HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY

FUTURE FARM

SHROPSHIRE

IN THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming industry events and local news
Details of some of the upcoming industry events happening in February 2026 and the latest local news.

An insight into the performance of the farm animals
A visual representation of the performance of our animals and how our farm compares.

Industry news
The top news stories in January 2026 that are relevant to Future Farm.

Did you know…
Our monthly section of general farming facts.

Thank you, and Feedback
A brief thank you to our readers and details on where you can give feedback.

Don't forget to check out our website for more information on the farm at

https://futurefarm.zone/

Industry Events

Upcoming industry events in February 2026

- [Norfolk Farming Conference](#) – 10 February 2026 @ Norfolk Events Centre – Showground

- [Women in Agriculture Conference](#) – 11 February 2026 @ Edinburgh

- [FAS Conference](#) – 19 February 2026 @ Inverness

- [NFU Conference](#) – 24–25 February 2026 @ Birmingham

- [Royal Northern Spring Show](#) – 25 February 2026 @ Thainstone Agricultural Centre, Inverurie

💡 **Tip:** Want to know more? Just click the event names — they're linked!

Local News

Future Farm Conference Success

The Future Farm team delivered an excellent and insightful conference recently, forming a key part of this year's Community Week.

Special thanks go to Grace Milburn & Lesley Spencer for their organisation and coordination of the event, as well as to the full line-up of speakers: Matthew Swaine, Chris Ruffley, Matt Bolton, Carrie Gauld, Alice Sault, and Steffan Newell. Their contributions helped create a programme that balanced academic perspectives with real-world professional insight.

The audience reflected the strength and diversity of the Harper Adams community, bringing together academic staff, professional services, technical teams, and students. This mix sparked valuable discussion and demonstrated the collaborative spirit that continues to drive Future Farm's work forward.
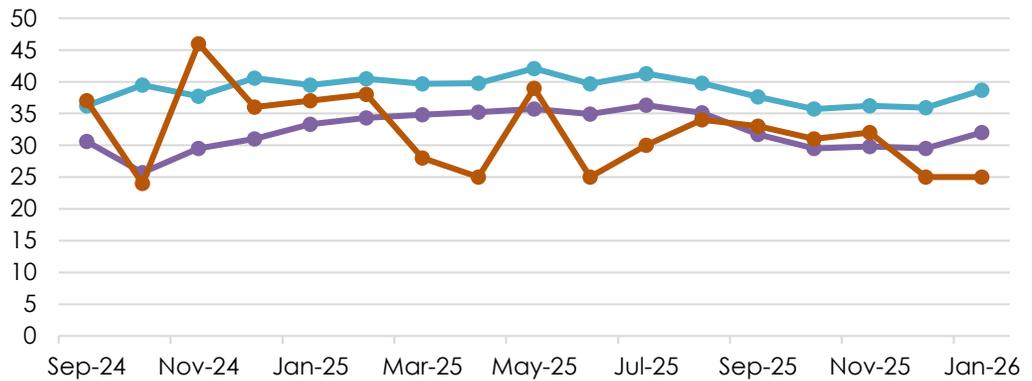
A huge well done to everyone involved for making the conference a real highlight of the week.

Future Farm Animal Performance in January 2026:

The Main Dairy milk yield and KPI's in comparison to all NMR recorded herds of a similar herd size (Please note, the data in the graph and screenshot of the KPI table are from Herd Companion)

Herd Production Summary - Main Dairy

	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Sep-25	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26
Avg Yield	30.6	25.7	29.5	31	33.3	34.3	34.8	35.2	35.7	34.9	36.3	35.1	31.7	29.5	29.8	29.5	32
Avg Milking Yield	36.2	39.5	37.7	40.6	39.5	40.5	39.7	39.8	42.1	39.7	41.3	39.8	37.6	35.7	36.2	35.9	38.7
SCC > 200	37	24	46	36	37	38	28	25	39	25	30	34	33	31	32	25	25

Benchmark	New	Export
NMR14: Holstein herds > 300 cows	Benchmarks	Export

Drag a column header here to group by that column

KPIs	'Worst' <--> 'Best'	Worst	You	Best	Mean
Milk/Cow/Year of life		4,094	7,370	9,128	6,203
Milk/Cow/Year		6,816	12,270	13,602	10,016
Lactation Yield		6,829	11,091	13,110	9,812
305 Day yield		6,295	11,065	11,757	8,859
Protein/Cow/Year		232	384	449	344
Fat/Cow/Year		290	479	726	432
Ave. Protein %		3.12	3.13	3.82	3.44
Ave. Fat %		3.68	3.91	5.58	4.31
Mean Parity		1.99	2.64	3.76	2.77
Calv. Interval<385 %		29.17	40.41	74.81	58.01
Ave. Lactation length		376	286	249	313
Ave. SCC		323	108	73	159
% Cows in Parity 1		45.00	31.78	12.99	29.16
Age 1st Calving		1,020	711	698	786
Ave. Calving interval		447	412	368	392
Ave. Dry days		82	64	34	55
Culling + Death %		70	35	3	30
Ave. No. Cows		138	399	1,229	487

Create Filter

The Main dairy milk quality components compared to the Benchmark Müller average.

