The Farm Business Self Assessment Tool

A healthy and resilient business is all about balance. 2 Minute Farmer has identified 10 areas that contribute to a balanced farm life. All these areas are interconnected, but thinking about them separately will help you to prioritise which areas to be proud of and which areas to work on.

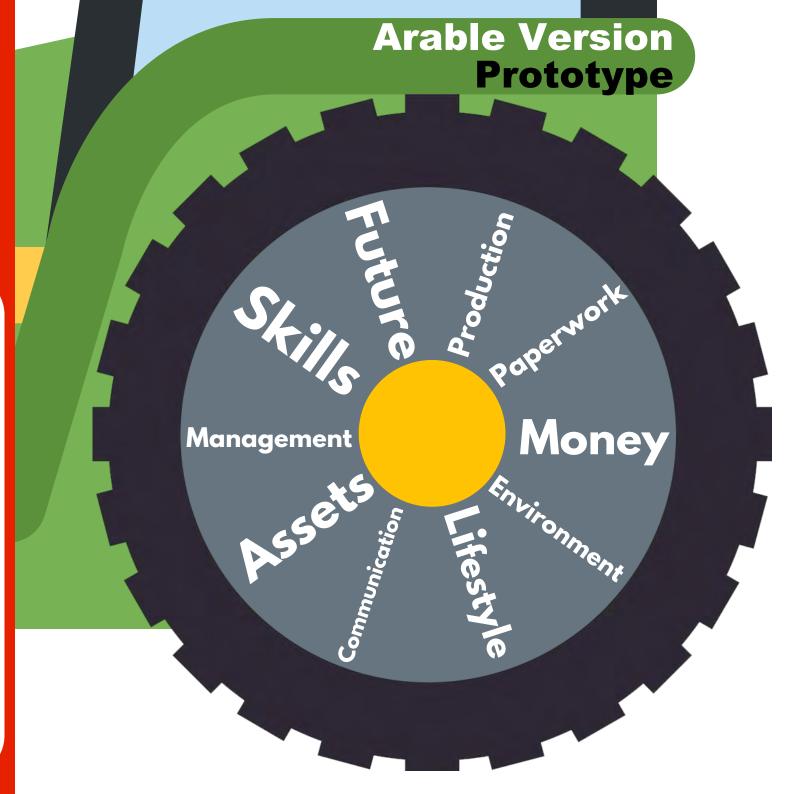
This booklet will help you to assess yourself on each area.







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#### **Section 1**

In this section you will fill in the 'Quick Spin Wheel' on the next page.

To do this rate your farm out of 10 for each question on the right. 10 out of 10 means your farm is very successful at that question. Select your score by:

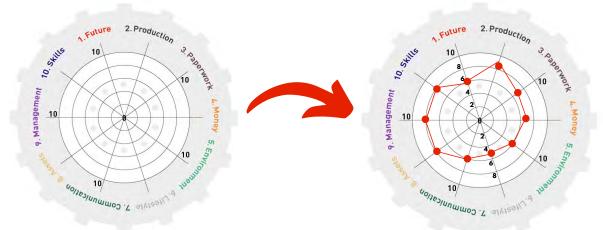
- Selecting the top box, then type your answer then press tab to move to the next box
- Or, select each box and click on your score on the drop down list

For each question, a circle will be automatically added to the 'Quick Spin Wheel' (see **page 4**).

Draw a line from score to score to create a 'wheel' shape, similar to the demo on the right. You can do this by printing the page off or by using an electronic drawing tool (if you have this you will see a pen symbol on your screen).

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#### How I see myself Questions

Score /10

- 1. How prepared do you feel for the future?
- 2. How well do you turn inputs into outputs?
- 3. How up to date are you with paperwork?
- 4. How good is your farm business at managing money?
- 5. How positive is your business's impact on the environment?
- 6. How do you rate your work-life balance?
- 7. How good are your people skills?
- 8. How well do you manage your business's assets?
- 9. How well do you manage people and processes on the farm?
- 10. Do you have all the specialist skills required on your farm?

#### **Section 2**

In this section you will fill in the '**Proper Job Wheel**' on page 4.

To do this follow these steps:

- 1. Choose one of the 10 topics and go to its page (pages 5-12).
- 2. For each question, decide on the option that fits your farm best.
- 3. Select your score from the drop down list at the end. If you chose an option in the red traffic light column it scores 0 points, the amber scores 1 point and green scores 2 points. See the diagram to the right for help on how to do this.

