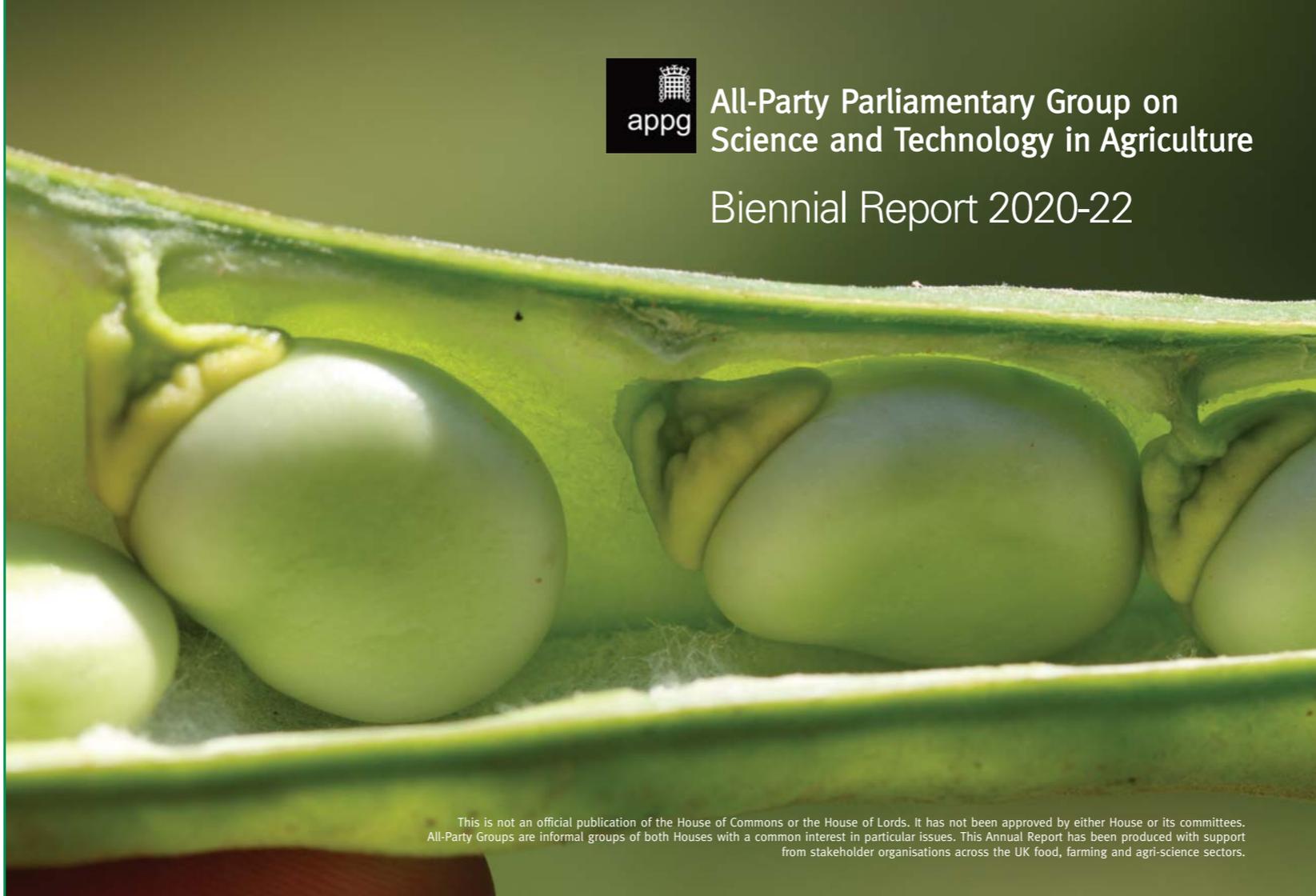




All-Party Parliamentary Group on Science and Technology in Agriculture

Biennial Report 2020-22



This is not an official publication of the House of Commons or the House of Lords. It has not been approved by either House or its committees. All-Party Groups are informal groups of both Houses with a common interest in particular issues. This Annual Report has been produced with support from stakeholder organisations across the UK food, farming and agri-science sectors.

