Issue No. 9

FCN THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

Summer 2021

Here for *you*

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE WITH RENEWED OPTIMISM

Jude McCann, FCN CEO

So much can change within the space of a year. Now, as we are finally leaving lockdown and seeing life return to some degree of normalcy, we are all reevaluating the things that are important to us. I think it is safe to say that none of us will be taking things for granted that we perhaps once did, such as meeting friends or visiting family.

I am delighted with the successes FCN has seen this year. We have been working in a very different way but have adapted our operations to continue providing pastoral and practical support to the farming community during this challenging time.

As you will read in this newsletter, we've been keeping very busy and have received really strong feedback across our industry for our positive and optimistic outlook. We've been involved in so many projects, campaigns and initiatives and have worked closely with a broad array of organisations all united by a common interest in supporting our great farming community.

There is great change on the horizon for UK farming, but by working together, I am confident we can manage these changes and emerge stronger than before.

I sincerely thank all of our volunteers, supporters, friends and partners for your support. Because of you, we have been able to continue delivering our essential services to those farming families most in need.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and finding out what we've been up to so far this year.

For the latest news about all things FCN, continue reading…

FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK JOINING FORCES WITH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE RURAL SUPPORT TO HELP FARMERS IN NEED

Earlier this year we joined forces with Nottinghamshire Rural Support.

Building on this collaboration a new FCN Nottinghamshire County Group has been formed, ensuring that support for those living and working in farming communities in Nottinghamshire continues uninterrupted. By coming together, the expertise and support networks of both organisations have been combined, ensuring a smooth transition.

"This joined-up approach will allow us to consolidate our efforts and continue providing vital support to those most in need," says Jude McCann, FCN CEO. FCN is looking for new volunteers in the county. If you are interested please contact help@fcn.org.uk.

FCN PARTNERS WITH NUFFIELD FARMING TO DELIVER BUSINESS AND MENTAL RESILIENCE PROGRAMME

We teamed up with The Nuffield Farming Scholarships Trust and Focussed Farmers through a grant provided by The Garfield Weston Foundation to develop a programme offering business and mental resilience support to the UK farming community.

The programme includes a video series, mentorship programme, farm walk series, online webinar, newsletter, peer support networks and online workshops. As part of the project, we have conducted a wide range of interviews with Nuffield Scholars around topics including diversification and planning for the unexpected.

The expertise of the interviewees provides useful information for viewers considering these areas for their own farm businesses. You can watch the videos via FCN's YouTube channel. Search for 'The Farming Community Network'.

ARLA AND ASDA JOIN FORCES WITH FCN TO SUPPORT FARMERS WITH MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

With increasing pressures on farmers from the pandemic, the isolation of often working alone and future uncertainty all contributing to mental health issues, dairy cooperative Arla has joined forced with Asda through a new charity partnership with FCN to give support back to farmers during challenging times, helping them to plan ahead and manage stress.

As part of this partnership, they're supporting our Time to Plan initiative, which has focused on helping the farming community to plan ahead for the future and manage change.

EVENINGS WITH FARMING FAVOURITES JULIAN NORTON AND AMANDA OWEN IN SUPPORT OF FCN

In February fans of Channel 5's 'The Yorkshire Vet' and 'Our Yorkshire Farm' were given a unique opportunity to hear from stars Julian Norton and Amanda Owen and ask questions during two online charity events.

Coordinated with the National Farmers' Union, the events raised funds for FCN through ticket sales and saw over 400 farming families tune in to hear from Julian and Amanda about their TV work and what motivated them to work in their professions. It was wonderful seeing lots of young people hoping to go into veterinary work and farming in the future asking questions during the Q&As.

