

WE NEED THRIVING
ECOSYSTEMS TO
CONTINUE TO PRODUCE
FOOD THAT'S HEALTHY
FOR PEOPLE AND
PLANET



In the last 5 years, farmland birds
in the UK have declined by **10%**

70% of crop types rely on pollination



Over **70%** of the UK is farmland.
Farming plays a vital role in restoring
nature and helping to reverse the
trend on climate change.

M&S
— FOOD —

FARMING WITH NATURE

We recognise that in order to continue to produce high quality, trusted, delicious food it starts with sourcing from our Select Farms we know and trust, who care for every aspect from the soil that grows crops and forage for animals, to the health of the surrounding environment. We are proud to work with some of the best farmers in the UK – not just in terms of their high production standards, but in how they provide wildlife habitats, protect soil and water resources and ensure the land is managed for the benefit of future generations. As custodians of the land, we believe they have a vital role to play in nurturing nature and helping to tackle climate change, and we are committed to ensuring our customers are aware of the lengths that our Select Farms go to when producing products for M&S.

We know that UK farmers are facing significant challenges, from uncertainties around Brexit and changes to farm support, to climate change. Adapting to these pressures will require innovation in farming practices and industry collaboration; we are determined to support British farmers as they find new ways to meet the environmental challenges we face and help our Select Farms become more resilient.

The M&S Farming with Nature programme is a nature-friendly farming approach to sourcing our fresh British products; covering 100% of our British Select Farms supplying livestock, farmed salmon and trout, and fresh produce including fruit, veg and salad. The 5-year programme aims to support farmers with industry-relevant, specialist support and tools to help them to become more resilient and sustainable, and deliver measurable improvements to their businesses, whilst encouraging the uptake of nature-friendly farming practices.

Farming is core to our Plan A strategy at M&S- as an evolution to these plans we will extend our environmental programme across international fresh produce growers too.

FARMING WITH NATURE ACTIVITY

STRONGER ENVIRONMENTAL OUTCOMES

MEAT, POULTRY, DAIRY AND FARMED FISH

M&S continues to lead on animal welfare standards, now offering the largest range of RSPCA- assured products on the high street. As part of Farming with Nature, we are now collecting environmental outcome measures alongside our welfare measures, allowing us communicate the great practices that already go on, as well as identifying areas for further exploration. This will enable farms to demonstrate their progress, supported with industry- focused, practical resources.

FRESH PRODUCE

When it comes to fresh produce, M&S already asks all UK growers to be LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming) Marque certified. As part of our Farming with Nature programme we are going further by partnering with LEAF to deliver a programme of verified modules for M&S growers covering nature and landscapes, crop protection, soil, water and energy, which build on the LEAF Marque standard and aim to support M&S growers towards enhancing environmental outcomes.

CHAMPIONING REGENERATIVE FARMING

INDICATOR AND INNOVATION FARMS

We are working with a network of 17 brilliant Indicator and Innovation farms across the UK from apple orchards to free range egg farms to our loch trout. Together with farmers and partners we are trialing new ways of farming in harmony with nature and measuring environmental improvements and benefits to those farming businesses over time. M&S-funded partners from the Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), the Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust and FERA will provide science, technologies and advice to support the farms identify opportunities to improve environmental performance and adapt to the challenges ahead; with learnings and insights being shared across all of our UK Select Farms.

We are working with a number of these farms with a technology-led approach, aiming to provide new insights for farmers on the biodiversity on their farms, using novel methods from DNA to remote sensing and mapping using drone and satellite data.

SUPPORTING FARMERS THOROUGH NETWORKS, TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Through our work on our M&S Indicator and Innovation farms and with partners, we will create industry-focused, practical resources for M&S Select Farms supplying livestock and farmed fish to support them to address real challenges in enhancing environmental outcomes.

For M&S growers, FWAG and The Wildlife Trusts will be delivering support through annual landscape-level events enabling peer-to-peer exchange, 121 remote support and wildlife advisor farm visits.

