m	£1.7m	£5.1m	£4.9m	
South East (England)	£26.3m	£28.8m	£33.4m	£28.1m	£30.1m	
South West (England)	£3.7m	£3.0m	£4.2m	£4.2m	£5.0m	
West Midlands (England)	£2.3m	£2.2m	£2.8m	£3.7m	£3.0m	
Yorkshire and The Humber	£8.1m	£7.3m	£7.3m	£7.2m	£10.9m	
Northern Ireland	£1.4m	£1.0m	£1.0m	£0.7m	£2.0m	
Scotland	£20.6m	£17.5m	£17.7m	£17.0m	£23.0m	
Wales	£3.9m	£3.7m	£3.2m	£4.2m	£3.7m	
Total	£130.2m	£113.4m	£122.4m	£128.0m	£140.9m	

Place-based investments and how they are evaluated

1. UKRI supports place-based innovation through a range of programmes designed to strengthen local research and innovation ecosystems, support commercialisation, and build on locally identified priorities and strengths. Examples include the Local Innovations Partnership Fund⁶ (LIPF), Strength in Places Fund⁷ (SIPF), Innovation Accelerators⁸, and the Connecting Capability Fund⁹, which support regional growth through partnerships between universities, businesses, civic partners, and local government.
2. Examples of place-based investments with relevance to agriculture and food systems include the SIPF-supported **Growing Kent & Medway** programme (£18 million) which is helping develop the region as a centre for climate-smart food production and processing. A further £21 million was invested through the SIPF-supported **Digital Dairy Value-Chain**, supporting the renewal and decarbonisation of the dairy sector across south-west Scotland and Cumbria, introducing technologies for sensing and data handling, as well as infrastructure to support innovation and growth for local businesses.
3. UKRI is building an extensive evidence base around regional innovation through a portfolio of evaluations of these programmes. Collectively, these evaluations will assess the extent to which programme objectives are met, and help improve understanding of how place-based R&D and innovation investments contribute to economic growth, cluster development, innovation capacity, and local partnership working.
4. UKRI publishes a Geographical Distribution of Funding¹⁰ report annually. The publication enables us to track how UKRI investment is distributed across the regions and nations of the UK, and how this distribution has changed since financial year 2021–22. These data provide insight into the geographic distribution of R&D investment, helping us understand the level of research and innovation funding received by different parts of the UK. UKRI also tracks investments to place-based programmes as part of project monitoring. The integration of this with the aforementioned evaluations will provide an evidence-base for the success of regional investment.
5. The implementation of an organisation-wide evaluation strategy and evaluation framework, alongside the use of comparable indicators, metrics, and approaches where appropriate will enable findings to be compared and synthesised across programmes, helping UKRI and Government understand what works and assess success at a portfolio level.
6. In addition to formal evaluation activity, UKRI also draws on a wider range of evidence, including programme monitoring data, stakeholder engagement, portfolio and outcomes analysis, case studies, delivery insights, commissioned research, and external evidence. Together, these sources help build a richer understanding of the

⁶ [Local Innovation Partnerships Fund – UKRI](#)

⁷ [Strength in Places Fund – UKRI](#)

⁸ [Innovation Accelerator programme – UKRI](#)

⁹ [Connecting Capability Fund – Research England Development Fund – UKRI](#)

¹⁰ [Geographical distribution of funding – UKRI](#)

effectiveness of place-based innovation investments and inform the design of future interventions.