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Lords seek to allow gene-editing in UK 'to produce healthy, hardier crops'

Breaking away from EU rules on gene editing should be a no-brainer for Government

MPs call for Ag Bill to boost precision breeding post-Brexit

Gene editing 'vital' for future of UK farming

Include agri-food in US-UK talks, APPG urges

APPG chair calls for renewed policy focus on sustainable intensification in agriculture

UK to look at changing rules to allow gene editing in farming

UK set to approve gene-edited livestock and crops in major post-Brexit break with EU policy

Cross-party group leads calls for Ag Bill boost to genetic innovation post-Brexit

Introduction

As the montage of headlines opposite indicates, the All-Party Group has experienced one of its busiest and most influential periods on record over the past couple of years.

This unprecedented level of activity reflects the urgent need to ensure Britain's farmers can access the innovation, knowledge and technologies they need to help feed a hungry world in the face of climate change and pressure on finite natural resources.

War in Ukraine has provided a sharp reminder that we cannot afford to be complacent with an issue as fundamental as food security.

Guided by science, Britain is well-placed to improve its own food production capacity, and to help deliver technological solutions to others, while at the same time safeguarding natural ecosystems and tackling the climate crisis.

Ensuring scientific rigour and evidence underpin the Government's food and farming policies is a key priority for this APPG.

Through the height of the Covid pandemic and beyond, the Group continued to host a full programme of meetings, with high-level guest speakers and active participation from cross-party MPs, Lords and stakeholders across the sector.

From genetic innovation to drone technology, from agri-tech exports to post-Brexit opportunities for regulatory reform, and from the potential of home-grown protein crops to priorities for a new National Food Strategy, the Group has engaged across a wide range of issues.

And our activities have delivered positive impact.

The All-Party Group led a co-ordinated campaign urging Ministers to adopt a more enabling approach to the regulation of gene editing in agriculture, bringing together cross-party politicians alongside leading scientists, farmers, crop and livestock breeders and others - culminating in the Precision Breeding Bill currently before Parliament.

The Group led the way in persuading the UK Government to sign up to the US-led Sustainable Productivity Growth Coalition (SPG), sending a clear signal that Britain is part of a global drive to use agricultural science and technology to forge a more sustainable food future.

And the APPG is progressing discussions with Government Ministers and officials on the science-based sustainability metrics needed to ensure the optimum balance between food production, resource use and environmental impact.

As ever, I am grateful to Officers, Members and Stakeholders of the All-Party Group who have supported our work programme over this period, and have helped to highlight and reinforce the strategic significance of agricultural science and technology.



Julian Sturdy MP
Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Science & Technology in Agriculture

APPGSTA priorities

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Science and Technology in Agriculture exists to promote debate among politicians and other stakeholders on the value and role of scientific innovation in UK agriculture.

The following six priority themes have been agreed by Officers and Members to help frame the All-Party Group's work programme and activities:

Priorities



Promote a strong UK policy focus on agricultural science and innovation as an economic driver and response to global food security and environmental challenges.



Ensure future UK regulation of agri-science innovation is evidence-based, proportionate and enabling.



Promote an effective and sustainable balance between the funding requirements of fundamental, applied and translational R&D - including knowledge exchange - in the agri-science sector to promote a rapid transition from discovery to application of innovation.



Champion the UK's role as a global agri-science hub, attracting inward investment and expertise and exporting technological solutions.



Seek clear and measurable targets for sustainable intensification in UK agriculture, applying developments in data science.



Promote more positive public engagement with agricultural science and technology and encourage the next generation of agricultural scientists.

Setting the Agenda

The All-Party Group has been proactive in raising the profile of these six priority themes with Ministers and in Parliament, leading the debate on issues such as post-Brexit regulation of genetic technologies, sustainable intensification, pro-innovation policies and the need for a more joined up approach to funding crop genetic research and innovation.

Gene editing

In May 2020, Julian Sturdy wrote to Defra Secretary George Eustice on behalf of the APPG urging the Government to support a targeted amendment to the Agriculture Bill, paving the way for Ministers to consult on the rule changes needed to set aside restrictive EU rules on precision breeding techniques and bring our domestic regulations into line with the stance of other countries, such as the US, Argentina, Brazil, Australia and Japan. An APPGSTA-sponsored amendment to the Bill was tabled by Vice-Chair Lord Cameron of Dillington, supported by cross-party Peers and backed by a broad coalition of farmers, scientists, breeders and agri-food interests. The amendment was withdrawn after Defra Minister Lord Gardiner agreed to bring forward the requested public consultation, which resulted in the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill currently before Parliament.