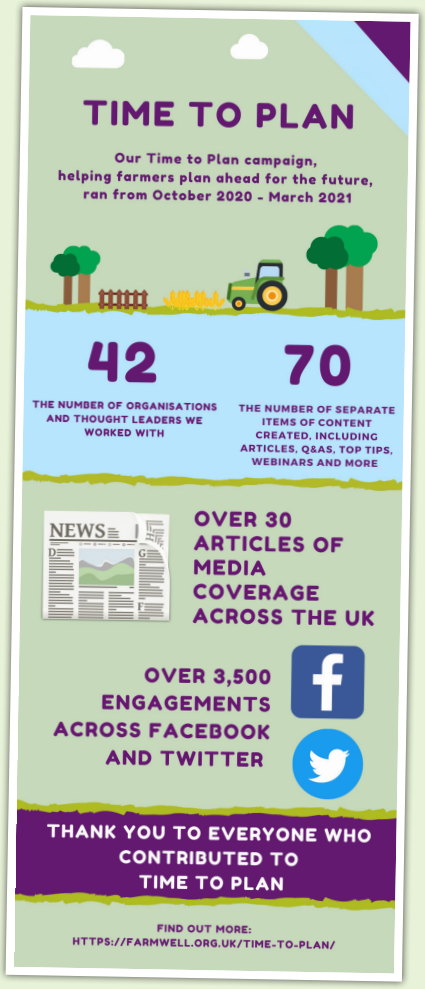
Amanda's event was sponsored by Arla, building upon our partnership throughout the year.

TIME TO PLAN – SUPPORTING FARMERS IN PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

In March we wrapped up the first phase of our Time to Plan project.

We have worked with a wide range of thought leaders and industry experts to create content, such as Q&As, podcasts, webinars and articles, all with a focus on planning ahead for the future. This graphic highlights some of the key highlights from the project.

You can find out more by visiting our FarmWell website: farmwell.org.uk/time-to-plan



PARTNER WITH FCN

FCN works in partnership with organisations and agricultural businesses across England and Wales to better raise awareness and provide support to our farming community. If you would like to discuss working in partnership with FCN, please contact help@fcn.org.uk.

NEW SHORT FILMS HIGHLIGHT IMPORTANCE OF ASKING FOR HELP AND TALKING TO OTHERS

This year FCN has launched two short films highlighting the importance of talking to others and why it is important to ask for help when needed.

In the first film – called 'Farming and Better Mental Health' and directed by Berno Vierbergen – former dairy and sheep farmer and FCN volunteer Nick Viney talks openly to farmer Trevor Cligg from Pipplepen Farm in Dorset about their experiences of mental ill-health and the support they received. The film is available here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6U7oT_kdVk

In the second film, titled 'The Hill Farmer', Oliver Edwards, a well-known Exmoor farmer, tells his story of dealing with pressures on the farm at the same time as battling a diagnosis of colon cancer. Initially Oliver found asking for help difficult, as he shut himself off from others and didn't want to burden those around him. Thankfully, his diagnosis served as a 'wake-up call', which motivated him to talk to those around him.

The film was produced by The Somerset Mental Health in Agriculture Group (SMHAG), of which FCN is a member, and is available here: vimeo.com/507036647

#SPEAKUPBEHERD CAMPAIGN WITH MEGALAC

Throughout March, we teamed up with Megalac to show our support for the farming community and spark discussions around positive mental wellness.

The #SpeakUpBeHerd campaign saw FCN contribute a variety of helpful blogs, as well as a #MarchIntoMarch community challenge and a Facebook Live discussion about some of the most common challenges flagged by dairy farmers across the UK today.

The overall focus of the campaign was on reducing the stigma around asking for help and seeking support.

NEW TRAINING MODULES TO SUPPORT YOUNG FARMERS' MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

We're working with The National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs (NFYFC) and The DPJ Foundation to support young farmers' mental health and wellbeing through the development of new Rural+ training modules.

This initiative, called 'Supporting Together', has been made possible by funding from The Westminster Foundation, which is Chaired by the Duke of Westminster and aims to encourage young people in farming families to take action early and to plan for the challenges and restructuring that the industry now faces.