Comparative international investment figures in agriculture

1. While public agricultural R&D expenditure provides one important indicator of national investment, broader measures of innovation activity and commercialisation are also relevant when assessing competitiveness in agri-tech.
2. AgFunder's *Global AgriFoodTech Investment Report 2026*⁵ tracks venture capital investment into food and agriculture technology companies worldwide. The report **ranked the United Kingdom fifth globally in 2025**, attracting approximately \$685 million across 111 deals, behind the United States (\$5.9 billion; 507 deals), India (\$2.2 billion; 188 deals), China (\$1.2 billion; 199 deals) and the Netherlands (\$903 million; 50 deals). This is despite ranking 22nd in terms of public investment (**Table 5**)
 - i. The UK's fall from fourth (in 2024) to fifth place (in 2025) reflected a particularly strong year for the Netherlands, where a single \$495 million investment into online grocery platform Picnic accounted for more than half of total Dutch agrifoodtech investment. While the Netherlands attracted a higher total investment value, the UK recorded more than twice as many deals (111 compared to 50).
 - ii. The report also highlighted the UK's strength in science-led innovation. Among the ten largest agrifoodtech investment markets globally, the UK recorded the highest proportion of agrifoodtech funding directed towards deeptech¹¹ companies, with approximately 49% of UK agrifoodtech investment allocated to deeptech ventures. AgFunder attributes this to a combination of academic spin-outs, specialist venture capital investment and government support for research and development.
 - iii. It should be noted that these figures represent private venture capital investment into agri-food technology companies and startups, rather than public expenditure on agricultural research and innovation which in the UK is comparatively low. They therefore provide a different indicator of international competitiveness, reflecting the strength of national innovation ecosystems and their ability to attract private investment.
3. International comparisons of agricultural R&D investment remain challenging due to differences in reporting practices, classifications, and data availability. Recent academic work¹² notes that existing international datasets have often been fragmented and not directly comparable across countries. This has historically limited the availability of robust global comparisons of public agricultural R&D investment.
4. Efforts to improve global agricultural R&D datasets have recently culminated in the publication of the Global Research on Agriculture: Personnel and Expenditures (GRAPE) dataset¹³, which provides internationally comparable data for 190 countries up to 2022. In parallel, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

¹¹ AgFunder classifies deeptech as companies whose core competitive advantage is rooted in scientific or engineering innovation. Further information can be found in the report's sources and methodology.

¹² [A global dataset of public agricultural R&D investment: 1960-2022 | Scientific Data](#)

¹³ [GRAPE dataset | Zenodo](#)

(FAO) launched its new Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators (ASTI) domain in 2026¹⁴, providing a globally agreed framework for reporting agricultural R&D expenditure and research capacity. Together, these developments should improve the quality and comparability of international agricultural R&D statistics in future years.

5. Analysis of the GRAPE dataset indicates that the UK invested approximately \$2.9 billion¹⁵ (constant 2017 purchasing power parity (PPP) dollars) in total public agricultural R&D between 2018 and 2022 (see **Table 5**).
 - i. Public agricultural R&D expenditure increased over this period, rising from approximately \$533 million in 2018 to \$634 million in 2022. The largest public investors over this period were China, the United States, and India.

Table 5: Top 25 countries by cumulative public agricultural R&D expenditure, 2018–2022.
Constant 2017 PPP\$, US\$ million.

Rank (2018–2022 cumulative expenditure)	Country	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total (2018–2022)
1	China	6,901	7,506	7,647	7,789	7,964	37,806
2	United States	4,914	4,780	5,030	4,963	5,114	24,802
3	India	4,014	4,197	4,300	4,336	4,454	21,302
4	Japan	2,782	2,783	2,680	2,545	2,538	13,327
5	Brazil	2,947	3,086	2,555	2,324	2,276	13,188
6	Germany	1,600	1,634	1,606	1,594	1,838	8,272
7	France	1,526	1,548	1,500	1,550	1,537	7,661
8	South Korea	1,240	1,298	1,338	1,475	1,473	6,824
9	Thailand	934	940	942	950	968	4,734
10	Canada	800	945	963	918	871	4,496
11	Italy	866	874	824	871	953	4,388
12	Russia	783	831	854	861	860	4,190
13	Australia	862	832	797	731	671	3,892
14	Nigeria	728	608	608	789	807	3,540
15	Türkiye	706	689	721	739	638	3,493
16	Netherlands	625	664	698	731	662	3,380
17	Spain	677	675	695	683	634	3,364
18	Malaysia	613	615	635	704	709	3,276
19	Argentina	552	593	618	711	690	3,163
20	Indonesia	606	619	636	638	633	3,132
21	Taiwan	568	609	610	613	598	2,998
22	United Kingdom	533	554	548	595	634	2,864
23	Mexico	584	536	632	490	508	2,751
24	Iran	451	503	483	506	508	2,451
25	Egypt	436	408	503	539	529	2,415

¹⁴ [Data collection - Generic | FAO Statistics](#)

¹⁵ These figures are not directly comparable to the UKRI expenditure figures presented elsewhere in this return. The GRAPE dataset captures public agricultural R&D undertaken across government and higher education sectors and are likely to include activity funded through multiple routes, including other government departments. The underlying methodologies and classifications may also differ.