- Your scores will
   automatically add up.
   You can see your total for
   the section on the
   bottom right.
- 2. Your total will also be added to the 'Proper Job Wheel' (page 4).
- 3. Don't worry about completing all 10 sections in one go. If you like, fill out a section when you have 2 minutes to spare.
- When all 10 sections are complete go the the 'Proper Job Wheel'.
   Connect your scores like you did for section 1.
- 5. Compare the two wheels

and think about:

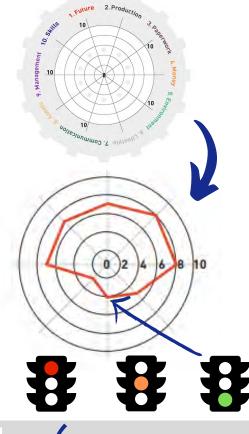
- Do the wheels match?
- Would these wheels roll?
- What areas are you good at?
- Which area should you work on first?

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**Total** 

#### Example



Question 1	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	0
Question 2	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	1
Question 3	Opton 1	Option 2	Option 3	0
Question 4	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	1
Question 5	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	2

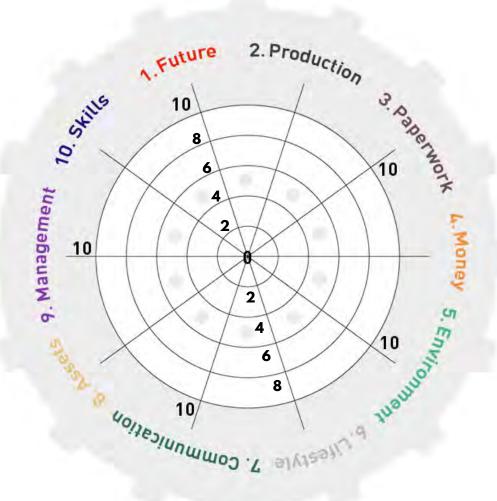
#### **Quick Spin Wheel**

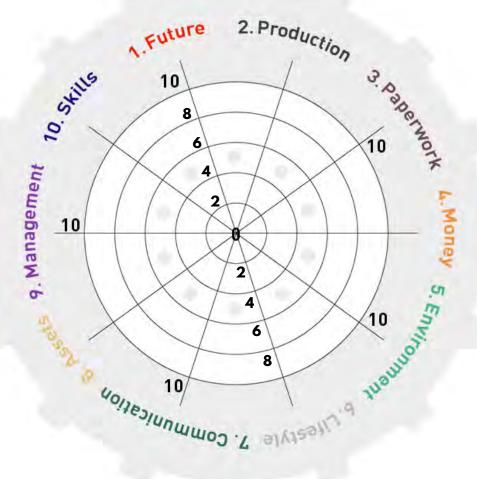
#### Proper Job Wheel

Where are you actually?

Where do you think you are? Section 1 (page 2)

Section 2 (pages 4-12)





# 1. Future

Life is full of ups and downs. But planning for them in advance can make the journey a lot smoother. If a farmer does not anticipate and plan for issues on their farm then it can lead to huge financial and emotional consequences.



A healthy business plans for the future.	0 points	point 1	2 points	Score
A Do you have a business succession plan in place?	No	There has been some conversations about it	The farm has a successor nominated and a plan in place	
What would happen to your farm if there is an extreme weather event next year?	We haven't given any thoughts to extreme weather events	We are prepared for events we have been affected by before	We have plans for new and expected weather events	
Have you done a business risk assessment for your farm?	No, I am not fully aware of the risks associated with my business	I am aware of the risks facing my business but don't have any plans in place for them	Yes, and I have written plans for any risks that would have a big impact on my farm	
Do you have a retirement plan?	No	I pay into a pension but have no other plans <b>or</b> I won't be able to retire until after I'm 70	Yes, I have plans so it will be possible for me to comfortably retire before 70	
Do you have a medium to long term (3-10 year) business plan for the farm?	No	I kind of have one in my head	Yes, I have a fully researched and costed plan in place. I have talked about it with everyone involved	

# 2. Production

Production is all about turning inputs into outputs. There are many benefits to improving productivity, for example it can reduce the amount of time a farmer needs to spend on the farm and can increase how much money a farm makes.



