



**Category:** Not-for-Profit Campaign

**Company:** National Farmers Union

**Entry title:** Back British Farming Day

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**Brief and objectives:**

Since 2013, activity for our Back British Farming Day had focused on targeting government and the public with a news story on food self-sufficiency figures. However, pressures on the sector post-EU referendum made it essential to evolve our approach for 2016 to:

1. Increase visibility of the NFU as the lead lobbyist for British agriculture, demonstrating effectiveness as a membership organisation.
2. Create a watershed moment for NFU lobbying in an unprecedented political climate, setting the tone for coming months.
3. Raise awareness of farming's contribution to the country, placing the sector firmly on the Brexit agenda and improving public engagement with the issues.

**Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:**

After reviewing traditional MP engagement tactics – centred around 'closed door' Westminster receptions – we concluded a highly visible, farmer-led event would better persuade MPs of agriculture's relevance, resulting in support for a Back British Farming pledge.

Inviting every MP to wear a special edition lapel pin to PMQs would maximise reach.

- Informally polled key MPs to gauge support
- Scouted locations with Westminster Council to understand security restrictions
- Worked with industry partners to avoid doubling up with their events, recognising we had a limited window to engage with MPs ahead of Party Conference season
- Reviewed market research and ONS data, which showed 25-35 year olds – Facebook's largest audience – are least likely to buy seasonal British produce, despite having 20% more disposable income than over 55s (most likely to buy) (3).

Confirmed audiences: All current UK MPs, plus British 25-35 year olds active on Facebook

Stakeholders: NFU members, industry partners.

**Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:**

- Invite MPs to meet farmers and sign pledge at a celebratory event opposite the Houses of Parliament (1)

- Create visual impact with three red tractors, highlighting the British Red Tractor food assurance scheme, linking food and farming (1)
- Provide MPs with a lapel pin made of Shropshire wheat and red, white and blue British wool, urging them to wear it at PMQs (2)
- Place a new campaign image of a Union Jack created from fresh British produce at the heart of all communications (2)
- Create a halo effect using press and social media (3)

## Tactics

MP event: By creating a festival-like atmosphere in a space traditionally used for picketing, we positively challenged assumptions about trade union engagement.

### Content/collateral:

- Lapel pin mailer: believed to be the first sector-led pin to be worn in PMQs
- Campaign image
- Event branding, selfie-frames
- Facebook animation of core messages
- Pre/post event videos
- Photography

### Media relations:

- Pre/post releases
- Press/photo call

### Social media:

- Scheduled content
- Live posting (via Twitter/Facebook) Competitions

### Stakeholder relations:

- VIP attendance
- Social media support.

## **Implementation of tactics:**

Work started post-EU referendum.

### July – August: planning

- Event concept
- Plan production/build/break
- Secure space/suppliers
- Design/produce branding
- Guest list/save the date
- Recruit farmers
- Plan/produce lapel pin
- Plan/shoot campaign image
- Storyboard animation

### 1 – 13 September: Stage 1 activation

- RSVPs
- Event staffing/briefs
- Brief partners

- Develop animation
- Create/schedule social content
- Deliver lapel pin
- Farmer profiles and lapel pin release (trade/regional press)
- Press/photo call (nationals)
- Shoot/publish lapel pin video
- Final checks: weather/roadworks

#### 14 September: Stage 2 activation

- Manage build/break
- Release/press shot with quote from Defra Secretary of State (SoS) (all media)
- Publish animation
- Live posting
- Publish campaign image/competition
- Shoot/publish event video
- Photography

#### 15 – 30 September: Post-event

- Follow-ups
- Evaluation.

### **Measurement and evaluation:**

Results relate to all objectives unless specified.

#### Outputs

- 649 MP lapel pins
- 30 farmers attended (despite harvest)
- 20 press releases/press calls
- 98% of MPs/peers attendees photographed
- 3 social media videos

#### Outcomes:

- 126 MPs/peers attended (>double our last Westminster reception)
- 85% signed our pledge on the day
- 65% (81 MPs) hadn't attended our last reception
- VIPs included Defra SoS Andrea Leadsom MP, Farming Minister George Eustice MP, Defra Shadow SoS Rachael Maskell, Liberal Democrats Leader Tim Farron
- c. 30 pins worn at PMQs. Craig Williams MP posed a question while wearing his pin, boosting awareness
- Prime Minister Theresa May met informally with NFU President Meurig Raymond one week after the event, subsequently wearing our pin to a constituency event
- 36 additional MPs signed our pledge within two months of the event, meaning >20% of MPs pledged to Back British Farming ahead of Brexit

#### Press coverage:

- 35 cuttings spanning national/regional/trade, including BBC Radio 4's Farming Today, Metro, and a Western Morning News front page
- Lapel pin featured on BBC Parliament
- Interviews included German TV station ZBF, highlighting international reach
- 1.9m known circulation/monthly unique visitors
- 90% of coverage carried our key messages

#### Social:

- Trended at number three on Twitter
- 450,000 people saw #BackBritishFarming via our posts
- 240 Twitter followers (>double our average weekly increase)
- Mentions by Robert Peston (ITV) and Richard Gaisford (Good Morning Britain)

#### Campaign image (2):

- 3.5million OTS (event/social/print)
- 2,480 visits to online competition

#### Facebook animation (3):

- >1,000 shares (our highest ever for video)
- 40,000 watches

#### Independent research into public awareness of the importance of British food shows some evidence of improvement (3):

- July 2016: 73.5% agreed it's more important for the UK to grow its own food since voting to leave the EU
- February 2017: 83% agreed it's important for Britain to increase its self-sufficiency in home-grown food

#### **Budget and cost effectiveness:**

The campaign was devised, managed and mostly delivered in-house to minimise outgoings, e.g. outsourcing the campaign image alone would cost around £10,000.

Staff costs (estimated): £12,500

Event production/branding/photography: £9,965

Lapel pin/invite: £1,475

Animation: £3,250

Campaign image: £200

Accommodation, travel, expenses: £2,000

Total: £29,390

N.B. Farmers volunteered their time. Tractor hire/transport provided by manufacturer FOC.

Cost per political outcome (pledge signature (142), new attendee (81) or pin worn (30)) = £95 (excludes animation costs/staff time).

Post-EU referendum we had a greater share of voice than any other trade union, boosting the sector's profile and cementing our reputation as a leading lobbyist – which is priceless during a challenging political climate.