6. The UK is also home to one of the world's leading technology ecosystems, ranked among the largest globally and the largest in Europe¹⁶. This broader innovation environment helps support the formation, growth, and financing of technology-focused businesses across sectors, including agri-tech.
7. Taken together, the available evidence suggests that the UK attracts a greater share of global agri-tech investment activity than might be expected from public agricultural R&D expenditure alone. While public agricultural R&D expenditure and private venture capital investment measure different aspects of the innovation system, the UK performs strongly in attracting private investment into agri-food technology companies, particularly in science-led and deeptech sectors. This indicates a research and innovation ecosystem that is effective at translating scientific capability into investable agri-tech opportunities.

Return on public investment in agricultural research and development spending

1. Assessing the returns from agricultural research and innovation requires a long-term perspective. Many investments relate to pre-competitive research, where benefits are often realised over decades through improved productivity, resilience, and adoption. As such, investment in agricultural research and development must be treated as 'patient capital.'
2. UKRI routinely evaluates¹⁷ the outcomes and impacts arising from research and innovation investments. A range of evaluations have identified positive economic, commercial, and societal impacts from previous agricultural and food-system research programmes.

BBSRC investment in wheat research

3. An independent evaluation of BBSRC's wheat research portfolio¹⁸ published in 2023 found that:
 - i. BBSRC invested £221.7 million wheat research and innovation between 2010/11 and 2021/22.
 - ii. Over a 25-year period, BBSRC investment expected to create £900m Gross Value Added (GVA) for UK economy, yielding a return of £4 per £1 invested by BBSRC.
 - iii. Accounting for both UK and global benefits, wheat research could contribute to an additional £1.99 billion to global GVA, yielding a return of £8.9 per £1 invested by BBSRC.

Transforming Food Production (Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund)

4. An independent evaluation of the UKRI Transforming Food Production¹⁹ (TFP) programme found that:

¹⁶ [Digital and Technologies](#)

¹⁷ [UKRI evaluation strategy – UKRI](#)

¹⁸ [Evaluating the impacts of BBSRC's investment in wheat research – UKRI](#)

¹⁹ [Transforming food production final evaluation report – UKRI](#)

- i. With £70 million of programme funding, participating projects anticipated £36 million of co-investment alongside TFP grant funding.
- ii. Total follow-on investment to progress the TFP-funded technology further, for those organisations where data are available, is £391 million.
- iii. One supported project raised over £2m through crowdfunding from over 600 investors, many of whom were UK livestock farmers, indicating strong interest from potential end users and confidence in the technology being developed.
- iv. Participating businesses demonstrated greater employment growth (14.1%) than comparable businesses.
- v. Programme participants progressed through Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) significantly faster than unfunded applications.
- vi. Modelling suggests that participating organisations could generate approximately £175 million of additional turnover by 2028.

Innovate UK support for agri-tech innovation

5. Between 2020 and 2026, agri-tech projects supported by Innovate UK received approximately £458 million in grant funding, matched by £158 million of match funding invested by project participants. Of this, around £259 million of grant funding and £131 million of match funding related to SME participants. These figures represent match funding contributed by project partners as part of supported projects and do not include additional investment subsequently secured from external investors.
6. Evidence from the 2025 Defra Farming Innovation Investor Partnerships competition demonstrates the potential for public funding to catalyse additional private investment. The 12 SMEs supported through this activity in 2025 received **grants totalling £7.98 million** and have already confirmed **£36.6 million of aligned investment from investors**, with this figure expected to increase to approximately **£44 million** as agreements are finalised. Applications for the 2026 Defra Farming Innovation Investor Partnerships competition are currently being evaluated.
7. Innovate UK is also working to strengthen its evidence base on programme outcomes through a recently implemented Impact Framework, which will provide more granular information on outcomes arising from supported innovation activities.

