


Understanding consumer perceptions of British farmers

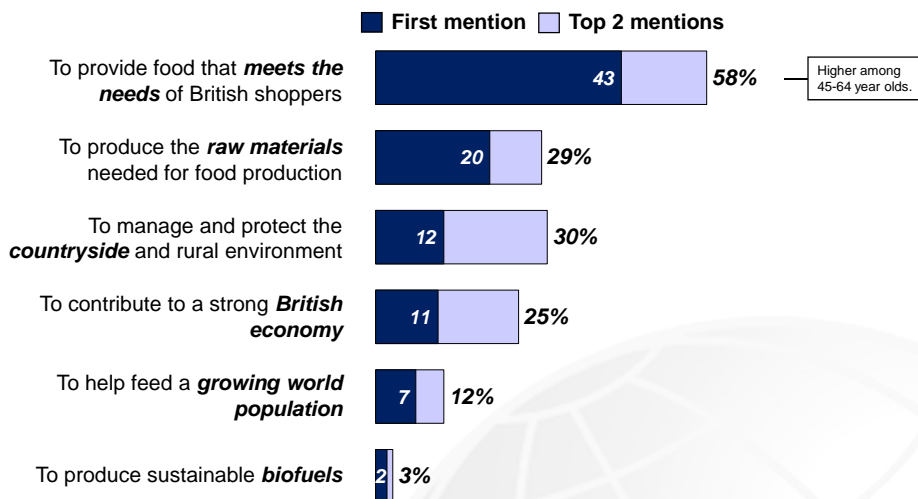
Oxford Farming Conference research 



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Main responsibilities of British farmers



Base: all adults, Q1. In your opinion, what should be the main responsibility of farmers in Britain? And second?
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Responsibilities of British farmers – league table



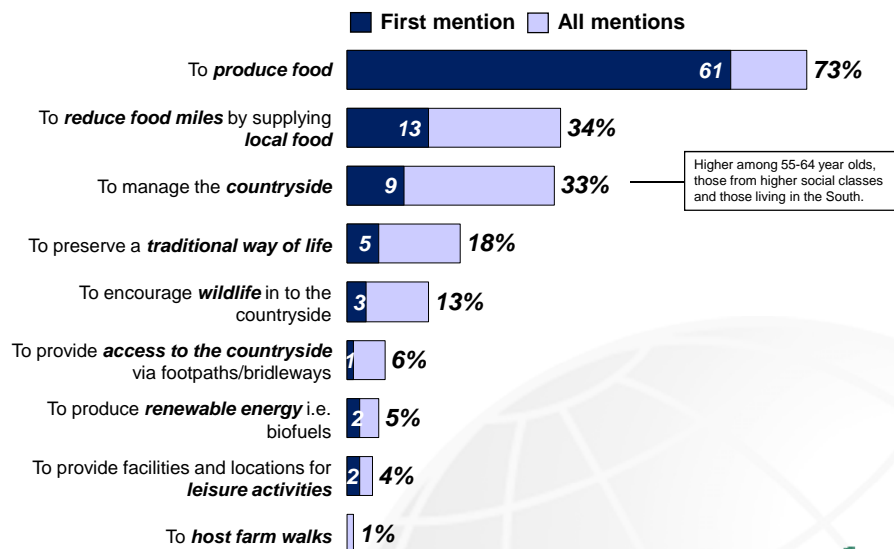
- 1 To provide food that *meets the needs* of British shoppers
- 2 To produce the *raw materials* needed for food production
- 3 To manage and protect the *countryside* and rural environment
- 4 To contribute to a strong *British economy*
- 5 To help feed a *growing world population*
- 6 To produce sustainable *bio-fuels*



Base: all adults.
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Main contribution to British society



Base: all adults, Q2. What is the single most important contribution that farmers make to British society? Others (max 2)?
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Main contribution to British society – league table