Crop Genetic Innovation Research Fund

In July 2021, the All-Party Group wrote to Defra Secretary George Eustice, highlighting concerns raised by leading UK plant scientists and breeders that opportunities to exploit major advances in our understanding of plant science are being lost due to a fragmented R&D pipeline in plant genetics. With crop genetic innovation recognised as the single most important factor driving agricultural productivity, the APPG backed calls to establish a long-term, strategic Crop Genetic Innovation Research Fund to bridge a long-recognised hiatus in research funding between early-stage genetic research and its application in commercial breeding programmes.

Sustainable intensification and metrics

On 22 February 2022, Julian Sturdy introduced a Westminster Hall debate in Parliament on 'Sustainable intensification and metrics in agriculture.' Recalling the advice of Professor Sir John Beddington's 2011 Foresight report, he urged Ministers to restore the policy focus on sustainable intensification in agriculture - securing the optimum balance between food production, resource use and environmental impact - and called for the adoption of science-based sustainability metrics to support that process. He issued a stark reminder that the 'perfect storm' of population growth, climate change and pressure on finite natural resources of land water and energy



remains as threatening as ever to the security of food supplies. Two days after the debate, Russia invaded Ukraine, prompting renewed and urgent concerns over global food prices and availability. The APPG is now progressing discussions with Government Ministers and officials on sustainability metrics.

Meetings

Throughout the Covid lockdown period and beyond, the All-Party Group has continued to host a full programme of meetings. A high-profile line-up of expert speakers and active participation from MPs, Lords and stakeholders from across the research, farming and food chain sectors provided a platform for lively and informed debate on key issues affecting the development, regulation and application of science and technology in agriculture.

Full meeting reports and copies of guest speakers' presentations are available to download via the meetings section of the All-Party Group website at www.appg-agscience.org.uk

Post-Brexit opportunities for better UK regulation of plant breeding innovation

Guest speakers:

Karen Holt, Regulatory Consultant
Prof Jonathan Jones, The Sainsbury Laboratory
Ian Munnery, SESVanDerHave UK
Dr Tina Barsby, NIAB

In May 2020, the All-Party Group hosted a session focusing on post-Brexit opportunities for better UK regulation of innovative plant breeding techniques such as GM and gene editing.



Regulatory consultant **Karen Holt** presented a new report comparing regulatory approaches around the world and providing recommendations for the UK. This highlighted the importance of political will in supporting functional, science-based regulatory systems, rather than simply whether they are product- or process-based.

Professor Jonathan Jones described his research to develop a GM blight-resistant potato, and highlighted the opportunities for public good GM crop research through more proportionate, risk-based regulation.

Ian Munnery of sugar beet breeder SESVanDerHave UK, presented the promising results of an Innovate UK-funded study to identify novel sources of virus yellows resistance in sugar beet, and explained how

gene editing techniques could radically speed up the commercial availability of much-needed alternatives to now-banned neonicotinoid seed treatments.

Dr Tina Barsby also highlighted the positive opportunities to address climate change, health and sustainability objectives through improved access to gene editing techniques, and discussed options for UK regulatory divergence post-Brexit.

National Food Strategy - the role of science and innovation

Guest speaker:

Henry Dimbleby, National Food Strategy lead



At the Group's meeting in September 2020, National Food Strategy lead **Henry Dimbleby** explained that following the publication of Part One of the Strategy in July 2020, which focused on issues of food insecurity and standards, Part Two of the Strategy would include a more systematic examination of the food system and its impact in terms of health, climate, biodiversity and the environment.

Focusing on agri-science within the Strategy, he suggested that the food system was currently riven with negative externalities which were not being properly measured, costed or reported.

Any successful shift in food system policy would mean redefining productivity - for example taking into account sustainability and health impacts - and establishing meaningful metrics to build those externalities into the system.