International Wheat Yield Partnership

8. The International Wheat Yield Partnership (IWYP) is an international partnership of funders, research centres and private industry working towards a common goal of increasing wheat yield potential by 50% by 2035. It provides an example of how long-term strategic investment can contribute to global food security outcomes through international collaboration.
9. BBSRC has supported IWYP for more than a decade, and the programme is included as a case study (p. 91) in the independent evaluation of BBSRC's investment in wheat research¹⁸. Outcomes to date have included:

- i. IWYP-supported germplasm evaluated through international yield trials has demonstrated observed yield improvements of 2.5% year-on-year.
- ii. New lines at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), a key partner in IWYP, exhibit significant improvements over test varieties in several target traits, including 20% increased biomass, 30% higher radiation use efficiency (RUE), 10-15% higher photosynthetic efficiency, 10% more grains and 15% larger and heavier grains.
- iii. Breeding organisations are incorporating IWYP-supported traits into breeding programmes, helping to develop more productive and climate-resilient wheat varieties; 31 lines have been selected for yield, stability, and disease resistance, shared with 76 organisations at 85 sites worldwide (primarily public sector). 9 IWYP-derived lines have already been released as varieties in 5 countries.

Transforming UK Food Systems

10. Current strategic programmes are also subject to ongoing evaluation, such as the Transforming UK Food Systems²⁰ (TUKFS) programme, funded by UKRI through its Strategic Priorities Fund²¹ (SPF). While it is too early to fully assess the longer-term economic impacts of the TUKFS programme, interim evaluation findings²² already demonstrate positive progress through a place-based approach, including extensive engagement across the food system and participation from over 100 food businesses.

Research and Innovation Campuses

11. Research and Innovation Campuses²³ provide a further example of how UKRI and BBSRC investments support the translation of research into economic activity and commercial impact, delivering local, regional, national, and global impact. Several campuses host companies working in areas relevant to agriculture, food production, and food security.
12. BBSRC commissions independent economic evaluations of its research and innovation campuses. For example, an assessment of the Roslin Innovation Centre²⁴ (RIC) - located on the University of Edinburgh's Easter Bush Campus, within Midlothian Science Zone²⁵ - estimated total GVA impacts of between £32.8 million and £186.3 million, with an estimated return of £2.86 per £1 of public investment during its first five years of operation. The RIC supports a wide range of tenants, including those that operate in the agri-tech sector. Relevant examples include Roslin Technologies, which develops animal stem cell technologies for cultivated meat production, and Raygonal, a company developing AI-enabled sustainable aquaculture systems.

²⁰ [Home - Transforming UK Food Systems](#)

²¹ [Strategic Priorities Fund – UKRI](#)

²² [Transforming UK Food Systems SPF programme interim evaluation – UKRI](#)

²³ [UK Research and Innovation Campuses – UKRI](#)

²⁴ [Roslin Innovation Centre report – UKRI](#)

²⁵ [Midlothian Science Zone](#)