The new Rural+ mental health training modules are aimed at 10-26 year old YFC members and 16-25 year old agricultural students yet to embark on their first placement or role in the industry. The training focuses on understanding stress and anxiety; managing personal mental wellbeing; how to talk about mental health; seeking support; and supporting others.

To book onto a Rural+ session or to find out more, please email help@fcn.org.uk

CHRISTMAS TRACTOR RUN RAISES OVER £5,000 FOR FCN

Over the Christmas period, two farmers in North Somerset organised a tractor road run in support of FCN. After receiving the go-ahead from their local council, the charity run was set up as a 40 mile route between Yatton and Clevedon, through local villages then on to Weston-super-Mare.

The event took off in a big way, surprising the organisers, who were amazed by the number of farmers who chose to get involved and helped to raise funds for FCN. In total, 70 tractors made the run, and they raised over £5,000! Many thanks to all involved!

150KM RUN IN SUPPORT OF YORKSHIRE FARMING COMMUNITY

Sally Steadman, Vice-Chair of FCN's Board of Trustees, is undertaking two mammoth feats of endurance as part of a fundraising challenge later in the year.

On 5 June, Sally will be embarking on the Run to the Sea – a 50km run from Horsham to Brighton. The final stretch of the run is along the beautiful seafront.

Then on 10 July she'll be doing the Race to the Stones, a 100km trek along one of the oldest trails in Britain – the Ridgeway National Trail, finishing at the iconic Avebury Stone Circle.

"It's more than just running, it's about your mental strength as well as your physical fitness; this is about endurance and resilience. This felt like the perfect way to represent FCN, with the charity's focus on helping farmers overcome challenges and to stay resilient during testing times," says Sally.

RUN 1000 CAMPAIGN RAISES £19,000 FOR FCN

The Five Nations' Run 1000 challenge in January saw Team England raise over £19,000 in support of FCN.

Run 1000 is a competition for teams to run at least 1,000 miles in January, whilst raising awareness of mental health in agriculture. Five teams took part, representing England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland and the Rest of the World. All teams involved supported a different charity – FCN, The DPJ Foundation, RSABI, The Do More Agriculture Foundation and Embrace FARM.

We'd like to thank Team England captain Charles Anyan, vice-captain Liz Hoggarth, ADAMA and everyone who got involved and helped to raise funds for FCN as part of this wonderful initiative.

RECONNECTING OUR FARM COMMUNITY

Over the coming months FCN will be supporting a range of local projects which will help us to re-engage with the farming community and reconnect with those around us as we leave lockdown.

FCN County Groups in England and Wales are in the process of developing proposals for engaging with local farmers and farming families once Covid-19 restrictions have lifted. This project is supported by The Mercer Charitable Foundation, which was set up in 2018 to support local and national issues, focusing on education, healthcare and community.

We are keen to work with other organisations on developing plans to interact and engage with local farming communities for the remainder of the year. Please contact help@fcn.org.uk if you would like to work with our volunteers on outreach projects with local farmers.

60 SECONDS WITH FCN DEVON VOLUNTEER EMILY FLEUR

Could you tell us a bit about your background in farming?

I'm a farmer's daughter, brought up on my family farm in Devon. Growing up my Dad was a dairy farmer; however, my brother now runs the farm and they mainly have sheep with some cows. From the age of 8 I ran my own little poultry business. I really loved the idea of being a poultry farmer and was set on pursuing that. Life had other plans, but I still love the opportunity to be home on my parent's farm, helping out where needed.

What motivated you to join FCN as a volunteer?

Growing up I could see a real impact that farming can have on mental health and wellbeing, and it always annoyed me that nothing was being done to help. When I was 19, I had a brain haemorrhage, it was a tough time, yet the rural community supported us all. After I recovered, I wanted to do something to help others.

What would you say to others who may wish to volunteer with FCN?

Think about why you're wanting to help and if you have enough time. While it is important to be there for others, you also have to be there for yourself.

