



January 2022 Newsletter

Welcome to this 2022 New Year Edition of the AFCP newsletter which includes

- a brief report on the National Forum held in November 2021,
- details of the Student Forum to be held next March,
- news of Morley Agricultural Foundation Winter Talks and AGM,
- reports on two of our jointly-funded students,
- news about the publication of the proceedings of the Oilseed Rape Forum which was held in June 2021,
- an update on our joint digitisation project, and
- information on two projects looking for support.

AFCP exists to inspire closer collaboration between charities and organisations in order to drive greater impacts from the charitable donations being made in food and farming.

Dates for your diaries

AFCP Student Forum

30 March 2022 at Cranfield University

**National Forum: 'Growing Young Minds and New Ideas'
held at the Hartpury Agriculture Agri-Tech Centre, November,
2021**

Ben Thompson, the Agri-Tech Centre Manager at Hartpury, led the morning session with an introductory talk on the practical development of 'smart farming' and the challenges faced, followed by a tour of the centre. Details of the facilities can be found at

<https://www.hartpury.ac.uk/college/facilities/agriculture/agri-tech-centre/>.

The first post-lunch session focussed on 'Optimising Plant Factories -Progress and Challenges', giving delegates a great opportunity to learn about progress in growing crop plants in indoor systems and included important themes such as photobiology and aeroponics. Speakers were Dr Matt Jones from Glasgow University and Jack Farmer from LettUs Grow. The session included discussion led by AFCP Board Member, Dr Jim Stevens.

The second part of the afternoon focussed on involving young people, including those with a defined needs, in food, farming and the environment, through experiential learning. Speakers were Carl Edwards (LEAF) and Rachel Bragg (Social Farms and Gardens). Carl then led a discussion on this important work. Most of the presentations are available [here](#).

AFCP is very grateful to Hartpury University and Hartpury College for hosting this meeting and making us very welcome. We made a special effort to encourage students funded by charities to attend and this was very successful.

Student Forum 2022 Cranfield University - 30 March 2022

All students funded, or part-funded, by AFCP member charities are invited to attend - and to participate in this meeting. Details have been sent to charities but if you have any questions please contact the organiser, [Dr Ken Pallett](#).

Past student forums have been very popular and we strongly encourage charities to support their students (including those who have graduated in the past year or two) so they can attend. Charity trustees and student supervisors are also welcome.

As well as talks and posters from students, there will be an opportunity to see some of the work being carried out at Cranfield.

**Morley Agricultural Foundation Winter Event and AGM
13.15 on Thursday 3 February 2022 at Morley Business Centre, NR18 9DF**

Three speakers will present on a range of topics to provoke thought, stimulate discussion and inform decision-making on farms:

- Managing the risks of farming
- Quantify and manage spatial variation on farms
- Measuring to develop measures

Full details available [here](#).

AFCP AHDB Studentships

AFCP charities have been jointly funding four studentships with AHDB. Two of the students completed their research in the autumn.

Bobby Hyde, who has been researching calf health, welfare and productivity at Nottingham University has successfully completed his PhD is now a post-doctoral fellow in the Veterinary School at the university working on simulation modelling.

George Crane, who was researching soil-microbe interactions, has been appointed Energy Crops Project Manager at NIAB. George has submitted his thesis and is expecting the viva in the next month or so.

**Publication of the Proceedings of 2021 AFCP
Forum 'Control of Diseases and Pests of Oilseed Rape'**

The edited proceedings of the meeting held at the University of Hertfordshire last June are now available on the AFCP website [here](#) .

The Proceedings are also now available in paperback from [Amazon Books](#), price £10 + postage.

Capturing scientific knowledge

AFCP board member Jim Orson provides an update on the digitising of the BCPC archive and highlights a new opportunity:

The BCPC archive

Five agricultural charities have funded the digitisation and access to a significant collection of scientific knowledge that would otherwise be overlooked by online searches. The proceedings of the British Crop Protection Council annual Brighton and Glasgow Congresses and also its specialist Colloquia from 1954-2007 are becoming available on the BCPC website. It has been a much bigger and more complicated project than originally envisaged!

Many of the proceedings are now online with the remainder becoming available soon. Just go to <https://www.bcpc.org/>, click on Open Access on the top line of options and then click Knowledge Bank to look at what is already available. Already online is the 1993 colloquium on Climate Change and its Implications for Crop Protection (yes in 1993!). It makes interesting reading and is still very relevant today as are the papers that feature in the wider archive. This example also demonstrates that it is not just scientific knowledge that can be gleaned from the archive but also the then current attitudes on the challenges to, the value of, and the future role of crop protection and its impacts.

The AFCP Newsletter will provide a further update on this project once all 65,000 pages are available on the BCPC website. Many thanks to the charities

that funded this project, their logos are displayed on the search page of the archive.

Next moves

There is now interest in archiving the annual reports of the Weed Research Organization, and also its reports on the activity of individual herbicide active substances, from its opening in the 1960s to its closure in the mid-1980s. This will be smaller than the BCPC archive, with around 7,000 to 10,000 pages to digitise. Again, this would result in a significant increase in the online knowledge of weeds and their control by both chemical and cultural means. We should be delighted if any charity who is particularly interested in part-funding this project should inform the AFCP.

Other opportunities for charities to be involved in new projects

1. Merrist Wood College, Surrey

The college has a small farm that is in need of funding, to ensure that it can meet the education needs in Surrey and the surrounding areas. It has recently received accreditation for Rare Breed status and would like to use this accolade to raise awareness of sustainable green food production practices and careers for young people who are interested in entering farming as a career. It would also like to increase this opportunity for all people with additional physical and learning needs, by making the farm inclusive to all by making the farm accessible to all.

To achieve this the college is looking for charities or organisations to invest in helping to develop the present small farm into one that offers not only courses for those entering the profession, but to also raises awareness amongst the public and local children of rare breeds and local food production.

Charities interested in exploring this further should contact the director of the college, [Laura Asbridge](#).

2. Understanding Rural Britain to 2050

Rural Britain is poorly understood at a time when it is undergoing profound change.

Data on rural communities, their life experiences and challenges are limited and often flawed. Farming is undergoing a series of significant changes and faces many new challenges. Whilst many organisations would like to serve their rural audiences better, they often lack the evidence and insights to do so. This project aims to encourage a small group of non-competing organisations to fund an authoritative study into the current situation. See Powerpoint explaining the proposed project [here](#). Charities who may be interested in following this up please contact [Barry Clark](#).

www.afcp.org.uk

AFCP Contacts

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Alex Payne, Jim Stevens, Jim Orson

AFCP was registered as a company limited by guarantee in February 2008 and became a registered charity in June 2015. The Board and its Directors and advisors represent a range of charities and organisations from across the UK.

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