You don't need to work harder to improve productivity. It is all about working smarter.	0 points	point 1	2 points	Score
A Do you know what key performance indicators (KPIs) are?	I'm not really sure	I am aware of them but don't really use them	I am aware of them and I use well established KPIs	
B Do you benchmark your production?	Nope	Kind of, but not seriously	I am a committed member of an organised benchmarking group <b>or</b> seriously compare myself against published figures	
C Do you use the support of agronomists?	No	I meet with an agronomist infrequently	I am fully engaged and have a good relationship with my agronomist <b>or</b> I am FACTS accredited	
Are you aware of new research and development in farming?	I prefer to live under a rock	I dip in and out when I have time	It is important to me to keep up to date with new developments	
E Do you have a soil nutrient management plan?	I don't spend time thinking about just soil	l occasionally do some soil analysis	I have a soil nutrient management plan which I regularly update and implement	

## 3. Paperwork

No matter what industry someone works in, paperwork cannot be escaped. Making sure it is filled out correctly, and at the right time, can be a headache, but it can help avoid a lot of stress in the future. So it is important farmers know that all of their farm's paperwork is sorted out even if they are not the one filling it out.



Filling out paperwork is never fun but it is essential.	0 points	1 point	2 points	Score
Are you aware of all the paperwork you need for inspections?	Not a clue	I think so, I know some of it anyway	Yes, of course	
B Is your paperwork ready for inspections?	I want to run a mile from the inspector <b>or</b> I avoid it as it feels overwhelming	It would take me a few days to prepare	I'm ready for the inspector anytime	
Do you have the appropriate documents sorted in the eventuality you are incapacitated or die?  LPA stands for a lasting power of attorney	Nope	I have a will	I have an up to date will. I have a partnership agreement, health and welfare LPA, and a financial LPA if applicable	
Do you have complete records for all fertilisers and sprays used on your farm?	My records are incomplete or aren't up to date	I have <b>unfiled</b> records of all fertiliser and spray applications	I have <b>filed</b> or <b>electronic</b> records of all fertiliser and spray applications	
E Is managing paperwork part of your routine?	I do it at the last minute or when I'm exhausted	I schedule all the necessary time needed to ensure my paperwork is in full order (or someone else does)	I schedule all the necessary time needed to ensure my paperwork is in full order (or someone else does) <b>and</b> I use it to make management decisions	
			Total	/10

I otal

# 4. Money

Understanding finances is essential to every business, but it is easy to avoid talking about and can quickly get confusing. This can lead to stress and worry. If a farmer takes the time to look over and talk about their finances, it can lead to quick wins and reduce worry.



A How often do you review your overhead costs?  Never, or only if something big happens  Annually or less  More than annually  I roughly budget according to the previous wake forecasts and budget accordingly  Do you think your farm business would survive without direct payments?  Does your farm make enough net profit to pay loans and cover private drawings?  Do you take opportunities to buy inputs at lower costs?  E.g. Comparing prices from different suppliers  Never, or only if something big happens  Annually or less  More than annually  I roughly budget according to the previous make forecasts and budget accordingly  Yes, it would be fine  It depends on the time of year  Unitly sometimes on the farm's net profit could cover loans and personal drawings from the business  I will sometimes look out for good deals from other suppliers  I will sometimes look out for good deals from other suppliers  I will sometimes look out for good deals from other suppliers	Ignoring money issues doesn't make them go away.	0 points	1 point	2 points	Score
C Do you think your farm business would survive without direct payments?  Does your farm make enough net profit to pay loans and cover private drawings?  I am always struggling to pay loans or I can't take private drawings from the business  I am always struggling to pay loans or I can't take private drawings from the business  I will sometimes look out for good deals from other suppliers  No, I don't think about it  I will sometimes look out for good deals from other suppliers	A How often do you review your overhead costs?		Annually or less	More than annually	
Does your farm make enough net profit to pay loans and cover private drawings?  Do you take opportunities to buy inputs at lower costs?  E.g. Comparing prices from different suppliers  I am always struggling to pay loans or I can't take private drawings from the business  I am always struggling to pay loans or I can't take private drawings from the business  It depends on the time of year  It depends on the time of year  I will sometimes look out for good deals from other suppliers  I will sometimes look out for good deals from other suppliers	B Do you budget for the year ahead?	_	according to the previous	make forecasts and	
and cover private drawings?  Do you take opportunities to buy inputs at lower costs?  E.g. Comparing prices from different suppliers  To pay loans or I can't take private drawings from the business  To pay loans or I can't take private drawings from the business  I will sometimes look out for good deals from other suppliers  I will sometimes look out for good deals from other suppliers		Not at all	With difficulty	Yes, it would be fine	
Do you take opportunities to buy inputs at lower costs? No, I don't think about it I will sometimes look out for good deals from other suppliers  I will sometimes look out for good deals from other suppliers  I plan for seasonal deals <b>or</b> I compare prices from different		to pay loans <b>or</b> I can't take private drawings	•	unexpected expense the farm's net profit could cover loans and	
			out for good deals	I plan for seasonal deals <b>or</b> I compare prices from different	