Find out more about volunteering with FCN here: fcn.org.uk/volunteering/

COLIN'S SOUTH WEST COAST PATH WALK

Colin Smallacombe, Coordinator of FCN's Devon Group, has been walking the South West Coast Path in support of FCN, Cots for Tots and Therapy For Swansea Kids. Colin has been with FCN for 14 years and completed the trip in May. Well done, Colin!

NFU MUTUAL CHARITABLE TRUST SUPPORT FOR FCN

NFU Mutual recently pledged £750,000 to the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust in response to the ongoing challenges faced by communities across the UK.

FCN is one of eight charities who benefited from this additional funding, which is helping to support a wealth of initiatives and will allow us to continue providing our services at a time when demand is high. We would like to thank everyone at NFU Mutual and the Charitable Trust for their continued support of the work we do.

FCN
THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

Here to **listen**
Here to **support**
Here to **connect**
Here for ***you***

Helpline:
03000 111 999

e-Helpline:
help@fcn.org.uk

Helpline is open 7am to 11pm every day of the year

NEW FCN LEAFLET AVAILABLE TO ORDER

We have developed a new FCN leaflet which focuses on how we're helping to create a resilient farming future for the next generation of farmers and the ways in which we can support the farming community during difficult times. **If you would like to order some leaflets to distribute through your networks please email help@fcn.org.uk.**

NATIONAL REMEMBRANCE SERVICE RECOGNISES THOSE WHO HAVE DIED IN FARMING COMMUNITIES

FCN is organising a national ecumenical Remembrance and Thanksgiving service which will take place on 7 November 2021 at 15:30pm at Ripon Cathedral in North Yorkshire.

The service will pay tribute to those who have died because of farm accidents, Covid-19, and those who have died by suicide. It will recognise the experience of loss felt by all those who have been bereaved.

This is a national service available to all in the UK and will be livestreamed, so that people can join from home and light a candle in memory of a loved one.

Please fill out the form on FCN's website with expressions of interest in attending or to provide details of a loved one you would like to recognise as part of the service: fcn.org.uk/remembrance-service

HOW TO SUPPORT FCN

"Before FCN visited John was showing signs of extreme stress. FCN's sympathetic and practical attitude was just what he needed and now matters on the farm are much improved. I am most grateful for FCN's input."
- Farm Vet, South Wales

Please help us to continue supporting farming families. With UK farming farming facing an uncertain future, FCN is preparing to meet the challenges that it will undoubtedly face – but this will not be possible without your support. FCN relies solely on donations and grants in order to continue supporting our farmers.

We are grateful for anyone who is willing to support our work. There are a number of ways you can support FCN, such as:

- **Fundraising** – celebrations could include walks, bike rides, corporate sponsorship or any other ideas you may have. We welcome organisations supportive of our work to reach out to us with fundraising ideas.
- **Volunteering** – we welcome anyone passionate about helping the farming community to join as a volunteer. There are numerous volunteering roles available, including taking Helpline calls, handling casework, fundraising and publicity. More information is available at: fcn.org.uk/volunteering.
- **Share your story** – FCN treats all cases confidentially, but we are grateful to anyone who is willing to talk about the support they have received from FCN. Please email Alex Phillimore, Marketing and Communications Manager, on alex@fcn.org.uk if you would like to share your story (details such as name and age will be anonymised).
- **Leave a legacy** – leaving a gift to FCN in your will is a wonderful way to support our work. Your gift helps to ensure our volunteers can continue supporting farming families, supports the running costs of our Helpline and assists farmers in building strong, sustainable businesses. To find out more visit: fcn.org.uk/leave-a-gift-in-your-will/
- **Donate** – go to fcn.org.uk and click "Donate Online" in the top right hand corner, or send a cheque, made payable to "FCN" or "The Farming Community Network", to The Farming Community Network, Manor Farm, West Haddon, Northamptonshire, NN6 7AQ.

Alternatively you can scan the QR code below to be taken to our donation page.

If you would like to discuss how you can support the work of FCN, call the FCN head office on 01788 510866 or email help@fcn.org.uk. The office is open 9am-5pm Monday - Friday.

FCN

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