Reversing declines in productivity to become a world leader in sustainable agriculture would also require a change in approach to research and innovation - not just embracing high-tech genetic innovation, robotics and vertical farming but also developing more effective ways of sharing knowledge and best practice, and understanding why there is such enormous variability in productivity on British farms.

Better alignment and connectivity between research organisations, working towards shared challenges, would be an important part of that process, he suggested.

USDA Agricultural Innovation Agenda

Guest speaker:

Ted A. McKinney, USDA Under-Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs



In October 2020, USDA Under-Secretary **Ted A. McKinney** joined the group virtually from Washington D.C. to describe the United States' open-arms approach to innovation through the Agriculture Innovation Agenda (AIA), a commitment to use science and technology to help farmers increase production by 40% while halving the environmental footprint of US agriculture by 2050.

He contrasted the US approach with the EU's Green Deal Farm to Fork (F2F) Strategy, which includes an ambition to increase the EU organic area to 25% of total farmland, and sets targets to reduce pesticide use by 50%, fertiliser use by 20% and antimicrobial use in farmed animals by 50% by 2030. Under-Secretary McKinney warned that the EU approach would double world food prices and plunge millions more people into food insecurity.

He added that many of the objectives set out in F2F - in terms of soil health, cover cropping, reduced soil erosion and run-off - were already being delivered by US farmers, but as the result of efficiency savings and adopting new technologies, not by banning them.

In particular, he highlighted the contribution of technologies such as GMO crops in supporting minimum and no-tillage farming systems in the US, where crop production resulted in half the GHG emissions compared with the EU, with additional soil quality benefits.

Under-Secretary McKinney also welcomed the direction the UK was taking in relation to gene editing, and applauded the work of the All-Party Group in pressing for change.

Drones in precision agriculture

Guest speakers:

Viscount Ridley, Regulatory Horizons Council
Jonathan Gill, Harper Adams University
Dr Shamal Mohammed, AGRI-EPI Centre
Hendrik zu Knyphausen, Hummingbird Technologies

In February 2021, the APPG hosted a session focused on the use of drones in precision agriculture, and supporting an ongoing inquiry by the Regulatory Horizons Council (RHC) into the potential opportunities and regulatory barriers surrounding drone technology in the UK.

RHC member **Viscount Ridley** explained that the Council had been established by BEIS to advise Ministers on the regulatory reforms needed to support the safe and rapid uptake of promising new technologies across a range of areas.



Guest speakers from Hummingbird Technologies, the National Centre for Precision Farming, and the AGRI-EPI Centre, described how the use of drones in agriculture offers significant opportunities to save time and improve the precision and efficiency of both crop and livestock

production, from accurate field mapping, management of crop health issues and monitoring grazing livestock to precision application of inputs.

They also highlighted opportunities to develop a more enabling UK regulatory environment to support their safe use, drawing on experience of drone operation in other parts of the world. These included a more risk-based approach to Beyond Visual Line Of Sight (BVLOS) restrictions and multiple-drone operation, taking account of developments in assistive technology, and a less precautionary approach to spray done operation, which research showed could allow more precise targeting of inputs with reduced carbon footprint and without the soil compaction from tractor-mounted sprayers.

PM's Task Force on Innovation, Growth and Regulatory Reform (TIGRR)

Brainstorm with George Freeman MP



In March 2021, the All-Party Group hosted a rapid evidence-gathering and brain-storming session with former APPGSTA chair **George Freeman MP** to support the work of the Prime Minister's Task Force on Innovation, Growth and Regulatory Reform (TIGRR).

TIGRR was convened in February 2021 to scope out and propose options for how the UK can take advantage of its new regulatory freedoms outside the EU to reduce unnecessary barriers, drive innovation and accelerate the adoption of new technologies.

Eleven guest speakers from a cross-section of agricultural and horticultural organisations fed in their priorities for innovation and regulatory reform which would unleash opportunities for innovation and economic growth in the agri-food sector.

Proposals ranged from a switch to more risk-based regulation in genetics, crop protection, biologicals and alternative feeds, calls for more research into viable home-grown protein sources, and the urgent need for consistent sustainability metrics to frame the research and policy agenda, including a more meaningful and science-based approach to measuring methane emissions from livestock production.

