

## **Growing the Future: Pathways for young people into agriculture and food production**

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SUFFOLK  
AGRICULTURAL  
ASSOCIATION

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FOUNDED 1831

# Growing the Future: Pathways for Young People into Agriculture and Food Production

**Shân Buss**

Education Manager

## Our Mission

The Suffolk Agricultural Association (SAA) aims to be a force for good and central to all matters food, farming and the countryside. We harness the commitment and enthusiasm of our members and volunteers, who have been awarded the Kings Award for Voluntary Service, to disseminate knowledge about food and farming.

This is achieved through our year-round education programme which includes the two-day Suffolk Show, an iconic agricultural event that celebrates the rich heritage, culture, and industry of Suffolk.



## Educational Aims

To provide facilities/facilitation for learning about food, farming, the countryside and wider environmental issues enabling informed connection between tomorrow's consumers and the producers, and to contribute to the growth of the rural economy through inspiring particularly younger people to explore the wide range of careers the sector offers.

## Primary

Tractors into Schools

Learn About Livestock

Farming School of the Year Competition

School Farm & Country Fair

School Show Garden Competition

Farm Discovery Zone @ Suffolk Show

Outreach Farm Visits

## Secondary

Food & Farming Student Day

Farm4Future Zone @ Suffolk Show

## Young Adult

Apprentice of the Year

Rising Star Scholarship

## Further

Farming Conference

SAA Membership

Clergy into Combines





# Primary

Tractors into Schools

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# Secondary

## Food & Farming Student Day

### Farm4Future Zone @ Suffolk Show



# Young Adult

Agricultural Apprentice  
of the Year



Allied Agricultural Apprentice of  
the Year

Rising Star Scholarship Award





# Further

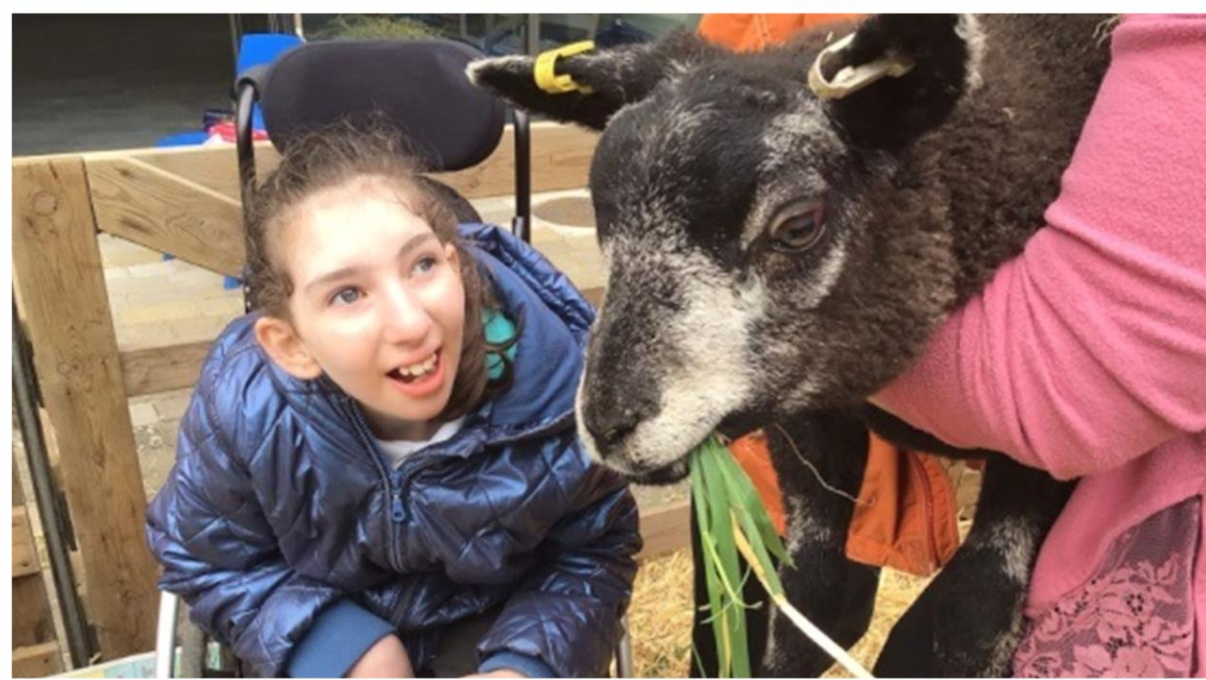
## Suffolk Farming Conference

### SAA Membership

### Clergy into Combines



# Supporting SAA Education



Funding

Stewarding

Exhibiting

Outreach Visit

Advocate

# How Do Young People Perceive and Value the Agri-Food Industry?



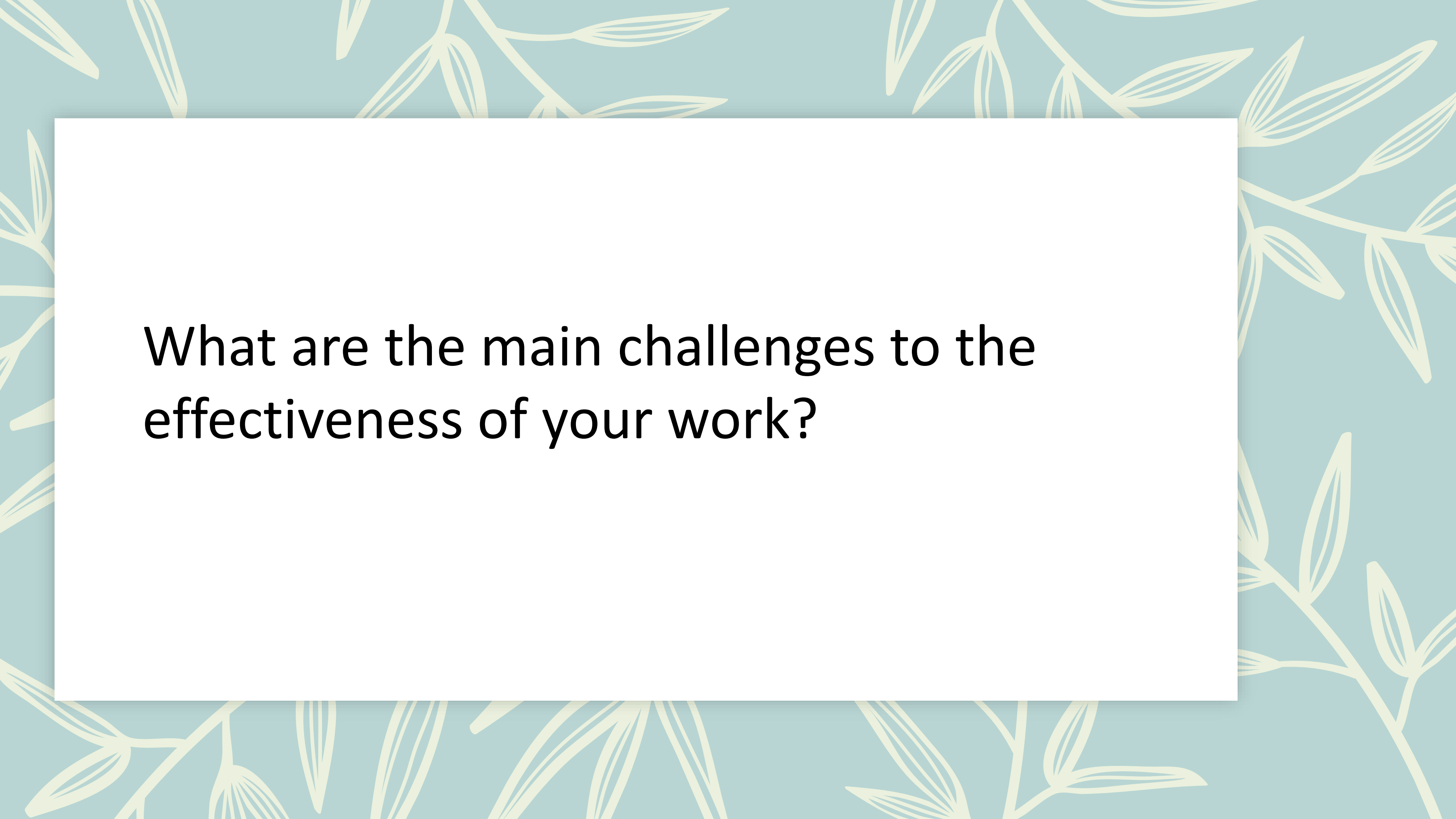
Young people (11-18) show interest in sustainable eating and agricultural careers but lack awareness of specific roles and opportunities in the industry.