## 5. Environment

By correctly managing and protecting the environment, a farm protects itself for the future and can make money in the present. The government is likely to put more incentives in place for good environmental management practices in the future, so get ahead of the game.



Look after the land, and the land will look after you.	0 points	1 point	2 points	Score
A Do you know how energy efficient you are?	No, I don't waste my energy on that	I keep an eye on my energy bills	I monitor, evaluate and act on my energy usage and efficiency	
B Do you look after your soil health?	I don't really think about it	I follow some recommended practices	Yes, I have a soil conservation plan which I adhere to	
Have a look at the reducing emissions checklist on page 23.  How many of these practices do you follow to reduce the impact your machinary has on the environment?	0	1-4 of them	4-7 of them	
Do you have a lot of biodiversity on your farm?  A biodiverse farm will have 6 or more of the habitats listed on page 24	Not much, maybe the odd rat	There is some but it is quite patchy (around 3-5 different habitats)	The farm is very diverse, we have a wide variety of habitats (around 6+ different habitats)	
Are you aware of the Environment Agency's Farming Rules for Water?	No	I am aware of them but don't follow them very well	I am aware of them and follow them	

## 6. Lifestyle

The main drivers behind a farm's success is the people who work on and manage the farm. Therefore, it is essential that farmers make their own health a priority if they want the business to be healthy. It is also important to consider that a person's wellbeing and health is more important than their job and productivity.



Life is not merely being alive, but being well.	0 points	1 point	2 points	Score
A How often do you take time off the farm?	Never	Less than 7 days each year	More than 7 days each year	
B Do you have a hobby away from the farm?	No, farming is my whole life	Yes, but I don't have much time for it	Yes, I make sure I do my hobby regularly	
What is your heart rate?  Don't know how to take your pulse? See page 23	Below 40 bpm or Above 100 bpm	40-50 bpm or 80-100 bpm	50-80 bpm	
How often have you been bothered by feeling down, depressed or hopeless in the last 2 weeks?	Nearly everyday	Several days in the last 2 weeks	Rarely or not at all	
E Do you have a balanced diet? Not sure what a balanced diet looks like? See page 25	I eat lots of fatty, salty and/or sweet foods	I tend to eat from the different food groups every day, but its not balanced	I have a balanced diet and eat 5 portions of fruit and/or veg and drink 2 liters of water every day	

# 7. Communication

Working on a farm can be a lot more isolated than other jobs. For many this is a pro of the job. But, there are still many people associated with the running of a farm such as family, consultants, suppliers and the community. How relationships are managed with these people can impact on a farm's performance.



Even the Lone Ranger didn't do it alone	0 points	1 point	2 points	Score
A Do you have a network of people that you trust for advice?	I only listen to my own advice	There is a small group of people that I trust to take advice from	There is a variety of people who I will take advice from which includes professionals	
B How often do you feel lonely?	Often	Some of the time	Hardly ever or never	
C Do you have a good relationship with the local community?	I stay away from them, and hope they stay away from me	I go to some community events	I am an active member of the community	
Has your family been the source of any stress over the last couple of weeks?	Severe stress	Moderate Stress	No or mild stress	
E Is there marketing for your farm? Ways that you may market your farm are listed on page 23	There is no marketing	There is some marketing (1-4 items from the checklist)	The is a marketing plan for the farm which advertises its unique selling point (5+ items from the checklist)	
			Total	/10

## 8. Assets

Most people have heard the phrase that farmers are asset rich but cash poor, because farms often have lots of land, machinery and buildings. If assets are correctly managed then a reliable cash flow can be generated from them. Looking after assets is also important as it can prevent you spending lots of money to fix or replace them in the future.



