

# OFC 2020

GROWING A HEALTHY SOCIETY

**2020 EMERGING LEADERS  
PROGRAMME**

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# 2020 OFC EMERGING LEADERS

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**GEMMA ALI**  
Essex, England

Gemma is involved with the Hala Animal Welfare Association (HAWA) which was founded in 2016 due to the lack of transparency regarding Halal meat on supermarket shelves, butcher shops and restaurants as well as her concern for the husbandry and welfare of livestock being raised for Halal consumers.

Gemma hopes the Emerging Leaders programme aids HAWA in expanding their campaign by involving the wider farming community in policy/regulation.



**GRAHAM ARMSTRONG**  
Wigtownshire, Scotland

Graham Armstrong is Managing Partner of Kirvennie Farming Company a family partnership based in Wigtownshire, South West Scotland. The team at Kirvennie operates two main enterprises in the production of free-range eggs and milk. The poultry enterprise consists of 32,000 layer hens supplying free range eggs on a Marks and Spencers contract. The Kirvennie dairy herd consists of 350 pedigree Jersey cows all calving in the spring and supplying high butterfat and protein milk from a 90% grazed grass-based diet.

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**ALISON BENTLEY**  
Cambridge, England  
Twitter: [@AlisonRBentley](#)  
LinkedIn: [Alison Bentley](#)

Alison grew up in Australia and became involved in agriculture through family connections to farming and working on arable farms throughout high school and university holidays. Alison completed her undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Agricultural Science at The University of Sydney, focussed on wheat production and how genetics and plant breeding can provide better varieties to improve farmers livelihoods.

Alison moved to the UK in 2007 to join NIAB in Cambridge where she currently leads the Genetics and Breeding team which focusses on how innovations in genetics, new breeding technologies and underpinning science can deliver improvements to farmers in the UK and worldwide.



**AMIE BURKE**  
Warwickshire, England  
Twitter: [@AmieLizBurke](#)  
LinkedIn: [Amie Burke](#)

Not from a farming background originally, Aime has now fallen in love with the industry and has a passion for promoting the great career opportunities available.

A graduate from Harper Adams, Aime is now a Skills Manager with AHDB where no two days are the same; from helping farmers to create apprenticeships standards and providing training workshops to creating case studies and independent working groups that feed into government. Aime is a proud member of AgRespect and is an advocate to ensure agriculture is an inclusive and open industry regardless of background, ethnicity or sexual preference.

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## **GORDON CALDWELL**

**Ayrshire, Scotland**

**Twitter: @caldwellgordon @caldwellsVeg**

**LinkedIn: Gordon Caldwell**

Gordon started GC Growers eleven years ago and has led the business each year with a focus on profitability which he has achieved through developing a team of motivated staff, building relationships with consumers, forming short supply chains and delivering a high quality product and service to customers. The emphasis of GC Growers is to supply locally grown vegetables to discerning wholesale customers throughout Scotland.

Gordon is also very active in his local community as a Community Councillor, Director of North Carrick Community Benefit Company and as a member of Carrick Round Table.



## **JOHN CAPPALONGA**

**Lea Valley, England**

**Twitter: @unhappyfeet**

**LinkedIn: John Cappalonga**

John owns and runs Netherhall Nursey in the Lea Valley which has been in operation for over 100 years. The main focus is growing sweet peppers and John has been at the forefront of modernisation and up-to-date techniques of growing peppers. John uses predation and biological control agents to counter the threat of pests and diseases reducing their need and use of pesticides to almost zero and take a holistic approach to growing to achieve a more economic and sustainable way of growing.

John is a member of various industry organisations such as NFU Horticulture and Potato Board, AHDB Protected Edibles Panel, Vice-Chairman of Lea Valley Growers Association and is working with the Department of Education to create a new Agriculture T-Level to be introduced in 2023.

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**FLORA CORBETT**  
Isle of Mull, Scotland

Flora runs the agritourism diversification on the family farm which currently runs 2000 hill sheep and 50 head of cattle plus followers on the Isle of Mull.

The agri-tourism diversification consists of two holiday cottages which are booked for approximately 42 weeks of the year with plans to start building a tearoom and farm shop slated for October.

Flora is the current Chairman of the Mull Slaughter House – a micro butchery which is run as a community business. Mull Slaughter House currently employs five full-time staff and is incredibly important to the local food economy on Scotland's west coast.



**PETER CRAVEN**  
Lincolnshire, England

Peter farms with his brother in South Lincolnshire on their family farm specialising in premium quality, main crop potatoes for UK supermarkets. The farm currently produces 9000 tonnes of packing potatoes and 1000 tonnes for the chip shop market. Cropping also includes Daffodils, Sugar Beet, Peas, Wheat and land let out for brassica and carrot production.

