

**Welsh Liberal
Democrats**

**Democratiaid
Rhyddfrydol Cymru**



MOTION AGREED BY AUTUMN CONFERENCE 2023

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF FARMERS AND FORESTERS IN WALES: Fostering a sustainable future for Wales

Conference notes:

- A. The crucial role played by the agricultural and forestry industries in Wales, not only in contributing to the economy but also in preserving our environment and rural communities.**
- B. The aging demographic of current farmers and foresters, creating a need to encourage and empower young individuals to enter and sustain these industries.**
- C. The challenges faced by young people seeking to enter agriculture and forestry, including limited access to resources, training, access to housing, and financial support.**
- D. The potential for sustainable and innovative practices to be championed by the younger generation, leading the way for a greener and more resilient future.**

Conference believes:

- I. Young people in Wales possess the passion, creativity, and determination to bring positive change to the farming and forestry sectors.**
- II. The creation of opportunities for young farmers and foresters will not only benefit individuals but also contribute to the long-term prosperity and sustainability of these industries.**

- III. Empowering the younger generation in agriculture and forestry will ensure the continuity of traditional knowledge while embracing modern advancements and environmentally friendly practices.**

Conference resolves:

1. To call upon the Welsh Government:

- a. To develop and implement comprehensive programs to empower and support young people who wish to pursue careers in agriculture and forestry.**
- b. To create a Young Farmers' Land Access Scheme, providing affordable lease and ownership opportunities for young farmers to access land and establish their agricultural enterprises.**
- c. To engage with local communities and organizations to raise awareness about the importance of agriculture and forestry and their significance in preserving local culture and landscapes.**
- d. To work in collaboration with other youth organizations, farmers' unions, environmental groups, and relevant stakeholders to support and promote the interests of young farmers and foresters.**
- e. To promote apprenticeship schemes and mentorship opportunities to facilitate knowledge transfer from experienced farmers and foresters to the next generation.**
- f. To collaborate with educational institutions and industry stakeholders to offer tailored training and education programs that cater to the needs of young farmers and foresters.**
- g. To actively support education institutions in taking measures to enhance diversity in the farming and forestry sectors.**

2. To call on the UK government:

- a. To establish a Young Farmers and Foresters Advisory Council to ensure that young voices are heard in shaping policies and strategies for these sectors.**
- b. To increase financial support, grants, and low-interest loans tailored to the specific needs of young farmers to support their entry into the agricultural industry as well as to assist with land acquisition, equipment purchase, and investment in sustainable practices.**
- c. To encourage networking opportunities across the UK and the world to connect young farmers as well as experienced mentors to share knowledge, skills, and best practices.**

- d. To champion the formation of Young Farmers' Cooperatives, enabling collective bargaining power, resource sharing, and access to markets.**
- e. To create targeted funding for research and innovation in sustainable farming practices, with a focus on climate resilience, agroecology, and regenerative agriculture.**
- f. To support young farmers to encourage the adoption of innovative and sustainable technologies in agriculture and forestry practices, ensuring environmental stewardship.**

3. To call on Welsh Local authorities:

- a. To work with landowners to identify underutilized or publicly-owned land that can be made available to young farmers for sustainable farming initiatives.**
- b. To aid in the development of local markets and distribution networks that prioritize and support the produce of young farmers, fostering a sustainable and circular economy.**