Managing a farm's assets well can increase its cashflow	0 points	1 point	2 points	Score
A Is your agricultural machinery managed correctly?	I only fix things when it breaks down	I maintain most of my vehicles to a good standard	I maintain all my machinery to manufacturer guidelines, and get them serviced when it is recommended	
Do you assess the costs and income from your farm buildings?	No	I maintain them to avoid them costing me a lot in the future	I ensure the buildings reach their full financial potential	
Do you know the current market value of all your assets	Nope	I know some, but not all	I have a fully costed inventory	
Are your assets insured?	The house is	I have basic cover	Everything is fully insured against all eventualities	
If you own land, do you make a 2% return on it? For rented land, do you make 5% return on tenant type capital (assets provided by the tennant)?	It makes a loss	No or I'm not sure	Yes	
			Total	/10

# 9. Management

There are many decisions involved in the daily running of a farm. Being able to make these decisions (or be confident that others are able) is a key part of managing a farm. There are many styles of management and the style chosen will depend on the situation and a person's character.



Deciding what not to do is as important as deciding what to do	0 points	1 point	2 points	Score
Are you good at delegating and passing on roles or responsibility?	I do as much as I can myself instead of delegating	Yes, but I don't always trust who I delegate tasks to	Yes, and I trust the people I delegate to do a proper job	
B For anyone else who works on the farm, have they been trained?	They got through in at the deep end	They learnt as they went along. I have given them some feedback	Yes, there was formal training when they started and they have opportunites for more	
C Do you seek new opportunities for the business?	I avoid change and anything new	I will look at opportunities that present themselves to me	I seek new opportunities and new ways to improve the business	
Do you enjoy managing people and processes?	I hate it	I don't mind it	Yes, I am glad that this is part of my role	
Are you confident in your ability to make important decisions?	I often question my abilities and I am scared to make decisions	I can make important decisions but feel like I am making it up	I can make important decisions quickly and confidentially when needed	
			<del>-</del>	140

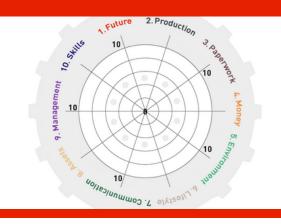


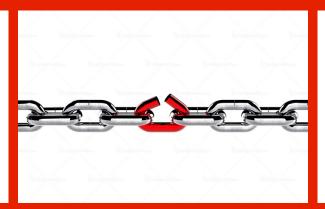
Lifelong learning helps both a farm business and the farmer. We are never too old to learn and continually developing skills keeps are minds sharp as we age. There are many skills needed in farming so there is always something that can be worked on. But some of these are becoming increasingly important for a competitive and resilient business.



Ε	Every day is a school day	0 points	1 point	2 points	Score
A	How good are you with computers?	I am lucky if I can turn it on	I can do what I need to once I have been shown how	I am a computer wiz	
E	How do you handle health and safety risks on your farm?	I don't worry about them	I am careful around the big life threatening risks.	I minimise the number of risks on the farm and ensure that myself and any workers think before taking risks	
(	How do you describe your organisational skills?	I couldn't organise a "party" in a brewery	They are alright	I can efficiently organise complex operations	
	How many of these technical skills do you have? See page 24	0-5	5-10	10-15	
E	Are you confident using the equipment and machinery on your farm?	I have never done accredited training (even if you feel like a pro)	I have done a little accredited training <b>or</b> I often don't feel confident in what I'm doing	I have undergone all required accredited training for equipment and machinery that I need to use	

#### WHAT NOW?







Take a look at your wheels

See what your wheels look like on page 4

Decide if there is anything you would like to change

Page 16 will help here

Set goals

You are more likely to achieve goals if you write it down and set a deadline. See page 17.







Learn from others
Look into resources and events
that may help you reach your
goals. See Section 4.

Monitor your progress
Review this booklet in a few
months to check your progress
on your wheels and goals.

**Feedback** 

Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help with this process. See **page 29**.





Section 3

# Personal Action Plan

## **Personal Action Plan**

<b>Key Strengths</b>		
<b>Key Priorities</b>		

## Goal 1

What do I want to happen?

Might there be any obstacles?

How could you overcome these?

Target Date:

## Goal 2

What do I want to happen?	Might there be any obstacles?	How could you overcome these?	How will you approach this?
		Target Date	x2

**Section 4** 

Every question in section 2 relates to something in your control. You won't be able to change everything you would like to at once. But each small change will make a difference.

In the future we will have signposting information in this section.

