

EC Drummond Farmer and Landowner

We are a diverse agricultural business based in Ross-on-Wye in Herefordshire. The business is made up of four operating divisions which grow, harvest, distribute and transport our produce nationally. We manage farms over a wide area of central and southern England including the Manydown estate near Basingstoke.

The partnership's core business includes arable and soft fruit cultivation. Its main crops are wheat, potatoes, rape-seed, strawberries and raspberries. Its core business also includes rearing broiler poultry, growing commercial and domestic turf and supplying topsoil, bark and mulch.

The main barriers that restrain the business are;

- Over regulation, from Europe, nationally and at a local level, including the land and country planning system making business development a long winded and costly affair, with decision makers often forgetting that the country side needs to be allowed to be an environment where people can live and work to ensure its viability.
- Poor transport links and highway infrastructure which restrict access to the farm base's around the country.
- Inconsistent economic performance of the agricultural sector in general

The past has seen the countryside shaped by grants, and the UK becoming dependent on imports for a proportion of its food with low priority given to food security.

Going forward our industry needs to tackle climate change, it would be much better if we are proactive, and plan for climate change instead of being re active. This could well include looking at energy production as well as different sources of plant nutrients. There is a high degree of awareness and interest about what goes in our countryside and this needs to be capitalised upon.

The overriding message that we would like to reiterate is that most farmers are extremely proud of their land and take seriously their responsibilities as land managers they regularly reinvest their profits back into their business which is ultimately the land they are not in it for the short term profit ***if farmers are making a profit the countryside benefits without the need for subsidies and regulation.***