As part of the programme we will be testing and adapting tools and technologies and sharing the learnings as we go with M&S Select Farms and the wider industry; for example novel biodiversity monitoring techniques, to a regenerative agriculture decision support tool we are testing with Soil Capital and our potato growers.

Recognising the importance of industry alignment and farmer-led innovation towards sustainable farming, M&S is also an early supporter and collaborator of the Soil Association Exchange, which aims to be a hub for innovative best practice for farmers.

As part of our Farming with Nature programme we are proud to have formed collaborative knowledge exchange partnership with a range of industry experts who will help us deliver on Farming with Nature activity and goals.

Key to the success of the programme is continued collaboration and consultation with suppliers and farmers in order to ensure solutions are fit for purpose and add value. Co-creation with farmers remains at the centre of our approach with our partners.



FARMING WITH NATURE FOCUS AREAS



POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY FARMING

We have pollinators to thank for a third of the food we eat; they are particularly important in creating our fresh produce at M&S. They're also vital for the survival of other wild plants that support so much of our wildlife.

As part of Farming with Nature, growers will be going further to support pollinators, for example through monitoring and enhancing pollinator habitats. We will be working with a range of Indicator and Innovation Farms and partners to explore practices to promote pollinators, for example, testing the impact of different wild-flower species on populations and measuring increases over time.

We also will introduce more than 30 million bees on to our fresh produce farms to help pollinate crops and produce delicious M&S Select Farm British honey.



REDUCED RELIANCE ON PESTICIDES

Many M&S growers already employ best practices in IPM (Integrated Pest Management) and a number of production contexts, for example glasshouses, use little chemical pesticides at all.

As part of Farming with Nature, with partners we will provide specialist support and guidance for growers to enhance their IPM best practices and enable them to demonstrate progress on reducing reliance on pesticides. We will also be working with our Indicator and Innovation Farms to test methods to boost beneficial insects in order to manage pests naturally, using novel technologies to measure invertebrate populations and prove benefits to those farming businesses over time.



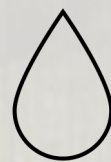
PROTECTING AND ENHANCING HABITATS AND SPECIES

UK wildlife is in decline; features like hedgerows, trees and field margins provide important corridors for wildlife to be able to move through landscapes. Across our Indicator and Innovation farms from orchard to grass-based livestock systems, along with growers receiving annual farm visits from wildlife advisors, we will measure improvements to habitats and wildlife, and the broader benefits to farm businesses over time. In addition, through learning resources and events will support knowledge of surrounding landscapes to enable landscape connectivity opportunities for farmers.



HEALTHY SOILS

Improving soil health is important for crop nutrition, water retention to reduce flooding and enable conservation, and removing and storing carbon from the atmosphere. Through our Indicator and Innovation Farms we will explore how management approaches impact on soil microbial activity, organic matter build-up and the potential for carbon sequestration, trialing regenerative agriculture techniques like minimum tillage and demonstrating impacts to farm businesses over time. Farmers will be provided best practice resources and we will be testing measurement and decision support tools to support the uptake of practices that protect and conserve soils.



CONSERVING WATER RESOURCES

Exacerbated by climate change, farmers in the UK are facing challenges of too little water, too much or it not falling in the right place. Farmers also have a crucial role to play in helping to improve the quality of our water environment. Water management best practice will be explored through our Indicator and Innovation Farms and through our partnership with LEAF we will support M&S growers towards strengthening water outcomes.

We also recognise the importance of industry collaboration to protect the health of our water catchments. Alongside other brands, retailers and food producers we continue to support WRAP's Courtauld Water Ambition, directly supporting stewardship projects including two in the UK in the Medway and Wye and Usk catchments.



ANIMAL WELFARE

We have enjoyed leadership status on animal welfare and are now going further, committing to increasing the use of RSPCA Assurance standards, with all our shell egg, pork, salmon, trout, Oakham Gold chicken and milk being reared to these standards, enabling M&S to offer the largest range of RSPCA-Assured products on the high street. Farming with Nature activity will be delivered with animal welfare at the heart, ensuring that environmental outcomes only enhance or support animal welfare.