



# Rural Professionals Conference England 2026.

Thursday 4th June 2026

Hartham Park, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 0RP

**Professionalism  
Profitability & Resilience**



# Conference Programme.

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TIME	DETAILS	SPEAKER
08.30	Registration – tea/ coffee	
09.30	Welcome & Opening Remarks	<b>Richard Price,</b> Huntapac Produce Ltd

## SESSION 1 Agriculture Today and the Road Ahead

Chair: Richard Price, Huntapac Produce Ltd

10.00	UK Agriculture Today	<b>Al Brooks,</b> Facombe Estates Ltd
10.25	Remaining professional in negotiation	<b>Julie Liddle,</b> Director, J Liddle & Co Limited
10.45	Questions	
11.00	Break	

## SESSION 2 Strengthening the Rural Business

Chair: Robert James, Partner, Thrings LLP

11.30	Understanding Business: What Analysis Often Misses	<b>Will Tongue,</b> Berrys
11.50	Difficult Conversation How to eat a frog!	<b>Heather Wildman</b> Managing Director, Saviour Associates Ltd
12.10	Practical Implications for Rural Businesses	<b>Andrew Vickery,</b> Partner, Head of Rural, Old Mill
12.30	Questions	
12.45	Lunch Break	

## SESSION 3 Professional Expertise in a Changing Industry

Chair: Megan Rogers, MRICS ASAg Chartered Surveyor, Berrys

14.00	<b>Expertise matters -</b> The Role of the Trusted Adviser	<b>Andrew Morris,</b> Partner, Thrings LLP, Agriculture Team
14.20	<b>Use of AI -</b> Critical thinking and assessment	<b>Richard Williamson,</b> CEO Fruitcast Limited, Owner Williamson Orchard Limited
14.40	<b>Recognising professionalism</b>	<b>Prof. Paul Wilson,</b> Professor of Agricultural Economics, University of Nottingham.
15.00	Questions	
15.15	<b>Walking Estate Tour</b> A guided tour of Hartham Park with Head of Estates, Mr Luke Raikes, showcasing how the estate is managed to balance heritage, commercial performance and long-term sustainability, including both external grounds and the Mansion House.	
16.15	<b>Summary &amp; take-home messages</b> Tea & cake	<b>William Waterfield,</b> Farm Consultancy Group
16.30	Conference Close	



# About our speakers.



## Al Brooks

Estates Director for Facombe Estates in rural Hampshire

Al Brooks is Estates Director for Facombe Estates in rural Hampshire, overseeing a diverse operation including mixed and contract farming, forestry, wood pellet production, residential lets and a village pub. A lifelong contributor to agriculture and rural affairs, he was Farmers Weekly Farm Manager of the Year in 2010 and a past Chairman of the Oxford Farming Conference.

Al is Chair of the CARAS English Panel, a Trustee of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, a Fellow of the Royal Agricultural Societies (FRAGS) and a Practitioner Member of the Society of Agriculture (PSAg). Originally from Warwickshire, he has received awards for environmental management and is a former Trustee of the Addington Fund.



## Robert James

Partner in Thrings' Agricultural Litigation team

Robert is a partner in Thrings' Agricultural Litigation team, ranked as a leading agricultural dispute resolution specialist by the legal sectors' most prestigious directories.

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## Julie Liddle

Rural Chartered Surveyor

Julie trained as a Rural Chartered Surveyor and double qualified with a Masters Law degree from Newcastle in order to pursue work in area of dispute resolution. She is a qualified arbitrator, sitting on both the CAAV and RICS appointment panels, also taking up private appointments. She is currently the President of the CAAV.

**LIDDLE & Co**  
CHARTERED SURVEYORS



## Andrew Morris

Partner in the Agriculture Team at Thrings

Andrew is a Partner in the Agriculture Team at Thrings leading on the business organisational elements of continuity and succession. Andrew's work largely involves the structuring and restructuring of farm businesses including partnerships and companies, to provide tax efficiency and resilience in daily operations and a flexible framework for succession.