Many of these suggestions were included in the final TIGRR report to the Prime Minister. In his concluding remarks George Freeman underlined his ambition for the UK to lead the world in the science of 'agrmetrics', defining what a 'sustainable' litre of milk or kg of flour actually is - not based on emotion but on the science of measuring resource use and environmental impact per unit of production.

Priority Areas
Genetic innovation
Alternative proteins
Novel feed sources
Sustainability metrics
Robotics and automation
Drone technology

International trade opportunities for the UK agri-tech sector

Guest speakers:

Rt Hon Greg Hands MP, Minister of State for Trade Policy, DIT
Elizabeth Warham, DIT
Nick von Westenholz, NFU



In April 2021, Minister for Trade Policy **Rt Hon Greg Hands MP** described the work taking place to support and promote the agri-tech sector in the context of UK trade deals and the Government's international trade strategy.

Mr Hands emphasised the UK's position as a global leader in agri-tech, with exports contributing significantly to the UK economy, particularly in sectors such as agrochemicals and animal health.

He updated on progress in trade talks, where existing EU trade agreements had already been rolled over with 67 countries. The UK Government was now also participating actively in the WTO.

Elizabeth Warham noted that the Covid pandemic had led to increased demand for agri-tech due to a renewed global focus on food security. DIT was now working in 42 different markets overseas to help UK agri-tech partners export. She reported that the UK's pipeline for agri-tech investment has increased by 50% in the past year, making Britain the fourth biggest global investor in agri-tech.

Nick von Westenholz underlined the importance of ensuring agri-tech trade policy is joined up with domestic policy. He cautioned against the risk of promoting exports of agricultural technologies which due to regulatory barriers could not be used by British farmers, citing concerns over inherited EU regulations in areas such as genetics and agrochemicals where this could be the case.

Britain is the fourth biggest global investor in agri-tech

The socio-economic contribution of plant breeding in the UK and EU - study

Guest speaker:

Dr Steffen Noleppa, HFFA Research GmbH



At the All-Party Group's meeting in June 2021, agricultural economist **Dr Steffen Noleppa** presented the headline findings of a recently published study into the socio-economic contribution of plant breeding in Europe, including the first public presentation of UK-specific data.

Dr Noleppa explained that genetic improvement of crops through plant breeding is the single most important factor driving productivity gains in agriculture, and is a major contributor to wider socio-economic and environmental goals such as improved farm incomes, food price stability, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and conservation of key natural resources such as land, water and biodiversity.

In relation to the UK, the study concluded that without the contribution of improved varieties over the past 20 years, crop yields would be 19% lower, and 1.8 million hectares of additional land would be needed in other parts of the world to meet our food needs, placing additional pressure on scarce global resources and causing more than 300 million tonnes of additional GHG emissions.

The HFFA study also highlighted the challenges of maintaining current rates of yield improvement, underlining the critical importance of access to new breeding techniques, such as gene editing.

Without plant breeding in the UK over the past 20 years:

- Crop yields 19% lower
- 1.8 million ha of additional land needed to meet our food needs
- 300 million tonnes of additional GHG emissions

Whatever happened to Sustainable Intensification?

Guest speakers:

Professor Sir David Baulcombe FRS, University of Cambridge
 Professor Michael Winter OBE, University of Exeter
 Professor Paul Wilson, University of Nottingham
 Professor Andrew Balmford FRS, University of Cambridge

In September 2021, 12 years after the Royal Society's 'Reaping the Benefits' report first coined the term, and 10 years since Sir John Beddington's Foresight Report urged the UK Government to take a lead in promoting it as the necessary policy response to a 'perfect storm' of global food security pressures, the APPG hosted a panel of leading UK scientific experts to consider the question - 'Whatever happened to Sustainable Intensification?'

The UK Government responded to the Foresight Report by establishing the Defra Sustainable Intensification Research Programme (SIP), a multi-partner research programme from 2014-2018 to investigate the challenge of securing the optimum balance between food production, resource use and environmental protection.

And yet while the challenges identified in the Foresight Report remain as urgent as ever, guest speakers noted that the outputs and recommendations generated as part of the Defra SIP platform appeared to have been quietly shelved and forgotten in current policy discussions.