Best wishes,

Professor Anne Ferguson-Smith
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Associate Director, Thematic Research
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Chris Danks
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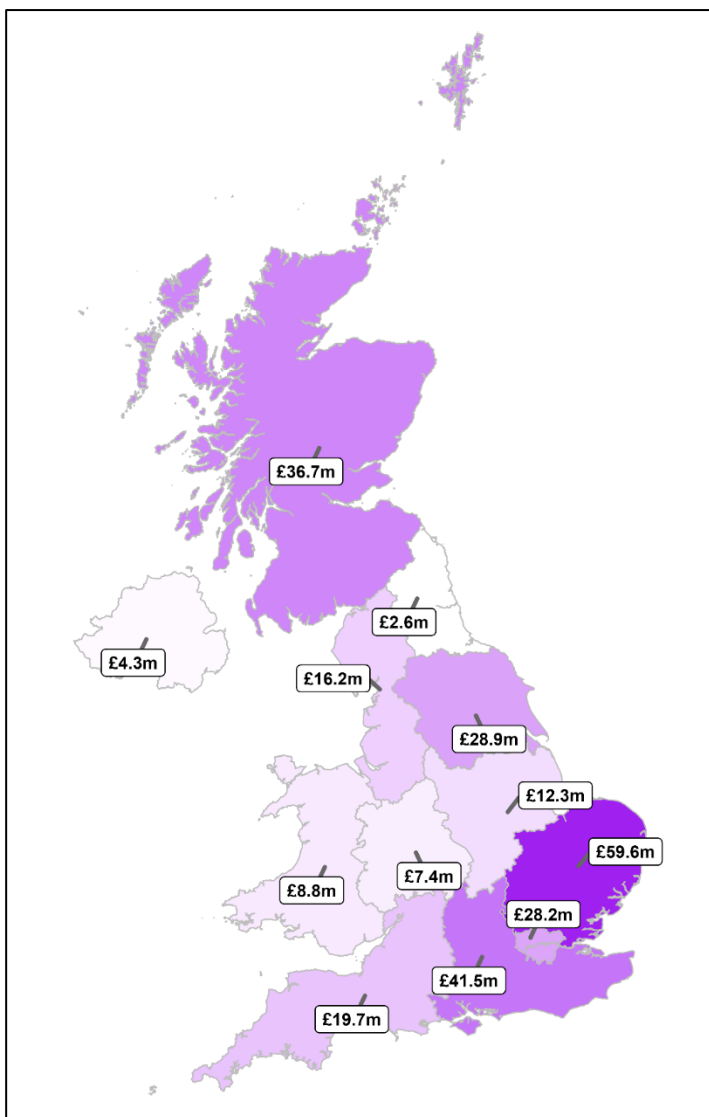


Figure 1: UKRI agricultural research and innovation expenditure by UK ITL1 region, 2025 (Calendar Year)

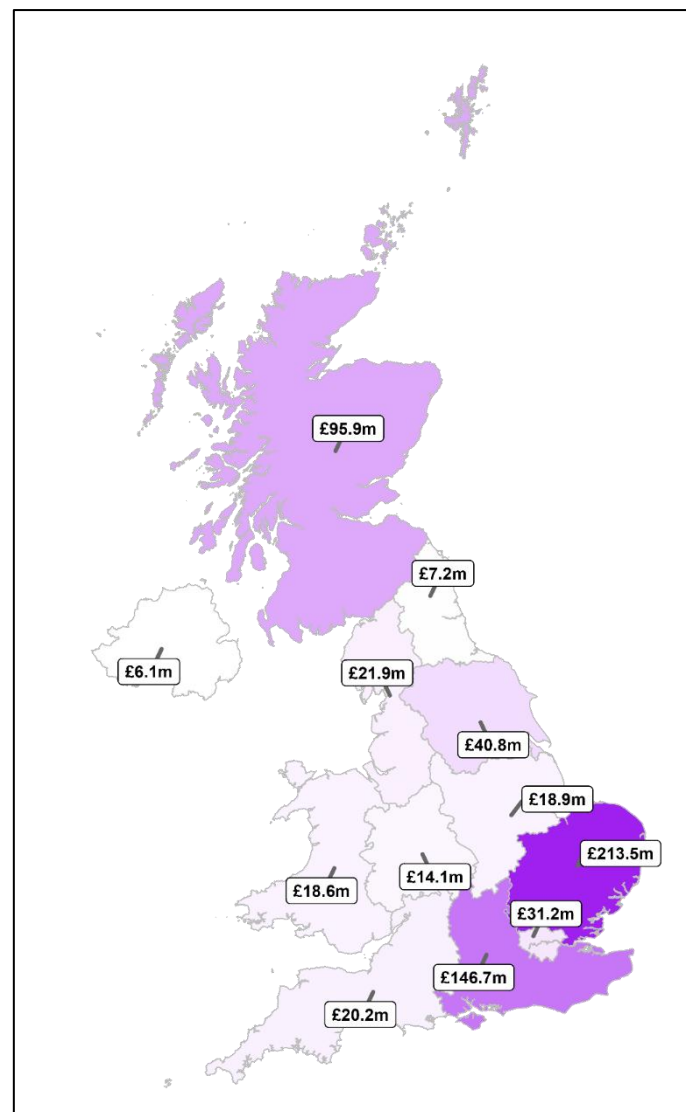


Figure 2: BBSRC agricultural portfolio expenditure by UK ITL1 region, 2020/21 – 2024/25