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### Richard Price

Farmer in Shropshire

Richard, hailing from a farming family in Shropshire, began his agricultural career with a YTS apprenticeship, followed by a diploma at Warwickshire College. He gained experience working on the Pilkington Estate, Warwickshire and in the U.S. Midwest before becoming Farm Manager at Warwickshire College and later Farms Manager at the Lowther Estate, where he won prestigious awards. In 2008, Richard transitioned to Director of Farming at Lowther, and is now Farms Director for Huntapac Produce Ltd. Huntapac are based in Tarleton, Lancashire which grow, pack and distribute fresh produce across the UK.

Richard is also a Fellow of CARAS and the Royal Agricultural Society, a Chartered Environmentalist, and a mentor for the Lord Plumb Foundation.

**Huntapac**



### Megan Rogers

Berrys

Megan joined Berrys in 2018 and graduated in 2024 with a degree in Rural Enterprise and Land Management from Harper Adams University. She is a Professional Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and an RICS Registered Valuer. Megan has experience advising on landlord and tenant matters, land and in hand farm management, rural grant schemes including Mid-Tier and the Sustainable Farming Incentive, as well as undertaking valuations of rural property and businesses and preparing compensation claims.

**BERRYS**



### Andrew Vickery

Partner, Head of Rural

Andrew heads Old Mill's rural team and works with a wide number of agricultural and rural businesses on a range of tax and planning matters

**OLD MILL**  
Financial experts, fuelling ambition



### Heather Wildman

Saviour Associates

Heather was raised on a family beef and sheep farm in Cumbria. She is now based in Scotland but covers the UK and beyond with her company Saviour Associates.

Her passion is to enable people to build a vision of where they want to be, where they are now and to develop a set of goals to achieve this vision. She has over 30 years' experience of working with framers and industry and, in 2012, did a Nuffield Scholarship entitled "Communication – influencing and motivating change".

**Saviour Associates**  
vision • collaboration • communication



**Paul Wilson**

Founding Director of the Nottingham Centre for Food Policy and Foresight

Professor Paul Wilson is a recognised expert in the drivers of farm business performance drawing on his research interests in agricultural and food economics, farm business management, and behavioural change and from 2006-2022 he led the contract for DEFRA's English Farm Business Survey (FBS). Active in research and policy communication via Government policy focused conferences, industry presentations, and input to parliamentary enquiries, he is the founding Director of the Nottingham Centre for Food Policy and Foresight supporting colleagues to translate research outcomes to policy impacts across the breadth of the food system.



**Richard Williamson**

CEO of Fruitcast Limited and Owner of Williamson Orchard Limited

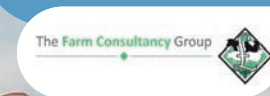
Richard Williamson is CEO of Fruitcast Limited and Owner of Williamson Orchard Limited, having previously served as Farms Director at Velcourt and Managing Director of Dyson Farming. He also holds a number of Non-Executive Director, Trustee and Chairman roles, bringing extensive experience in large-scale agricultural operations, governance and strategic business development.



**William Waterfield**

Farm Consultancy Group

William has spent more than 30 working as a farm business consultant, and for the last 25 years has been heavily involved in providing strategic and business advice on organic and nature friendly farming systems. Working mainly with retained dairy clients across south and midlands off England. He is a Nuffield farming Scholar and runs several special interest discussion groups. Between 2023 - 25 he helped set up and facilitated the 4 Barrows Environmental Cluster group in the North Wessex Downs AONB.



**William Tongue**

Business Consultant

William is a business consultant, his specialisms include: Strategic business appraisals, budgets and monitoring, renewables, joint ventures, rural grants, diversification and funding and agricultural planning appraisals. William understands first-hand the challenges facing the sector through his own farm business in Bedfordshire, which includes arable, sheep, horse hay and a glamping site.



# Booking form.

## How to book

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