## RECOMMENDATION

**S**

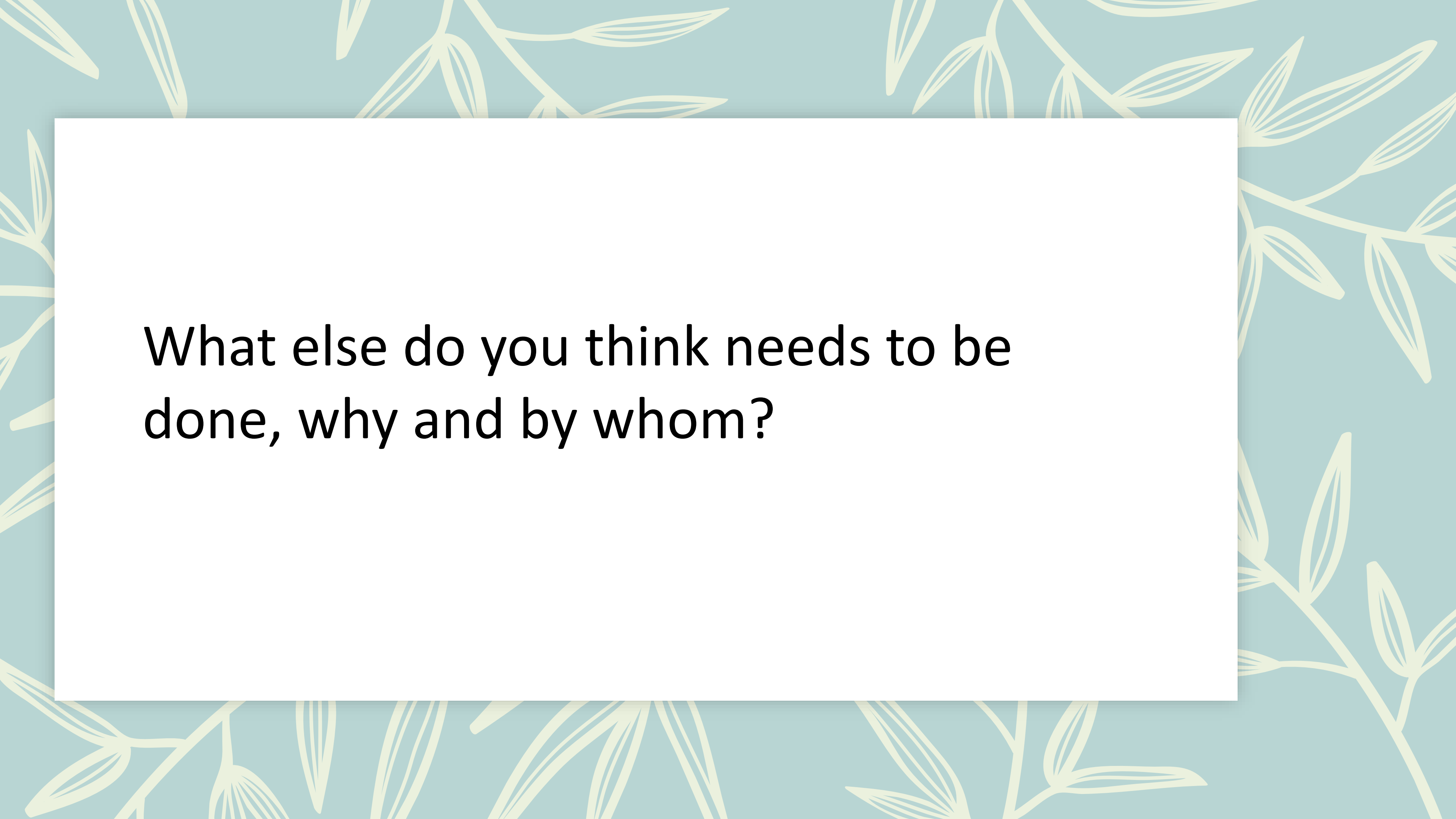
- **Provide Hands-On Experience and Experiential Learning:** On-farm visits and work experience placements to gain practical insights into sustainable agriculture and various career paths.
- **Educational Resources:** Develop materials to educate young people on soil health, sustainable practices, and the broader food supply chain from farm to fork - link to national curriculum
- **Teacher Support:** Provide training and resources to improve career guidance on agricultural pathways.
- **Promote Inclusivity in Career Opportunities:** Create clear, accessible guides for entering the agriculture industry, including competitions, apprenticeships, and programmes for students without prior farming experience.
- **Diversity and Cultural Inclusion:** Involve young people from diverse backgrounds and cultures in promoting sustainable food choices and consumerism.
- **Industry Engagement with Youth:** Encourage big brands, supermarkets, and industry professionals to communicate directly with young people about sustainable options and career pathways.

**Which of the recommendations/findings do you think your work helps to address?**



**What are the main challenges to the effectiveness of your work?**

**What greater role do you think teachers in schools and colleges, careers advisors could play?**



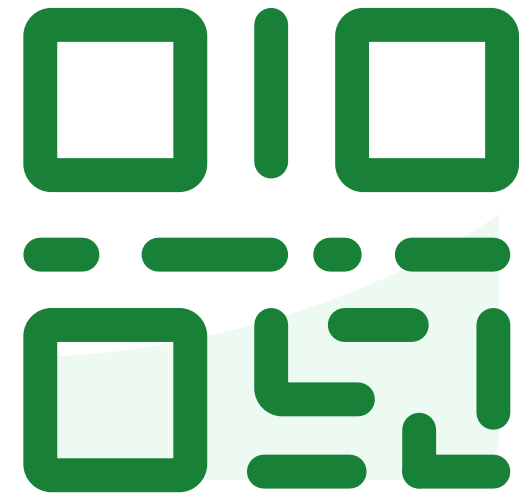
**What else do you think needs to be done, why and by whom?**

Social media reflects a vibrant food culture amongst young people, including its nutritional value and environmental impact. Rather than asking 'how can we attract more young people into the sector' should we instead be asking 'how can UK farms change in order to capture this interest, and extend it further back down the food chain?'



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**What could make food and farming more attractive career option?**

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**Thoughts, comments or questions?**