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**We are all farmers: revolutionising UK farming after Brexit to produce healthy, local food for all**

Bringing people back onto the land and reorienting subsidies to small-scale, sustainable farming after Brexit could help solve the current environmental crisis, says a new briefing from the Food Research Collaboration.

Radical changes in food production are urgently needed if we are to halt the decline of wildlife and provide people with ample, healthy and sustainable food. Currently £3.5 billion per year in farm subsidies support industrial scale farming, with the most money going to the biggest landowners.

The briefing, written by Professor Dave Goulson at the University of Sussex, points out that allotments can produce abundant food while supporting a healthy, biodiverse environment, showing that the two need not be mutually exclusive.

Prof Goulson said:

*‘We are making such a mess of our planet, we’re in the midst of a sixth mass extinction event. Leaving the Common Agricultural Policy could be a golden opportunity to revolutionise our farming system so it supports biodiversity and sustainable food for all. We will need to bring more people back onto the land as small-scale farming is more labour intensive, but would that be such a bad thing?’*

Buying more land for allotments and getting more people involved in small-scale farming, primarily aimed at growing mixed fruit and vegetables for local consumption, would not only enable people to eat healthy food with minimal packaging, but it would also provide a route into employment in a time when more and more jobs are becoming redundant due to automation, argues the paper.

Prof Goulson, whose book ‘The Garden Jungle or Gardening to Save the Planet’ is published on 11 July, calls for the removal of area-based subsidies and reinvesting the money in allotments, small-scale sustainable farms and research and development to optimise sustainability and productivity of this type of farming.

The paper also highlights that gardens and allotments are not only good models for sustainable food growing, but also spaces that allow average homeowners to contribute to wildlife conservation with simple actions such as not using pesticides; providing homes for bees and other insects; and growing plants that insects can pollinate.

Read the briefing here: <https://foodresearch.org.uk/download/14488/>

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**Notes to editors:**

1, The Garden Jungle or Gardening to Save the Planet is published by Penguin Books. Find out more about the book: <https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/111/1117058/the-garden-jungle/9781787331358.html>

2, The **Food Research Collaboration (FRC)** brings together academics and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to improve food policy in the United Kingdom. As an initiative of the Centre for Food Policy, at City, University of London, we support the Centre’s mission of advancing integrated and inclusive food policy. This briefing paper is part of the FRC Food Brexit Briefing series, with the full series available here: <https://foodresearch.org.uk/food-brexit-briefings/>

3, The **University of Sussex** has challenged convention since its foundation in 1961. From the campus’ modernist architecture on the edge of a rural national park, to our progressive academics and creative professional services staff, to the inspiring students who choose to learn and live here, to the very tone of the institution and the nature of its conversations, through to the expressions of radicalism, critical thinking and, at times, dissent. The University of Sussex has a long tradition of experimentation and innovation that has made a real difference to the lives of many students, and those who benefit from our research and wider endeavours. Our research creates new agendas, contributes new knowledge and provides new ideas and solutions that are helping to shape the world. We challenge conventional thinking and discourses, offering inspiring and creative ways to understand and solve global issues. Visit [www.sussex.ac.uk](file:///C:\Users\dg229\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\1OT6O6T1\www.sussex.ac.uk)