

It's not just British Beef at stake: the future of U.K. food production and our food security is on a knife edge

Adam Tugwell | 5 December 2023



So obsessed have we become with tech, the next big thing and the apparent ease with which we can get everything that we want, that we have forgotten what's actually important in life. And when it comes to the basic essentials for life, there's likely to be nothing more important than what we eat.

Just like the air that we breathe, it's easy to take the supply of food for granted. Unless you are already one of the growing number of us who cannot always afford to eat.

Yet, it's not even as simple as having access to the food that we genuinely need.

For half a century and probably more, the food we eat, the systems, the supply chains that provide it and the governance that is supposed to be there in place to maintain supplies of the things that meet our basic needs have been changed, manipulated and replaced from top to bottom and from left to right. For no better reason than to allow someone somewhere to make more and more money, without any regard for consequences or what for us – and for our food producers is already becoming a very high price.

To really grasp the horror story currently unfolding, there is need to have understanding of our political system, of human nature and how money runs the world and makes everything work.

Not in the sense of how we see it or how we talk about it. But in the sense of how it all *really is*.

This past weekend saw Channel 4 give a platform to yet another attack on meat production and specifically beef farming, leaning very much upon the narrative that to tackle global warming, cutting down and ideally stopping eating meat is the best place for everyone to begin.

Never mind the queues of private jets lining up at the very same time to fly an 'elite group' of very rich people to a meeting where they can all work out plans to force more of their green rules on the public, all in the comfort of luxury hotel suites in Dubai.

Regrettably, many of the people given platforms to speak passionately about the guilt people trying to eat a balanced diet should experience for eating properly have become the useful idiots of a very cynical strategy. One being pushed by people who were never elected to their roles and so recognise that to have control over everything, they must gain control of any basic essentials for life that everyone seeking to exert their own freedoms and will *must* automatically prioritise first.

What they forget to mention – even when these same people have responsibility for public health, is that good, healthy and nutritious food, as part of a balanced *natural* diet, is the essential building block and foundation of a happy life.

So, why would anyone of sound mind want to destroy or kick the foundation of good, healthy and nutritious diets away?

You can be sure that its not anything to do with the methane that animals, humans and just about every natural biological process produces. But it certainly has a lot to do with money and the two things that come with it: power and control.

Yes, it sounds like a conspiracy theory. But everything that the world is doing to itself today is thoroughly unsustainable.

The irony is that it's the same people, businesses and financial minds that created the false 'need' we have bought into. Unsustainable behaviour that has depleted the planet's resources for no good reason, whilst they have also systematically destroyed the governance and infrastructure that would make it easier for us to adopt alternative ways of living that would be much healthier, affordable and sustainable too.

It is these same selfish and self-serving minds that are now determined to dictate the solutions to the problems they caused, so that we change and then behave in ways that will work for them.

Food is power

Whilst it will make uncomfortable reading for farmers, including many great friends that I know, an entire industry populated by some of the most creative and entrepreneurial people imaginable has been reconditioned to accept grants, subsidies and 'guaranteed' contracts with big business and retailers as being 'normal'. Instead of using their own freedom to do all the things that only British farmers and growers know how to do best.

The consequences of what is happening because of greed and self-interest are very serious indeed.

Yes, farms are going out of business and land is being taken out of production at an alarming rate. But the fact the food the U.K. grows or is capable of growing doesn't often find itself into the mouths of the very people who live closest to the farms where it was grown is both part of the nightmarish reality that people in food poverty are suffering obesity and diabetes, and the accompanying reality that basic healthy fruit, veg and high quality meat and fish *that resembles its origin in an unadulterated form* is now for many, simply too expensive to eat.

It shouldn't be this way. Yet the travesty doesn't end there.

Whilst we should all be able to depend on the public representatives that we have elected to put our health and the security of UK food production first, the reality we all have to face is that whether it's the Conservatives this year, Labour or anyone else occupying No. 10 and the green benches to the right of the Speaker, next, none of these politicians have any idea of just how fragile the UK food supply is right now. Nor how serious even a few shortages of outside food supplies could make things get.

U.K. agriculture has reached the point where farmers, growers and the industries that are inextricably linked to U.K. food production will either choose to accept the risk of taking the steps necessary to facilitate its own revival or wait perhaps no more than just a couple of years and see everything that still exists swallowed up by some impractical idealists 2030-based agenda of some kind.

Farmers and the public are the two key stakeholders in U.K. food production and accompanying supply relationship. Yet neither farmers nor consumers have anything like the genuine say and influence that they should have.

It's money, self interest and other people's agendas at every step of the way.

The UKs Farmers shouldn't have to lead the revolution of reality. But the reality is that a meaningful commitment to changing U.K. food supply and recreating the local infrastructure that would be able to make that work, will soon gather growing public support once the work has really begun.

Its then and only then that our hapless politicians will have no option but to follow.

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