

# Agroecology in Action



The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Agroecology, the Landworkers Alliance, Sustain: The Alliance for Better Food and Farming, CPRE The Countryside Charity, Organic Farmers & Growers, Soil Association and the Gaia Foundation are pleased to host “**Agroecology in Action**”: presentations and policy recommendations by farmers across the UK designed to create a deep transformation of our food and farming system in line with global commitments to restore the earth and end food poverty.

The presentations, rooted in the experience of UK farmers, will bring to life the steps that can be taken by government to implement a food and farming system that is equitable, sustainable, nourishing and humane in the face of the climate and nature crisis and rising levels of food poverty.



We Feed the World is an international photographic exhibition that celebrates the triumphs and challenges of small holder farmers today. Highlighting the diversity of growers and their practices, We Feed the World features the stories of over 50 farming and fishing communities from around the world and shows how small-scale, agroecological farming not only provides the majority of the world’s food but also offers solutions to many of our converging planetary crises; from the pollution and depletion of our soils, waterways and oceans, to the diminishing health and wellbeing of our communities.



Mark Lea farms 450ac of organic land in Shropshire with a system built on the belief that sustainability requires diversity. The rotation is mixed with clover leys grazed by cattle and sheep, as well as producing red clover seed. Cropping includes milling oats, peas for human consumption grown for Hodmedods and this year 14 different milling wheats for direct sale to millers and bakers. They are food producers, adding value on the farm where they can, developing a relationship with customers. Companion cropping, diverse cover crops and agroforestry all contribute to the resilience of the farm. A green-waste composting enterprise receives 5000tpa of local kerbside garden waste, making compost used throughout the rotation to contribute to raising organic matter and improve the soil. This is their 20th year of being certified by Organic Farmers and Growers proving that their system is sustainable without synthetic inputs. They are proud to farm in a way that contributes positively to biodiversity and soil, air and water quality whilst producing healthy food that is in genuine demand.

Polly Davies is from Slade Farm, a 300ha family run, organic mixed tenanted farm situated on the Glamorgan Heritage Coast. The farm has a sheep flock of 500 ewes, 55 cow suckler herd unit, 35 pigs and around 80-90ha of organic arable, certified by Organic Farmers and Growers CIC, on rotation round the farm. "Farming with Nature, we manage a range of habitats, improving the farmland bird populations as well as producing quality meat and organic cereals. Here at the farm we aim to be sustainable by not 'buying in' forage or feed cereals for our livestock, all our feed (including the protein) for the cattle, pigs and sheep, is grown here on the farm. Reducing the farm carbon footprint as well as providing and patchwork of habitats due to cereals and grassland being grown across the farm."



Growing Communities is a successful social enterprise that has been running Dagenham Farm next to Central Park since May 2012. Having transformed an ex-council nursery site into a thriving growing and learning site, the farm regularly produces more than four tonnes of Soil Association certified organic vegetables per year and provides an important space for the local community. They support two part-time grower jobs at the farm, enabling staff to work around family commitments. They also run weekly volunteer sessions so the local community can access and benefit from the farm. Benefits for volunteers include learning growing skills, getting exercise and fresh air, and an improved overall sense of well-being.

Alice Holden transformed the derelict site into the vibrant business that it is today. Growing Communities provides the community with better access to fresh fruit and vegetables at an affordable price. This has a direct impact on public health and provides a valuable model for reducing food poverty.

Marina and Mark O'Connell with Bob Mehew of the Apricot Centre, Dartington, are transforming land, previously used for high-input chemical farming, into a fertile educational market garden and community-connected farm for biodynamic, permacultural and organic food growing. Huxhams Cross Farm, is leased to the Apricot Centre CIC to establish an educational market garden and community-connected small farm with transformational social and environmental impacts. The farm was designed using the permaculture methodology, producing delicious biodynamic food, vegetables, fruit, eggs, preserves and flour. The farm also supports wildlife biodiversity and has been designed to be low carbon. They are both organic and biodynamic certified.



Josh Healy of North Aston Dairy has been supplying milk to surrounding villages and into Oxford since 2006, when the first three cows were bought and milked in a refurbished barn. The dairy now has 14 Ayrshire milking cows and several more young stock. By selling high quality milk direct to customers it is able to finance two full-time and one part-time income.

The cows are milked 4 abreast and have a predominantly grass-based diet. When calves are born they are fed by their mother for around a week before being fostered onto a cow that is producing less milk.