Peter has just been confirmed as a 2020 Nuffield Scholar researching 'How to transform a 'Good' family business into a 'Great' family business within the agriculture sector'.

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**HANNAH DARBY**

Hannah farms the family farm with her uncle and is a fourth generation farmer.

Farming is Hannah's second career, as prior to farming she was a physiotherapist. She did a degree in physiotherapy and practised until 2013 when she realised she missed farming and so decided to go back and study again, doing a Masters in arable crop management at Writtle College.

After graduation Hannah worked part time on the family farm and part time as a physiotherapist until returning to farming full time, just over a year ago.



**ALED EVANS**  
**Carmarthen, Wales**  
**Twitter: @aledpictonevans**

Five years ago, Aled set upon creating a beef and sheep unit in partnership with his brother on a family farm with a passion to produce animals reared and finished on grass or home-produced forage.

The farm has grown to 480 cattle, 300 breeding ewes and 900 store lambs and Aled also has a focus on education and have developed five students on placement from Harper Adams and Aberystwyth University.

Aled wants to champion the opportunities for British Beef and is excited about helping deliver change and make a positive contribution to the wider industry.



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## MARCELO GALDOS

Leeds, England

Twitter: @marcelogaldos

LinkedIn: Marcelo Galdos

Marcelo is a Met Office University Academic Fellow in Modelling Food Security and Climate impacts, focussing on climate-smart agriculture and sustainable intensification.

With a background in agronomy and soil science, Marcelo's research involves using agricultural experiments, life cycle assessment, biogeochemical modelling and spatial analysis to evaluate the sustainability of food, fuel, fibre and feed production under different land use and climate scenarios.

Outside of academia, Marcelo has developed work on sustainability metrics in the food supply chain, engaging with stakeholder in farming, processing and distribution.



## LIZ GENEVER

Lincolnshire, England

Twitter: @lizgenever

LinkedIn: Liz Genever

Liz is a partner in a family mixed farm in south Lincolnshire with 200-hectares of arable, sheep and beef cattle.

Liz recently established her own independent consultancy business with a focus on sheep, beef, grass and forage management. Particularly interested in developing sustainable livestock systems and introducing livestock into arable rotations, Liz is extensively involved with knowledge exchange events for AHDB, Farming Connect, Quality Meat Scotland and grazing discussion groups.

Liz is currently working to with a group to develop a regenerative and conservation agriculture conference for livestock farmers in Cumbria to create positive ties between beef and sheep farmers.

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**MARTIN GOTT**  
Cumbria, England  
Twitter: [@st\\_jamescheese](#)

14 years ago, Martin, along with partner Nicola, set up at Holker Farm in the Lake District and began to produce something unique to the UK: a washed-rind ewe's milk cheese. Martin is among only a small handful of cheesemakers in the UK who make their own cultures.

The best sheep are selected, and the starter is cultivated from their milk. Such was the effort that went into the process, St James won the James Aldridge Memorial Award for best British raw milk cheese in one of its first years of existence.



**JOHN GRAY**  
Angus, Scotland  
LinkedIn: [John Gray](#)

John is the Commercial Director of Angus Soft Fruits Ltd a leading breeder, grower, packer and marketer of berries to UK and European retailers.

John is looking forward to continuing to develop my network and influencing skills to the benefit of rural communities.



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**RICHARD HEADY**  
Buckinghamshire, England  
Twitter: @headysfarm  
LinkedIn: Richard Heady

Richard is a fourth-generation farmer and farms in partnership with his father, uncle and two additional employees.

A mixed enterprise, Ash Farm has roughly 300-acres of grassland used for storecattle as well as a small sucker herd and a flock of Lleyn x Texel sheep which they sell to a local butcher and in lamb boxed. The farm, on the outskirts of Milton Keynes, also have around 700-acres of arable crops; wheat, barely, oilseed rape and oats in a rotational ploughing/min-till system which will progress to no-till in the coming season.

Richard is passionate about using social media to engage the general public about agriculture and help break down barriers and increase transparency and trust within the industry.



**ALAN HOGARTH**  
Ayrshire, Scotland

Alan Hogarth is a third-generation dairy farmer from Ardrossan in Ayrshire and is married with four young children. Alan operates a 400-cow spring calving grazing unit at Sorbie Farm in partnership with his wife, who runs her own Pilates business on the farm.