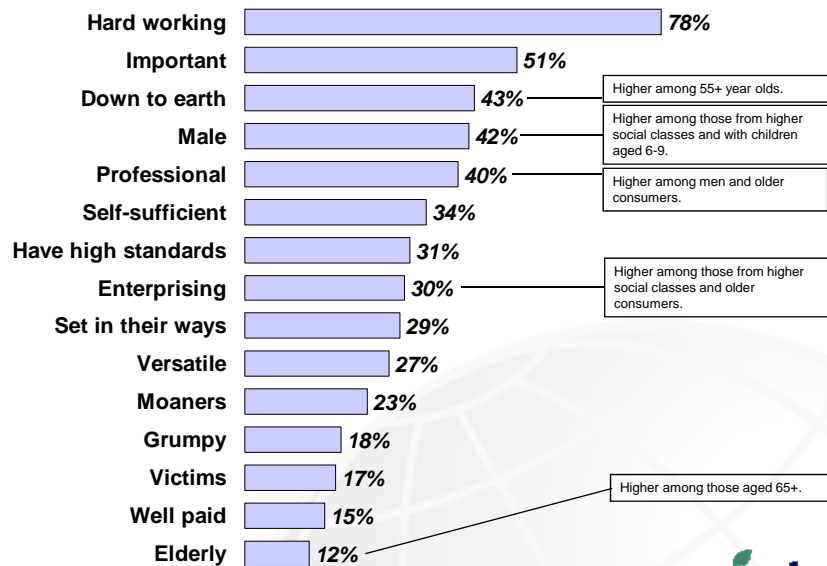
- 1 To **produce food**
- 2 To reduce **food miles** by supplying **local food**
- 3 To manage the **countryside**
- 4 To preserve a **traditional way of life**
- 5 To encourage **wildlife** in to the countryside
- 6 To provide **access to the countryside** via footpaths/bridleways



Base: all adults
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Which words/phrases describe British farmers?



Base: all adults, Q3. As I read them out please tell me which you think describe British farmers.
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Describing British farmers – league table

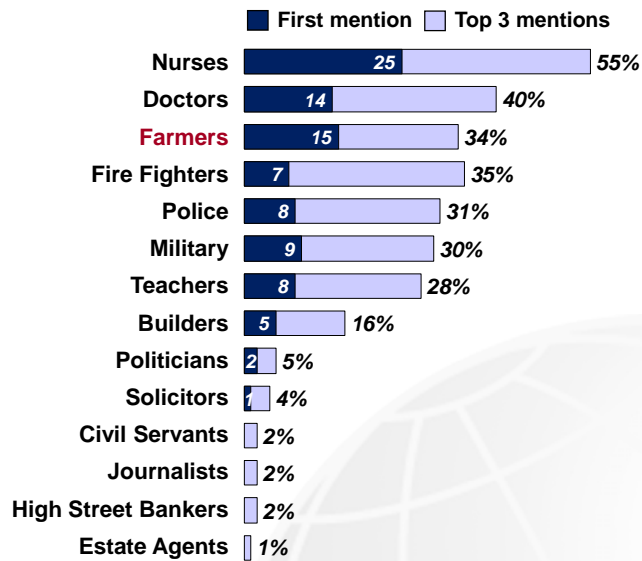


- | | | | |
|---|---------------------|----|-------------------|
| 1 | Hard working | 9 | Set in their ways |
| 2 | Important | 10 | Versatile |
| 3 | Down to earth | 11 | Moaners |
| 4 | Male | 12 | Grumpy |
| 5 | Professional | 13 | Victims |
| 6 | Self-sufficient | 14 | Well paid |
| 7 | Have high standards | 15 | Elderly |
| 8 | Enterprising | | |

Base: all adults, Q3. As I read them out please tell me which you think describe British farmers.
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Occupations perceived to work the hardest



Base: all adults, Q8. From this list of occupations I'd like you to tell me, in rank order, the three you think work the hardest?
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Perceived to work hardest – league table



- | | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Nurses | 8 Builders |
| 2 Doctors | 9 Politicians |
| 3 Farmers | 10 Solicitors |
| 4 Fire Fighters | 11 Civil Servants |
| 5 Police | 12 Journalists |
| 6 Military | 13 High Street Bankers |
| 7 Teachers | 14 Estate Agents |

