

## Dear Supermarkets – A plea for integrity from #FarmersAgainstFarmwashing

To the CEOs of the ‘Big Six’ supermarkets: Ken Murphy (Tesco), Simon Roberts (Sainsbury’s), Stuart Rose (ASDA), Rami Baitiéh (Morrisons), Giles Hurley (ALDI), and Ryan McDonnell (LIDL).

One year ago, we wrote to you as part of Riverford’s #GetFairAboutFarming campaign and explained that British family farmers are on the brink. The Big Six’s imbalanced, short-term, and wasteful buying practices leave farmers without a stable income – and many are at risk of going bust.

In response, you’ve done some brilliant marketing. We’ve noticed the British flags on display up and down the fruit and veg aisles, the meat offering ‘higher welfare standards’, and the quaint farm imagery on labels and billboards. You’ve even publicly promised to support farmers, to the tune of billions of pounds!

But in reality? Much of the produce under those British flags is imported, animal welfare claims are often cynically worded, and ‘trusted farms’ are frequently US-style mega farms. Meanwhile, the quaint farms shown in adverts are struggling to survive. This is farmwashing.

Behind the scenes, things have only got worse for Britain’s small farmers. Our survey reveals:

- A staggering 61% of farmers now confess being **likely to give up their farm** in the next 18 months.
- **Only 1 in 4** (24%) farmers think that supermarket claims to support British farmers are credible and backed up by supermarket buying behaviour.
- Two thirds (67%) **live in fear of being de-listed if they speak out** about supermarkets.

The British public care about where their food comes from. Shoppers want to support local, sustainable farms, where animals are treated well, staff are paid properly, and the planet is protected. Two-thirds of us seek to buy British – and research shows that shoppers trust farmers more than anyone else in the food supply chain.

Supermarkets all leverage the trusted reputation of British family farmers. But we believe, that often, food is being mis-sold.

Farmwashing doesn’t just mislead shoppers. Labour shortages and catastrophic weather mean that this is already a very challenging time for British farmers. If you don’t start treating them more fairly, then real food from real farms – which customers value and trust – risks disappearing from shelves altogether.

Supermarkets have the power to help protect British food and farming, in particular the smaller-scale British farms. You know what needs to be done; in fact, you’ve spoken publicly about doing it. Now all we’re asking you for is a little integrity.

Please, turn your words into actions. Stop farmwashing. And start offering real support for real farms.

### Guy Singh-Watson, founder of Riverford Organic Farmers

1. Jimmy Doherty, Conservationist, farmer and TV presenter
2. Zoe Colville, Chief Shepherdess, British lamb farmer
3. Kriss Woodhead, Super Serious Farmer, British lamb farmer
4. Hannah Jackson, Red Shepherdess, British lamb farmer
5. Ben Theo Andrews, Organic farmer and content creator, Herefordshire

6. Marcus Mumford, Musician and Farmer, Whiddon Farm, Barnstaple
7. Rick Stein, Chef, Restaurateur, Writer and Television presenter, Cornwall
8. Melissa Hemsley, Cook and Author of Feel Good and Eat Happy, London
9. Martin Lines, Chief Executive of the Nature Friendly Farming Network, UK
10. Sue Pritchard, Chief Executive of the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission, Bristol
11. Gareth Morgan - Head of Farming Policy, Soil Association
12. Rob Percival, Head of Food Policy, Soil Association
13. Samantha Cooper, Director of Business Declares, London
14. Isabella Tree, Author & Co-Owner of Knepp Estate
15. Safia Minney MBE, Chief Executive of the People Tree, London
16. Ben Goldsmith, Environmentalist, London
17. Jake Fiennes, Conservationist and Land manager, Author of Land Healer, Norfolk
18. Abby Allen, Director of Pipers Farm, Hakwhurst
19. Charles Dowding, Gardener and Author of No Dig, Somerset
20. Will White, Sustainable Farming Coordinator of Sustain, London
21. Yasmin Khan, Broadcaster and Human Rights Campaigner, Award-winning Author of The Saffron Tales, Zaitoun and Ripe Fig, Oxford
22. John Mildmay-White, The Flete Estate
23. Carolyn Steel, Award-winning author of Sitopia and Hungry City, England
24. Rowan Phillimore, We Feed The UK and The Gaia Foundation, London
25. Geetie Singh-Watson, MBE, Ethical Entrepreneur and Owner of The Bull Inn, Totnes
26. Phillipa Hughes, Managing Director, The Bull Inn Totnes
27. Ruth West, Co-founder of Real Farming Trust, ORFC
28. Tracy Worcester, Founder of Farms Not Factories, South Gloucestershire
29. William Chase, Entrepreneur and Founder of Tyrrells Potato Chips and Chase Distillery, Herefordshire
30. Niki Webster, Cook and Author
31. Ted Howard-Jones, Founder of Countryside Marketing, Cholsey Grange Farm, Buckinghamshire
32. Emma Mosey, Chari, Farm Retail Association
33. Skye Gyngell, Chef and Founder of Spring Restaurant, and Culinary Director at Heckfield Place, London
34. Shillingford Organics
35. Phil Stocker, Chief Executive of The National Sheep Association, Worcestershire
36. Wallace Currie, Founder of Rural2Kitchen, Isle of Arran
37. Gizzi Erskine, Chef & TV personality
38. Ravinder Bhogal, Restaurateur and Author
39. Barrie Quinn, Portnoo Market Garden
40. Pete Russell, founder, Ooooby
41. Donna Marie Edmonds, Chief Executive of Farms for City Children, Exeter
42. Mark Diacono, author and presenter
43. Seb Godwin, Young Farmer and Shepherd, Oxfordshire
44. Ripple Effect, charity
45. Felicity Cloake, author and food writer
46. Ioan Humphreys, Young Farmer, Powys
47. Olivia Shave, Farmer and Chief Executive of Eco Ewe, Norwich
48. Cat Smith, Labour Member of Parliament for Lancaster and Wyre
49. Marianna Leivaditaki, Author and Chef
50. Nigel Akehurst, Farmer and farming journalist
51. Jamie Walton, Grower and Influencer
52. Colin Ramsay, Independent filmmaker and Director of Six Inches of Soil, Cambridge
53. Demeter Scanlon, publisher
54. Anna Shepherd, author and cook