Remember, no one is perfect and it is never too late. So be brave and make the change!

2 Minute

Before 2008 the British cycling team had won 1 Olympic gold medal in 100 years. But at Bejing 2008 they won 60% of all gold medals available.

How?

Dave Brailsford introduced this principle:

66 If you broke down everything you could think of that goes into riding a bike, and then improve it by 1 percent, you will get a significant increase when you put them all together.



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### 1. Future

- A Farming Connect Succession Booklet
- B AHDB weather pages
- C Risk Assessment Worksheet
- D 2MF Meet Dave and Sarah (Other Forms of Income)
- E Teagasc Worksheet

### 2. Production

- A AHDB
- B Farmbench
- C BASIS
- D Innovation for Agriculture
- E Swarm Hub

## 3. Paperwork

- A Cross Compliance Inspections Youtube
- B Management Software and Apps
- C Stephens Scown LLP
- D www.voluntaryinitiative.org.uk and www.www.nutrientmanagement.org
- E Farm Office Handbook

## 4. Money

- A Farm Business Survey
- B FWI How to Draw Up a Budget For Your Farm Business
- C 2MF Diversification Blogs
- D UK Agricultural Finance
- E Comparison Sites such as Yagro and AgriSmart

## 5. Environment

- A Farm Carbon Toolkit
- B Swarm Hub
- Farming for a Better Climate Energy and Fuel use
- D FWAG SouthWest
- E Magic Maps www.magic.defra.gov.uk Environment Agency

## 6. Lifestyle

- A Farmers Guardian 7 Top Tips for Taking Time Off
- B Get Active Cornwall
- C Your GP
- D RABI 0808 281 9490
- E www.nhs.uk/live-well

### 7. Communication

- A Cornwall farming community get together www.2minutefarmer.eventbrite.co.uk
- B FCN & Farming Help 03000 111 999
- C Open Farm Sunday
- D 2MF Meet Dave and Sarah (Time to Talk)
- E 2MF Marketing & Diversification blogs

#### 8. Assets

- A HSE Working safely with Agricultural Machinery Booklet
- B Find an Agricultural Valuer near you via www.caav.org.uk
- C AHDB Machinery Costing Calculator
- Rural Insurance Companies e.g. NFU Mutual, Cornish Mutual, Towergate Insurance
- Find a Land Surveyor near you via www.ricsfirms.com

## 9. Management

- A Ag Web 7 Tips for Delegation Success
- B AHDB Training your Team for Business
- C FarmCornwall Consultancy
- D Share Farming
- E Worshipful Company of Farmers Courses

## 10. Skills

- A www.learnmyway.com or Check your Local Library for Courses
- B Yellow Wellies
- C AHDB Skills Webinar Using your Time Effectively
- D www.nlbc.uk
- E Cornwall College Group www.cornwall.ac.uk

#### **Other Resources**

The colour of the dot refers to the different topics in section 2. The matching colour will be in the top left of each page.

- www.focussedfarmers.com
- The Resilient Farmer by Doug Avery (Book)
- A guide to farm resource management by non-technical skills in agriculture (NTSAg) (online leaflet)Q
- NFU Business Guides
  - Facebook Forums

### **Events**

There are several events that you could go to improve each area. The colour of the dots respresents what area of the wheel each event will cover.

#### August 2020

**28th-30th,** Westpoint, Exeter Devon County Show



#### September 2020

**10th-12th**, Royal Cornwall Showground Royal Cornwall Show



#### November 2020

11th-12th, NEC, BirminghamFarm Business Innovation Show 202021st, Royal Cornwall ShowgroundCornish Winter Fair



If there are any events that you think should be added to this page, then please let us know via:

This page was created on the 6th April 2020.

Due to the Covid-19 outbreak many events

have been cancelled or postponed leaving this page a little empty. It also means that the

dates here may have changed, so please

check dates online if you are interested in

going to an event.

2minutefarmer@duchy.ac.uk

Section 5

Here is some extra information that might help you answer some of the questions in section 2.

#### WHAT IS MY HEART RATE? For page 10



2



2

Count the number of beats you feel for 60 seconds (or 30s and times by 2)

This number is your heart rate in beats per minute, or BPM

Find a timer. Also make sure you are calm (and not been exercising)

with your palm up.