The Dairy operation at Sorbie focuses on producing as much milk from grazed grass and forage as the farm can grow, using typical NZ cross bred cows. Alan's main KPI's which he focuses on are six week in calf rate, grass grown, grass utilised and days at grass. Alan likes to spend time off farm and enjoy travelling and all sports - unfortunately spectating most of the time these days.

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**JOHN KERR**  
Ayrshire, Scotland

A 38 year old dairy farmer from Ayrshire, John is married with two children.

John farms 120ha of mostly grassland in partnership with his mother.

Stocking is 190 mixed breed dairy cows and followers producing around 1.2 million litres of milk. Since attending the Rural Leadership Programme in 2015, John has become increasingly interested and involved in the industry's political lobbying efforts and hopes to connect with like minded individuals and together push harder for a better deal for farming and a more balanced view of the industry in the media.



**JONATHAN KERR**  
Wiltshire, England  
[LinkedIn: Jonathan Kerr](#)

Jonathan is a Farm Manager for Velcourt and manages two farms in Wiltshire totalling nearly 1000-hectares of arable land growing wheat, barley, malting spring barley, rye and maize, marrow fat peas and winter beans.

Prior to this, Jonathan was an infantry officer in the British Army for nine years, serving in Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan which taught Jonathan the value of training, planning, writing effective policy and procedures, effective communication and, above all, the true value of people.

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**BENJAMIN LEWIS**  
Newport, England

Benjamin is a beef and sheep farmer's son from mid Wales and now resides near Newport on a dairy farm.

Benjamin and his partner also have their own pedigree Suffolk sheep flock and a herd of Hereford x British Blue heifers. Benjamin uses his farming knowledge when also working for the Welsh Government within the Rural Payment Wales division where he manages two of the Glastir enviro-agri schemes which provide funding to encourage more environmentally responsible farming.



**KATE LORD**  
Gloucestershire, England  
Twitter: @CotswoldKate  
LinkedIn: Kate Lord

Kate is a rural chartered surveyor specialising in rural leisure and diversification. Kate has been with Cotswold Farm Park for eight years during which time the tourist attraction has developed extensive new facilities including a campsite, glamping, animal interaction barn and a new visitor centre. When not at Cotswold Farm Park, Kate and her husband rent the family farm and are looking at options to further diversify the business.

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## **RACHAEL MADELEY DAVIES**

**Gwynedd, Wales**

**Twitter: @RachMD2**

**LinkedIn: Rachael Madeley Davies**

Rachael is currently working with Kite Consulting whilst also farming in partnership with her husband, Geraint, on 1200 acres in the Snowdonia National Park in North Wales producing Welsh lamb and store cattle.

Rachael is also active in the wider industry as a non-executive Director for Hybu Cig Cymru (Meat Promotion Wales) and also sits on the Wales Rural Network steering group and the Wales Organic Forum.



## **Geraldton, Western Australia**

**Twitter: @MMcMartneyAusAg**

**LinkedIn: Murray McCartney**

Murray is an Area Sales Manager for BASF Ag Solutions in Western Australia.

Prior to this, Murray was working full time on his family's property in the mid-west of Western Australia growing wheat, barely, lupins and canola across 12,000 hectares where he continues to be involved as an agronomic advisor.

With a plan to return full-time to the farm in 2029, Murray hopes that by completing the OFC Emerging Leaders programme he will gain valuable leadership skills that can be passed on with a benefit to the wider agricultural industry, consumers and rural communities.

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## **ROBERT MACKENZIE**

**Tain, Scotland**

**Twitter: @cullisse**

**LinkedIn: Robert MacKenzie**

In partnership with his parents and two brothers, Robert farms 1500-acres of owned and rented land growing wheat, spring barley, oilseed rape and honeyberries as well as a small herd of suckler cows.

Robert is involved with the charity Farm Africa and it was during a visit to one of the charity's projects in Kenya that he was inspired to start cold pressing rapeseed oil back on the farm. In 2011 Robert established CCS Estates - a stand alone business producing cold pressed rapeseed oil - branded Cullisse where he is responsible for overall management.



## **JENNY MCKERR**

**Lanarkshire, Scotland**

**Twitter: @coomckerr**

**LinkedIn: Jenny McKerr**

Jenny is a first-generation farmer with her husband in South Lanarkshire. Conscious of creating new opportunities with their business that will allow growth, Jenny and her husband have created three aspects to their business which include agricultural/forestry fencing contractors who install around 2000m of fencing every week, cattle and sheep enterprise and the Wee Farm Distillery.

The Wee Farm Distillery has been operational since May 2018 and Jenny distils Drovers Gin, Farmers Strength Gin and over 40 flavours of gin liqueurs with the gin recognised by the Guild of Fine Foods Great Taste Award.