In particular, the meeting underlined the lack of consistent, science-based metrics to define and measure sustainability in agriculture and food production.

Panellists emphasised that, to be meaningful and robust, sustainability metrics must focus on measuring resource use and environmental impact per functional unit of output, not per area farmed.

Launch of Agri-Tech exports initiative

Guest speaker:

Mike Freer MP



At the Group's meeting in January 2022, Minister for Exports **Mike Freer MP** joined representatives of UK Technology for Agriculture and Genetics (UK TAG), the Commercial Horticultural Association (CHA) and the Agricultural Engineers Association (AEA) to launch a new website (www.agritech-uk.org) aimed at boosting international trade in the Agri-Tech sector.

Mr Freer said Britain has a unique opportunity to strengthen its position as a global hub of agricultural science and innovation, and with support from DIT the new portal has been developed by UK TAG, CHA and AEA, in partnership with the Agri-Tech Innovation Centres, to provide a searchable directory of UK Agri-Tech companies exporting overseas, with case study reports showcasing what the UK has to offer in terms of world-leading products, technology and innovation.

Mr Freer added that the website would strengthen the work of DIT's global network in over 100 markets which directly supported more than £260m worth of UK agri-tech exports in 2021, including vertical farms to the Middle East, grain storage solutions for Africa, veterinary medicines to India and precision farming technology for Latin America.

Defra Chief Scientific Adviser - Professor Gideon Henderson



In January 2022, Defra Chief Scientific Adviser **Professor Gideon Henderson** joined the APPG to discuss the net zero challenge and how scientific innovation in agriculture can help reduce the climate impact of our food system.

Prof Henderson noted that in 2019, the UK became the first industrial country to sign into law the requirement to reach net zero by 2050, since followed by many other countries with either similar legal requirements or statements of intent to get there.

He emphasised that the legal commitment to net zero would require a steepening of the rate of reduction in GHG emissions, and a dramatic change in Government thinking.

Prof Henderson emphasised that the legal commitment to net zero by 2050 required a steepening of the rate of reduction in GHG emissions, and a dramatic change in Government thinking.

While significant GHG reductions had been achieved in the manufacturing, construction, fuel and electricity supply sectors, agriculture and land use - accounting for 10% of emissions - remained little changed in 20 years.

He described how agricultural emissions are dominated by methane emissions from

livestock production, and stressed the need to reduce emissions from meat and dairy production if the UK is serious about net zero.

He also highlighted the dominance of land use from UK beef and lamb production, both in terms of grazing land and arable land used to produce feed.

Degraded peatland was another sector responsible for around 20 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions to the atmosphere every year, requiring an urgent plan of action to re-wet peatland and use it in more innovative ways.

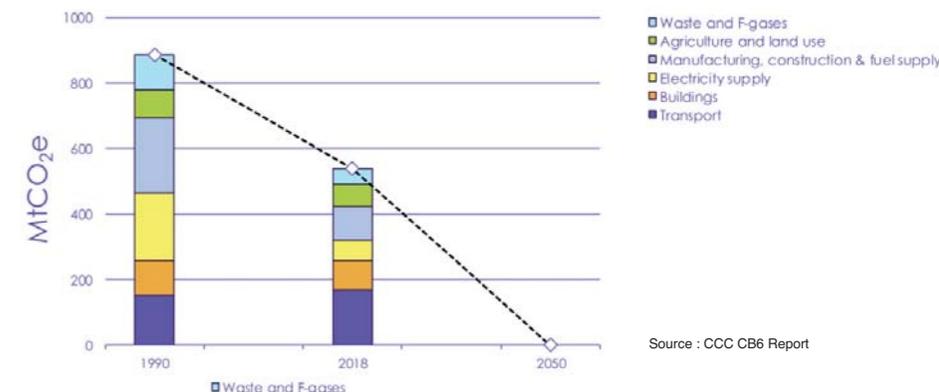
Prof Henderson pointed to ways in which agricultural innovation could be deployed

to improve the emissions profile, including:

- **new genetic technologies, such as gene editing;**
- **vertical farming systems;**
- **opportunities for wetland agriculture;**
- **consistent labelling of the carbon footprint of different foods.**

He added that agriculture must not only adapt to and be ready for climate change, but also minimise its contribution to the change. Scientific innovation can support that process in multiple ways.

