



HORTICULTURE

Key election asks

1. Access to seasonal workforce

The horticulture and ornamentals sectors need a fully-functioning seasonal agricultural workers scheme to be implemented, enabling the industry to recruit the 70,000 seasonal workers it requires annually. The scheme must be open to direct recruiters as well as labour providers.

2. Reform water abstraction licensing regime

The licensing regime needs to be reviewed and reformed to deliver an adequate supply of water to meet the increasing demand for UK-grown foods, such as fruit and vegetables and ornamental plants. We must ensure we take a strategic look at water infrastructure to ensure we balance surplus and scarcity and provide for food, people and the environment.

3. Develop new UK Producer Organisations

The horticulture sector must receive appropriate fiscal support to continue to deliver increased productivity and to adopt the latest technologies, including new growing systems, automation and robots, in particular through the development of new UK Producer Organisation scheme which delivers match-funded investment for both individual businesses as well as collaborative groups.

4. Adopt an evidence-based approach to crop protection

UK growers must have access to a range of effective crop protection tools which does not leave them at a competitive disadvantage. The Government must always adopt an evidence-based approach to crop protection for 'minor-use' fruit, vegetable and ornamental crops.

5. Promote consumption of fresh fruit and veg

The Government must develop a comprehensive plan within the National Food Strategy to grow UK fruit and veg production and reverse the long-term decline in UK self-sufficiency. Increased consumption of fresh fruit, vegetables, potatoes and plants should be backed by Government to improve the nutrition, health and well-being of the nation.

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