Hold out your hand Press your first and second finger at the base of your thumb. Press until you feel vour pulse

## REDUCING EMISSIONS For page FROM AGRICULTURAL 9 VEHICLES CHECKLIST

Plan work to minimise journeys between fields

Service the vehicle the recommended amount

Confine vehicles to permanent tramlines or defined routes as much as possible

Turn the tractor off if its standing idle

Throttle down - gear up. Keep revolutions as low as possible, this could save 33% on fuel cost

Look for low CO<sub>2</sub> emissions or low specific fuel consumption when replacing farm vehicles

Chose fuel efficient tyres for the vehicle

Taken from Farming for a Better Climate Website

Number of boxes ticked:

#### MARKETING IN **FARMING**

page 11

A logo

A clear unique selling point

A website

Meet product requirements to get the best price

Social Media Account

Talk to distributors about the value and selling points of your products

Have farm walks/visits

Number of boxes ticked:



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## **HABITAT DIVERSITY CHECKLIST** For page 9 Biodiversity is dependent on habitat diversity, how many of these habitat types do you have on your farm?



Stream, Pond, River or Lake



Trees

Farm Buildings with Nesting





Skylark plots or Beetle banks



Scrub



Over-wintered Stubble



Meadow or High Diversity Permanent Pasture



Field Margins or Conservation Headlands



**Number of** boxes ticked:

#### TECHNICAL SKILLS CHECKLIST

Pesticide application

Nutrient management

Variety selection

Fertiliser application

**Tractor driving** and operating

Disease detection

Sowing, Cultivation and ploughing

**Data Recording** 

Harvesting

ATV driving

Telehandler operation

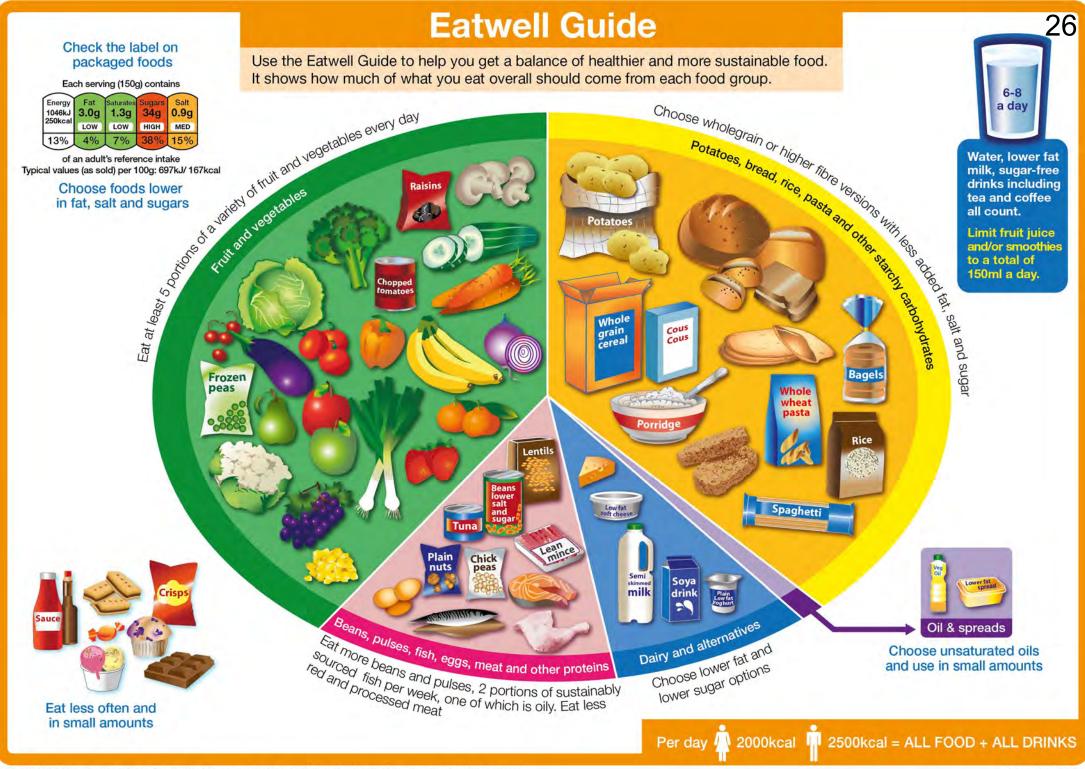
Trailer towing

First Aid

Crop storage

Pest Control

Number of boxes ticked:





# For more information: CONTACT US

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0845 458 7485

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**Our Collaborators** 









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