Male calves are killed to produce delicious rose veal after a diet of milk and grass/hay/silage at 6-9 months. Ayrshire female calves are brought up to come into the milking herd at around 36 months. They deliver the milk late afternoon onto doorsteps in glass litre bottles.

The milk is pasteurised but unhomogenized so has a lovely layer of cream on top.

Lynn Cassells runs Lynbreck Croft, a 150acre mixed upland farm in the Highlands of Scotland with a diverse range of enterprises that include cattle, sheep, pig, poultry, hens and bees. "Our pigs and poultry are fed on organic certified feed and our sheep and cattle are grain free. Our farm is zero input – no chemicals, fertilisers or lime is applied. Our goal is to use our animals to regenerate and build soil, improve diversity and produce the highest quality, nutrient dense food. We practise low stress animal handling and seek to utilise our livestock's natural instincts to best improve our land. We are passionate about selling produce to a local market and building long term climate and economic resilience. into our business. We offer eggs weekly and meat seasonally and are expanding into added value cured and smoked produce. We offer a range of monthly croft tours and courses to educate the public on what we do and why we do it and we currently feature on the award winning BBC2 This Farming Life series. We also work on a national scale as Scottish Government Climate Change champions to highlight the importance of low impact, community focused agroecological farming systems."

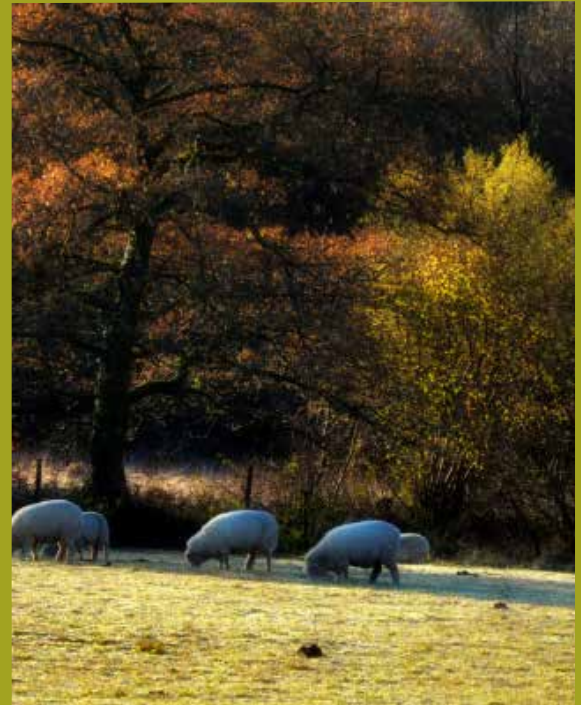




Adam and Ellen Simon and their daughter Leila manage Tamarisk Farm as a 3 generation family farm which combines local food production with conservation and public engagement, on 580 acres of poor-quality land. Red Devon cattle and sheep are grazed extensively on wildflower rich pasture, that also supports a diverse range of birds and insects. An arable rotation, comprising wheat, rye, barley, oats and drying peas provides flour to sell in the farm, alongside meat, wool and eggs.

Rebecca Laughton runs a market garden producing fresh vegetables on a corner of the farm alongside a range of other businesses which provide land based employment for a new generation of young farmers.

Middle Ruckham Farm and Forest is a mixed farming and forestry enterprise comprising 10 ha ex Forestry Commission PAWS, 5ha broadleaved woodland and hazel coppice, 1ha orchards, vegetable beds and polytunnels, and 14ha wildflower meadows. The plantation is in continuous cover management and we are members of a workers cooperative owning a mobile sawmill, which we use to turn our timber into compost toilets, our main source of income. The orchard and meadows are in mid tier Countryside Stewardship and support hundreds of species and is registered organic. There is a mix of cattle, ponies, a working horse and Devon Closewools which are grass fed and live out all year. We also keep chickens and bees, milk one of the cows and make our own herbal medicines. We use the sheep's wool for insulation and plan to develop our own yarn. We sell mixed salad leaves eggs, honey, beef and milk to visitors.



Adam Crowe grew up on a rented dairy and sheep farm and has witnessed first-hand the difficulties of making small tenant farms pay. With his partner Helen and baby Sam he is now making his own way into farming, working to produce food from a biodiverse landscape through conservation grazing of protected sites and traditional and restored orchards with cattle and sheep. He would like to start a small dairy in the future, but understands the challenges to new entrants of access to land and the capital costs of starting a farming business, and so advocates training, start-up grants and land reform to help young farmers.