The scale of the net zero challenge



UK pulses - fostering innovation to unlock sustainability, healthy eating and climate change benefits

Guest speaker:

Roger Vickers, Chief Executive, PGRO
Professor Lars Østergaard, Group Leader, John Innes Centre
Elena Walden, Policy Manager, Good Food Institute (GFI) Europe
Dr Richard Harrison, Director of Cambridge Crop Research, NIAB

In March 2022, the APPG hosted a session highlighting the opportunities to harness the potential of pulses and legumes as nitrogen-fixing crops, beneficial for soils and important as a versatile source of home-grown protein for both humans and livestock.

Roger Vickers of pulse research organisation PGRO introduced the UK market and crop, describing pulses as neglected niche crops in terms of private sector plant breeding and applied research activity, and highlighting the need for a co-ordinated R&D programme to deliver on the very real environmental, economic and climate change opportunities on offer.

Professor Lars Østergaard described some of the early-stage trait discovery work taking place in pulses, including research to develop more durable sources of disease resistance, to identify the genes controlling physical yield, to improve protein digestibility and health-giving starch properties, and to develop more efficient crop transformation systems for legumes.

Elena Walden suggested that while current livestock production is a major contributor to the climate emergency, effective policy responses must acknowledge that people like eating meat. She described the potential

for R&D to improve the functionality of plant-based meat to bio-mimic the meat-eating experience, and for the UK to take a leadership role in this high-growth sector.

Dr Richard Harrison reiterated the need for a specific end-to-end R&D programme to unlock the economic, health, sustainability and climate change potential of home-grown pulses, building on Britain's strengths in



terms of early-stage genetic research and food science skills. To help address the current situation of market failure in UK pulse breeding, he outlined plans for a pre-breeding programme which, by harnessing a range of technologies including genomic selection, gene editing, speed-breeding, multi-environment trialling and high-throughput phenotyping, might realistically deliver improved pulse varieties within 7-10 years.

Nuffield Council on Bioethics report on gene editing in farmed animals

Guest speaker:

Pete Mills, Assistant Director, Nuffield Council on Bioethics

At the All-Party Group's meeting in April 2022, **Pete Mills** presented the findings of a report by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics into the social and ethical issues raised by the potential use of gene editing technologies in farmed animal breeding.

While the Nuffield report acknowledged some potentially beneficial applications of genome editing in livestock, modern farming and food production were described as 'morally indefensible and unsustainable', and the report called for the research, breeding and rearing of genome edited livestock to be tightly regulated to prevent welfare abuses.

But **Professor Lord Trees**, a former President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, warned that excessive restriction of specific breeding technologies, such as genome editing, could be a major missed opportunity to deliver significant improvements in animal health and welfare, as well as the environmental impact of livestock production.

Professor Helen Sang, a researcher at the Roslin Institute who has pioneered the use of gene editing to develop bird flu resistance in chickens, agreed that genome editing offers the potential to accelerate the development of disease resistant breeds which would in



turn reduce drug and chemical use with positive effects for problems such as anti-microbial resistance and environmental pollution.

Prof Sang cautioned against singling out genome editing for extra regulation on the grounds of perceived welfare concerns, which could equally apply to other practices such as conventional breeding, vaccination and treatment with drugs.

She noted that regulatory safeguards are already in place to maintain high standards of welfare - during early-stage research and on-farm.



Science for Sustainable Agriculture

Science for Sustainable Agriculture is a new policy and communications platform, launched at Westminster in May 2022, which brings together like-minded individuals and organisations to champion and explain the vital role of agricultural science and technology in delivering more sustainable farming systems, and to challenge unscientific and potentially misleading positions.



Julian Sturdy presents the SSA prospectus to Farm Minister Victoria Prentis

Supported by an independent advisory group of political, scientific and industry leaders from a range of sectors and backgrounds, SSA's aim is to promote a conversation rooted in scientific evidence, rather than ideology.

In its launch prospectus, Science for Sustainable Agriculture welcomed early action by the UK Government to remove precision breeding technologies from restrictive rules inherited from the EU, but warned that without a matching commitment to follow the science on key policy issues such as future farm support, R&D funding and sustainability metrics, Britain risks sleepwalking into its own food crisis.