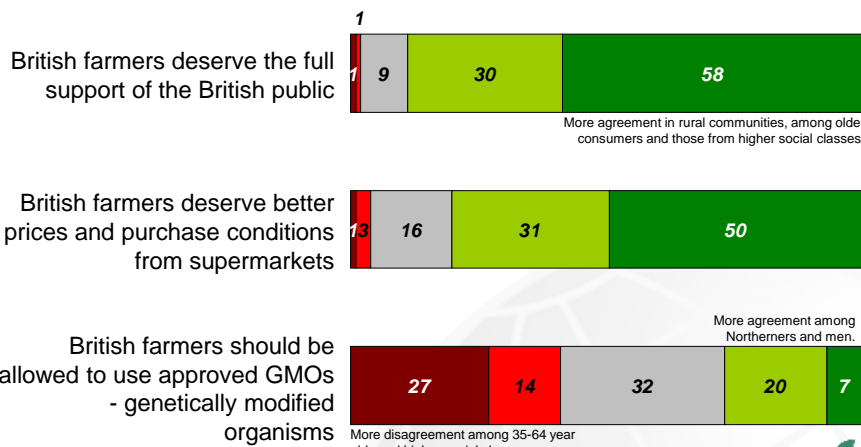
Base: all adults, Q8. From this list of occupations I'd like you to tell me, in rank order, the three you think work the hardest?
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Consumer attitudes (1 of 4)



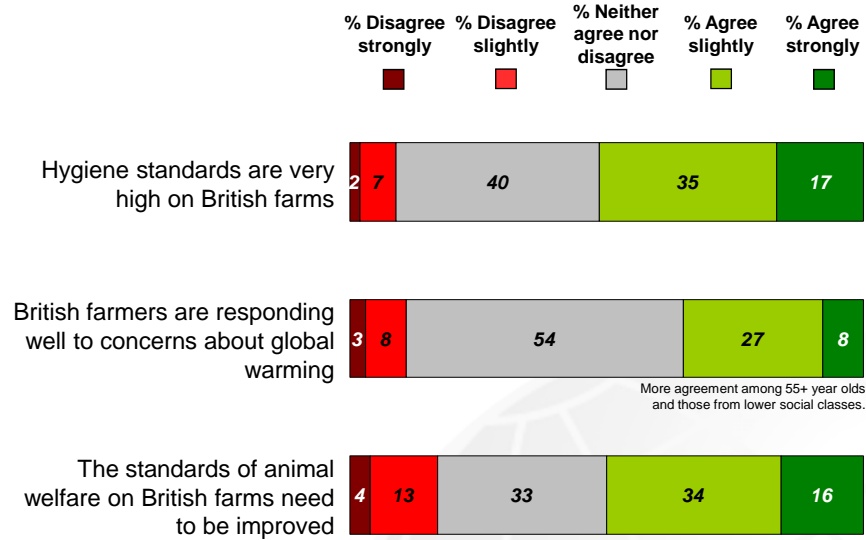
% Disagree strongly % Disagree slightly % Neither agree nor disagree % Agree slightly % Agree strongly



Base: all adults, Q4. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



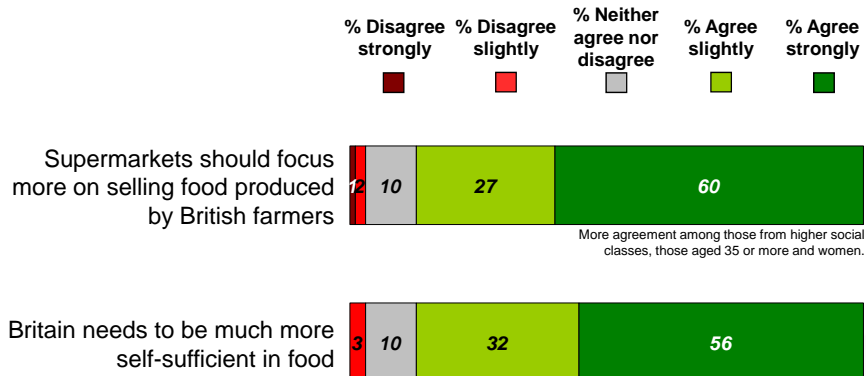
Consumer attitudes (2 of 4)



Base: all adults, Q4. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Consumer attitudes (3 of 4)



Base: all adults, Q5. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Consumer attitudes (4 of 4)



% Disagree strongly % Disagree slightly % Neither agree nor disagree % Agree slightly % Agree strongly

British farmers have an important role in helping to feed a growing world population



More agreement among Co-op shoppers, those living in Scotland and Northern England, those living in rural areas, 65+ year olds and women.