55. Melissa Thompson, Award-winning writer and cook
56. Jane Farnham, Director @ Great British Talent & 'No Farmers, No Food' Campaigner
57. Julia Kirby-Smith, Project leader of Better Food Traders, London
58. Rebecca Loughton, The Landworkers Alliance, UK
59. Caroline Bell, Director Acorn Dairy, organic milk farmer & retailer, North East
60. Ben Lake, Plaid Cymru Member of Parliament for Ceredigion Preseli
61. Emily Scott, restaurateur & author
62. George Monbiot, author and political and environmental activist
63. Anthony Field, Head of Compassion in World Farming UK
64. Anna Guyer, Founder, Greenhouse Communications
65. Cristina Dimetto, Managing Director, UK Organic
66. David Chadwick, Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Brecon, Radnor and Cwm Tawe
67. Eleanor Gilbert, Berkshire Farm Girl, Arable Farmer
68. Chris Jones, Woodland Valley Farm, Ladock
69. Tom MacMillan, Professor of Rural Policy & Strategy at the Royal Agricultural University
70. David Grint, CEO The Royal Agricultural Society of England
71. Martha Hayes, The Royal Agricultural Society of England & British Beef Farmer
72. Jo Hunt, Crofter at Knockfarrel Produce
73. Christopher Stopes, Chair of English Organic Forum
74. Ian Wilkinson, co-founder of FarmEd
75. Jim Twine, CEO of Organic Herb Trading Company
76. Hannah Shipton, CEO of Abel and Cole.
77. Phil Haughton, Founder Better Food Company.
78. Emilie Vanpoperinghe, founder OddBox
79. Roger Kerr, CEO of Organic Farmers & Growersgrowing
80. Rob Haward, CEO, Riverford Organic Farmers
81. Mike smith, Deapp farm
82. Laura Pollock, Lower House Farm, British livestock farmer, South Wales
83. Alex Sobel, Labour Member of Parliament for Leeds Central and Headingley
84. Flavian Obiero, The Kenyan Pig Farmer, Tenant Farmer in Titchfield, Hampshire
85. Charlotte Ashley, Farmer, Cumbria
86. Alan Bates, Owners and Grower at Menter Pandy Farm, North Wales
87. Elen Jones, Owners and Grower at Menter Pandy Farm, North Wales
88. Ellie Chowns, Green Member of Parliament for North Herefordshire
89. Richard Foord, Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Honiton and Sidmouth
90. James Playfair-Hannay, Farmer & Vice Chairman Border Union Agricultural Society
91. Donya Donger, Peacock Farm, Leicestershire
92. Leigh Donger, Peacock Farm, Leicestershire
93. John Pawsey, Shimpling Park Farm, Suffolk
94. Julie Brown, director, Growing Communities
95. Angus MacDonald, Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Inverness, Skye, and West Ross-shire
96. Ian Byrne, Independent Member of Parliament for Liverpool West Derby
97. Caroline Voaden, Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for South Devon
98. Sarah Dyke, Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Glastonbury and Somerton
99. George Dunn, Chief Executive, Tenant Farmers Association
100. Amanda Hack, Labour Member of Parliament for North West Leicestershire