January 2026		
	Main Dairy	**Muller Average**
Avg Bfat (%)	4.31	4.44
Avg Protein (%)	3.47	3.50
Avg SCC ('000/ml)	89	137
Avg BAC ('000/ml)	15	24.85
Therms (cfu/ml)	110	499.3
FPD (m*C)	525	-

The quarterly Pig unit production performance in comparison to the AgroVision Benchmark average (Please note that the AgroVision Benchmark figures are produced quarterly; for this performance comparison, the September 2025 figures have been used).

Quarterly pig unit performance vs. Agrovision benchmark
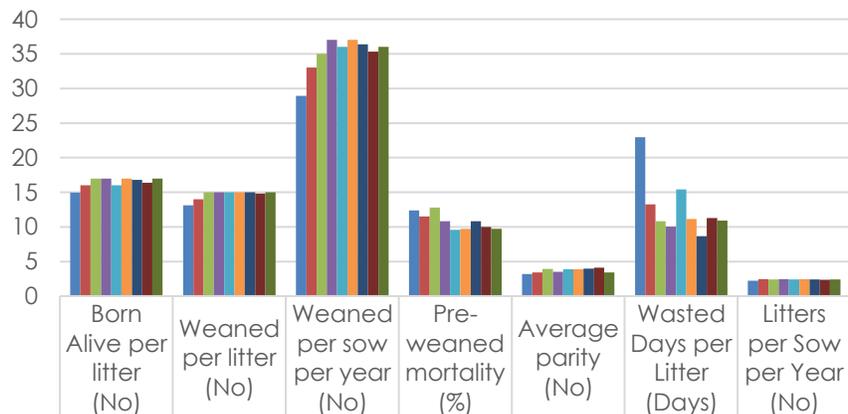
	Born Alive per litter (No)	Weaned per litter (No)	Weaned per sow per year (No)	Pre-weaned mortality (%)	Average parity (No)	Wasted Days per Litter (Days)	Litters per Sow per Year (No)
AgroVision Avg. (September 2025)	14.94	13.1	28.95	12.38	3.21	22.94	2.21
HAU pig unit (Q1 2024)	16	14	33	11.5	3.4	13.3	2.44
HAU pig unit (Q2 2024)	17	15	35	12.8	3.9	10.8	2.4
HAU pig unit (Q3 2024)	17	15	37	10.8	3.5	10.0	2.5
HAU pig unit (Q4 2024)	16	15	36	9.6	3.9	15.4	2.4
HAU pig unit (Q1 2025)	17	15	37	9.7	3.9	11.1	2.4
HAU pig unit (Q2 2025)	16.8	15	36.4	10.8	3.95	8.68	2.4
HAU pig unit (Q3 2025)	16.4	14.8	35.3	10	4.1	11.3	2.38
HAU pig unit (Q4 2025)	17	15	36	9.7	3.41	10.92	2.42

Industry News

1. £21.5m Boost for Farm Innovation – 31 January

New investment worth £21.5 million has been announced to accelerate the rollout of new crops and agri-tech across UK farms. The funding aims to support innovation, improve productivity, and strengthen long-term resilience within the sector.

Read more

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2. NatWest Warns 2026 Will Be a Defining Year for UK Farming – 2 January 2026

A new NatWest Agriculture Outlook report highlights that UK farmers are facing a pivotal year, driven by rapid changes in technology adoption, supply-chain transparency, workforce expectations, and succession planning. The report stresses that farms must adapt quickly to remain competitive amid structural changes in the sector.

Read more

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3. Andersons Seminars to Examine UK Agriculture's Future – 14 January 2026

The Andersons Centre has launched its 2026 seminar programme, focusing on profitability, evolving farm policy, trade pressures, and diversification opportunities. Now in its 29th year, the seminar series aims to help farmers navigate ongoing uncertainty and prepare for long-term sector changes.

Read more

Did You Know…

Livestock Farming Facts!

- ❖ A dairy cow's four-chambered stomach can ferment grass so efficiently that she produces enough energy each day to power a small fridge (if we could convert it directly!).

- ❖ Sheep have nearly 360-degree vision, meaning they can see behind themselves without turning their heads.

- ❖ Cattle form stable social groups and can recognise over 50 individual faces (both human and bovine), remembering them for years.

- ❖ Goats are natural climbers with excellent balance. They've been documented climbing trees and even balancing on branches to reach leaves.

- ❖ A single cow can produce 30–40 litres of manure per day.

- ❖ Chickens are surprisingly smart: they can count up to five, understand cause and effect, and communicate with over 30 distinct vocalisations.

- ❖ Grazing animals such as cattle and sheep help maintain rare habitats like chalk grasslands, which support more plant species per square metre than most rainforests.

- ❖ The microbial community inside a cow's rumen is so complex that researchers call it "a rainforest in a stomach", and it's inspiring new biotechnology innovations.

Thank you for reading the Future Farm monthly update newsletter. If you have any feedback or would like to see something in upcoming updates, please send your request to futurefarmenquiries@harper-adams.ac.uk.

We apologise to anyone who made a suggestion for the newsletter, and the content you requested was not included. We are doing our best to gather this information about the farm and our practices. Check out our newly updated website:

https://futurefarm.zone/.

Stay tuned for more updates from the farm in next month's issue!