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**ALICE MIDMER**  
Warwickshire, England  
Twitter: @Alicemidmer  
LinkedIn: Alice Midmer

Alice works with not-for-profit farming organisation Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF) where she manages the network of LEAF Demonstration Farmers and LEAF Innovation Centres as well as knowledge exchange activities such as workshops IFM training, communications training and on-farm demonstration events.

Alice is looking forward to developing her leaderships skills as part of the Emerging Leaders Programme and learn from the experiences of others.



**GRAHAM MILLER**  
East Lothian, Scotland

After a 15 year career in Civil Engineering, Graham returned to the family farm in East Lothian in 2012, becoming a partner in the business and taking responsibility for day-to-day management and operation.

Prora is a 500 acre mixed farm comprising a herd of 100 Simmental cross suckler cows, 350 acres of cereals, and let land for growing potatoes. Diversifications include office lets and renewables are an important part of the business.

Graham believes educating and engaging with the public is important, and volunteers with the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET) giving classroom talks in schools and am is Director of the United East Lothian Agricultural Society helping to run the local agricultural show.



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## JAMES MILLER

Canterbury, England  
LinkedIn: James Miller

James grew up on a farm in Suffolk watching his father, a first-generation farmer, gradually expand his business to 350-acres all combinable crops.

Currently working part-time as Audit Director responsible for the Wealth and Investment Management subsidiary of a major UK bank, James' long-term aim is to return home with plans already in place for farm diversification of an on-farm craft malthouse.

James sees the Emerging Leaders Programme as an important step to gain the knowledge, insights and networks needed to confidently shape his future and play a part in leading the evolution of the industry to be fit for the future.



**NAVARATNAM PARTHEEBAN**  
Swindon, England  
Twitter: @navaratnampart1  
LinkedIn: Navaratnam Partheeban

Navaratnam is a veterinary surgeon currently working at the Royal Agricultural University as a senior lecturer in livestock production.

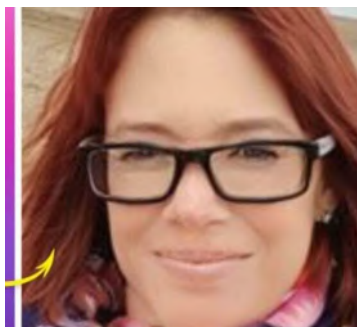
Navaratnam teaches agricultural students, provides health and welfare care to the university farms which includes sheep and calves, provides consultancy to large dairy herds and is about to take on a position as Dairy Technical Specialist for an animal health and nutrition company helping provide consultancy to farmers and livestock nutritionists.

Navaratnam is passionate about encouraging people who are not from traditional farming background to pursue careers in agriculture.

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## EMMA SMITH

Swindon, England

Twitter: @emmlous82

LinkedIn: Emma Smith

Emma and her partner breed pedigree Herefords as well as Ruby Red Devon cattle. Along with the farm, Emma and her partner have a foot trimming business with an insured purpose-built crush, specialising in pedigree beef cattle for routine and one-off visits for all herd sizes.

Emma is the UK Hereford Youth Coordinator, an organisation she established herself after realising that the Hereford Cattle Society had no youth programme, which has allowed her to expand her passion of bringing youth into the industry.



## JONNY WILLIAMS

Scottish Borders, Scotland

Originally from a family farm in Mid Wales Jonny graduated from Aberystwyth University back in 2005 with a BSc in Agriculture and is a past Rural Affairs Chairman of Wales YFC and NFYFC CEJA rep.

Jonny keeps busy day to day as Joint Operations Director for FarmStock Scotland, a farmer owned livestock marketing cooperative based in the South of Scotland. Working on behalf of the farmer members Jonny lead a team which procures beef and lamb for many of the major abattoirs/retailers throughout Scotland and the UK.

Jonny has his own commercial flock of sheep which he farms at evenings and weekends and helps out as and when required on his wife's large dairy, beef and sheep unit. Spare time is spent with our two young daughters.

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**ALISON YOUNGER**

**Stirling, Scotland**

Alison Younger farms at Old Leckie, a mixed livestock family farm just west of Stirling.

Over the past 8 years the farm has diversified into direct selling a range of farm produce, farmstay accommodation and farm experience tours. Off farm Alison is involved with promoting the growing Agritourism sector in Scotland, spends a lot of time shuttling three children around various activities and loves wild swimming and river kayaking when the weather and farm allows.



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The Oxford Farming Conference  
Secretariat

Telephone: 0845 652 0945  
Email: [secretariat@ofc.org.uk](mailto:secretariat@ofc.org.uk)