Find out more at:
www.scienceforsustainableagriculture.com

APPGSTA Officers

The late Earl of Selborne (d. Feb 2021) and Lord Haskins retired from the House of Lords in 2020, having both served as officers of the All-Party Group since its establishment in March 2008. The Rt Hon Robert Goodwill MP was elected as a new vice-chair in February 2020, and Professor Lord Trees was elected as a new vice-chair in May 2022.



Chair - Julian Sturdy MP
Julian Sturdy has served as chair of the All-Party Group since July 2016. Conservative MP for York Outer since May 2010, he is a regular contributor on farming and rural issues in Parliament, and is a member of the House of Commons EFRA Committee. Julian grew up in Yorkshire and has farmed in the area all his working life, having studied agriculture at Harper Adams University.



Vice-chair - Baroness Jones of Whitchurch
Baroness Maggie Jones was elected as a vice-chair of the All-Party Group in March 2019. A former trade union official and Director of Policy and Public Affairs at UNISON from 1994 to 2006, Baroness Jones was made a Labour Life Peer in June 2006. She has been Opposition Spokesperson in the Lords on Environment, Food and Rural Affairs since September 2015. She also chairs the Board of Rothamsted Enterprises at Rothamsted Research.



Vice-chair - Earl of Lindsay
Lord Jamie Lindsay served as a vice-chair of the All-Party Group since January 2015. A farmer and landowner in Fife, he has held a number of Government advisory and Ministerial posts relating to agriculture and the environment. A former chair of Assured British Meat and Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), Lord Lindsay chairs the UK Accreditation Service (UKAS) and is President of the National Trust for Scotland.



Vice-chair - Rt Hon Sir Robert Goodwill MP
Sir Robert Goodwill was elected as a vice-chair of the All-Party Group in February 2020. Conservative MP for Scarborough and Whitby since 2005, he was previously MEP for Yorkshire and the Humber. Sir Robert has served as Minister of State at the Home Office, the Department for Education and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. He was elected chair of the EFRA Committee in May 2022. He is a farmer on the 250-acre family farm near Malton in North Yorkshire where the family have farmed since 1850. He studied agriculture at Newcastle University.



Vice-chair - Lord Cameron of Dillington
Lord Ewen Cameron was elected as a vice-chair of the All-Party Group in July 2017. A farmer and landowner, he was CLA President from 1995 to 1997. He chaired the Countryside Agency from 1999 to 2004 and was the Government's rural advocate for England from 2000 to 2004. He chaired the Steering Board of the Government's Global Food Security Research Programme, and is now chair of the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH).



Vice-chair - Professor Lord Trees
Lord "Sandy" Trees is Emeritus Professor of Veterinary Parasitology, University of Liverpool and a Cross-Bench Peer since 2012. He is the only veterinarian in the House of Lords. He qualified as a vet at the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies, University of Edinburgh, and has worked in general practice, industry and academia. He was Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Science, University of Liverpool from 2001 to 2008, and served as President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons from 2009 to 2010. He is also co-chair of the APPG for Animal Welfare.

APPGSTA stakeholders

The activities of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Science & Technology in Agriculture are supported by a number of food, farming and research organisations:



The Agricultural Industries Confederation is the leading trade association in the UK agri-supply industry.
www.agindustries.org.uk



The Agricultural Biotechnology Council is the umbrella group for the agricultural biotechnology industry in the UK.
www.abcinformation.org



The British Society of Plant Breeders is the representative organisation for the UK plant breeding industry.
www.bspb.co.uk



CropLife UK is the voice of the UK plant science industry.
www.croplife.uk



The Maltsters' Association of Great Britain is the representative body for the UK malting industry.
www.ukmalt.com



NIAB is a leading UK centre of plant research, crop evaluation, agronomy and knowledge transfer.
www.niab.com



The National Farmers' Union represents farmers and growers in England and Wales.
www.nfuonline.com



UK Flour Millers is the representative organisation for the UK flour milling industry.
www.ukflourmillers.org



All-Party Parliamentary Group on
Science and Technology in Agriculture

Biennial Report 2020-22

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