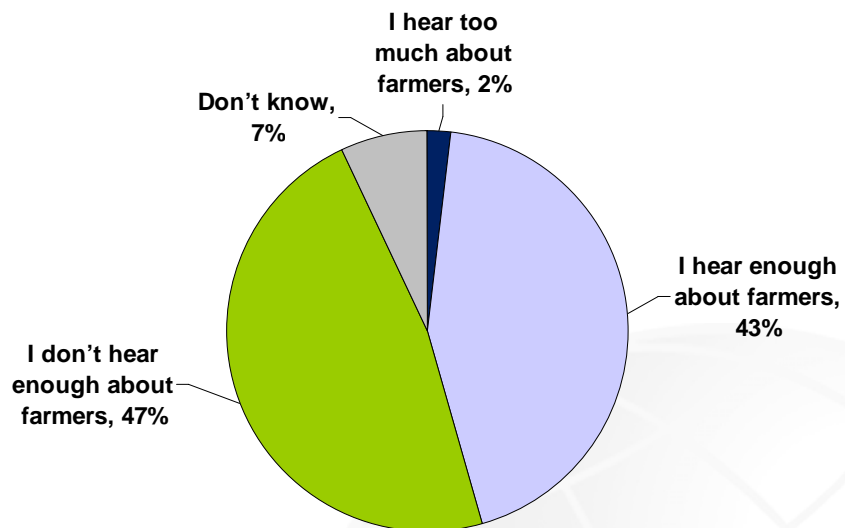
British farmers can do more to help reduce the cost of food in the shops



Base: all adults, Q5. Please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



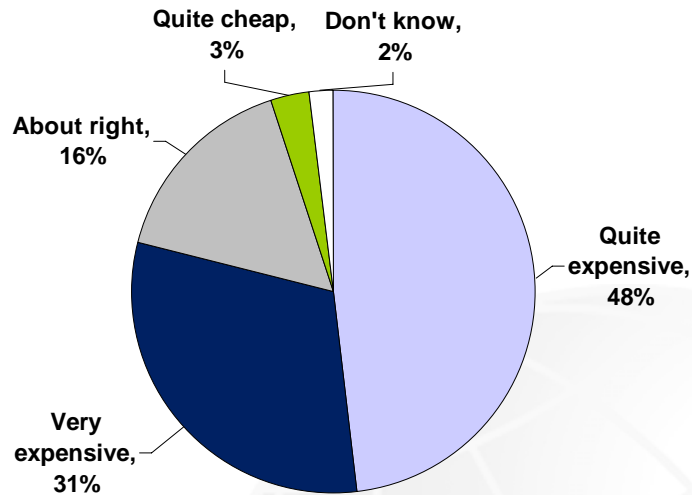
How much do people hear about farming?



Base: all adults, Q6. To what extent do you feel that you hear enough about farmers?
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Perceptions of the price of food (September 2008)



Base: all adults, Q7. Which of these best describes your perception of the price of food in Britain?
Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008



Key insights



- There is strong support for British farmers among the general public
- Demand for more British food is strong
- Farmers are considered to be hard-working but not well paid
- British farmers are given credit for being business oriented
- The public expect farmers to put their needs as shoppers first
- Food is considered expensive and some think farmers can do more to help
- Farm hygiene perceptions are very good, animal welfare less so
- On balance, people feel farmers are responding well to global warming
- Views about GM are diverse
- Many people would like to hear more from farmers

Source: IGD Consumer Unit, 2008