Gerald Miles is part of Caerhys organic family farm situated on the coast of Pembrokeshire. They farm 120 acres of mixed enterprises, which compliment each other in a sustainable way to benefit others. Caerhys Organic Community Agriculture established as the first community supported agriculture scheme (CSA) in Wales. He says "My son Carwyn desired passionately to come back to farm and I could envisage that by creating the CSA we could establish my son as the grower, giving him a wage that would secure the farm. That made me realise that the farm helped to bond the community and our farm because sharing the farm that fed them in true food sovereignty, according to the ideology of agroecology. Today we have 60 families receiving organic vegetables every week. Caerhys is truly what it set out to do – to feed local people.

We also have a herd of pasture fed beef cows. The animals are happy and content and spend most of their time lying down admiring the view. During the winter months when weather dictates and our fields get too wet, the cattle are on sheltered straw bedding which is used as compost for our fields applied in rotation with cereal crops. Our farm grows 25 acres of cereal every year. Varieties we grow are the holy grail of grain, which are the seeds of the future. Now that climate dominates our survival, all the ancient heritage grains are important because they were grown pre-Green Revolution before chemicals and nitrates were dreamed of. Seeds such as Emmer, which is a variety of wheat descendant from the Egyptian's, is great for bread and is low in gluten. The Black Oats variety was grown by my grandfather and is widely grown by farmers to feed stock on their farms. "



Jyoti Fernandes runs 23 acre Fivepenny Farm in Dorset with her family. They produce preserves, Jacob's hoggett (1 year old lamb), cheese from Jersey cows, apple juice, soft fruit (for their famous meringue towers), and herbal products. They run a catering business from the farm using produce from local smallholdings to create publically-procured buffet lunches for Dorset County Council teacher and NHS training days and feasts for local weddings. Fivepenny Catering brings you this feast today created entirely from UK produce, including vegetables from a couple sharing their farm.

Fivepenny Farm houses a community processing centre funded by Leader rural development funding in 2005. The processing rooms have a dairy, meat cutting room, preserving room and cider press. The facilities are used and maintained by over 50 local smallholders to add value to their produce, creating valuable income streams in a rural area. Jyoti is a policy officer for the Landworkers Alliance. She also collects cider apples with the old boys around Devon to produce a traditional scrumpy. Try some if you dare!



# Policies to Support Agroecology

- Create a 10 year plan for a wholesale transition to agroecological farming by 2030, as recommended by the RSA Food, Farming and Countryside Commission.
- Train and reward farms for improving agroecological practices across the whole farm.
- Widen the focus for UK R&D to include agro-ecological innovations for: climate change mitigation, soil health and fertility, crop rotations, crop husbandry, plant breeding, livestock health and welfare.
- Regulate pesticides, herbicides, artificial fertilizers and carbon emissions from farms.
- Improve organic support schemes, setting ambitious targets for converting farms to organic.
- Pay for “ecosystem services” delivered by farmers who create wild spaces and wildlife corridors, plant hedge-rows and trees, restore wetlands, healthy water catchments and biodiversity.
- Support farmer to farmer agroecology training networks and demonstrations farms.
- Maintain rural development funding for community farms, processing, marketing and local food.
- Create Community Supported Agriculture start- up funds in local areas.
- Allocate funding streams for community-integrated urban and green belt farms as part of city plans.
- Create a Climate Action Plan for Agriculture to reduce emissions and the use of imported soya.
- Train farms to save seed and set up regional traditional seed banks to breed resilient varieties.
- Improve access to land and provide a more responsive farming regime for new entrants to farming.
- Protect the diversity of UK farms- independent farms, community farms, co-operatives, small holdings and family farms- including by regulating corporations involved in the food system.
- Legislate for high standards in animal welfare, food safety, GM, pesticides, antibiotics, workers rights to be incorporated in any new trade deals. Avoid the concentration of corporate control of agriculture when negotiating trade deals.
- Boost agroecological domestic production for the supply of arable, pulses, fruit, vegetables, milk, and sustainable levels of meat to protect our food sovereignty.



THE ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP  
**Agroecology for Sustainable  
Food and Farming**

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## Landworkers Alliance Policy Workshop

September 11, 2019  
Forty Hall Farm (map attached)  
Enfield, London EN2 9HA  
10-4 PM  
8:30 start for farm tour

This policy workshop brings together farmers, foresters, community food growers, food activists, and public interest groups to develop policy recommendations for key government consultations on the National Food Strategy and the emerging Environmental Land Management Schemes.

The topics we will be discussing (with approximate timings) are the:

- 1) Proposed Environmental Land Management Schemes including sustainable farming transition, payments for public goods, landscape-scale ecosystem restoration. 10- 1
- 2) National Food Strategy and House of Lords enquiry into food poverty 2-3
- 3) Post EU Markets and the Shared Prosperity Fund 3-4

A tour of Forty Hall Farm will be held before the event at 8:30.

Lunch will be provided with agroecological vegan, vegetarian and gluten free options from 1-2

Please save travel tickets and receipts for accomodation for reimbursement.

If you would like for me to book you a room in the Stag Hotel in Enfield, please email me and I will reserve a room for you.

Any problems contact: Jyoti Fernandes +447875849754

Email [jyoti@landworkersalliance.org.uk](mailto:jyoti@landworkersalliance.org.uk)

We will summarise all of the schemes we will be discussing, including their Terms of Reference, key consultation dates and lobbying opportunities. You just need to bring your experience and enthusiasm to the workshop.

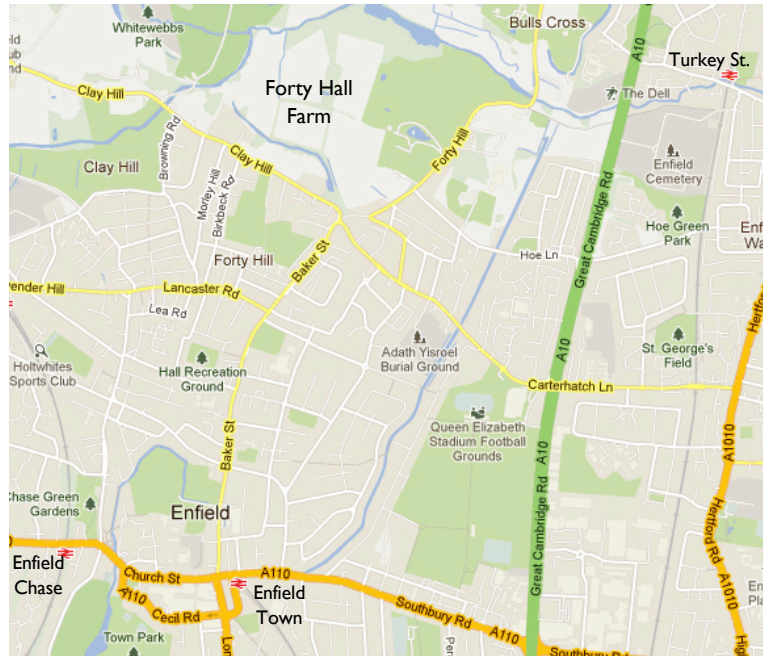
Looking forward to working with you!

# Forty Hall Farm

CAPEL MANOR COLLEGE

## GETTING TO FORTY HALL FARM

Forty Hall Farm is located next door to Forty Hall, at the top of Forty Hill in Enfield. The full address is: **Forty Hall Farm, Forty Hill, Enfield EN2 9HA.**



If you are travelling by train from central London the nearest stations are Enfield Town, Enfield Chase or Turkey Street. It's a 10 minute cycle from there or you can book a taxi from: Station Cars: 020 8366 6166 / 0800 953 0727 The 191 bus also stops at the bottom of Forty Hill. TFL routeplanner here: <https://tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey/>

If you are driving enter the estate and continue straight on, driving past the car park on your right and pond on your left. The road will bear left and in front of you is a brick wall, with farm gate to your right (on the gate there is a big banner advertising our monthly Farmers' Market). There is a second car park here by the wall where you can park.

## ON ARRIVAL



Follow the signs for Forty Hall and turn in to the park through the stone gates.

If you are on foot or on a bike, take the road to the left, towards the Hall. Continue past the Hall and the banqueting suite, both on your left, and you will get to the Farm.

From the main car park, there are two pedestrian routes to the Farm: around the lake, or past Forty Hall. The walk will take a maximum of five minutes. You can enter through the black gate with the Farmers' Market banner on it.

The Farm is shown in the top left corner of this aerial photo. For further information contact [fortyhallfarm@capel.ac.uk](mailto:fortyhallfarm@capel.ac.uk)

020 8363 1393