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AGRI LEADER

The Leader

Business insights and advice to help you stay ahead of the curve

July 2024

Welcome to the summer edition of The Leader, the ultimate newsletter for AgriLeaders. This month, we're excited to explore regenerative agriculture, focusing on the recent Groundswell event.

Despite hearing some misconceptions about regenerative agriculture being like a 'cult', what we found at Groundswell was a broad church movement where everyone was welcome and was striving to be better than before. Make sure you catch up with our [AgriLeader Circle livestream](#), summarising some of the learnings and ethos from Groundswell.

Read on for resources and expert perspectives to help you thrive in today's dynamic farming landscape.

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See more from Groundswell

Keep an eye out for videos from Groundswell as they are uploaded in the coming weeks. This year's event featured numerous sessions on regenerative agriculture, showcasing practical and theoretical applications.

[Watch videos from Groundswell 2024](#)

Leader in the Limelight: Charlie Steer

In this feature, we profile leaders from across our industry. This month, we hear from Charlie Steer (pictured), Arable Manager at Grosvenor.

Charlie grew up on his family's small mixed farm in Cheshire. He studied agriculture at the University of Reading before joining a graduate scheme at Eaton Estate with Grosvenor.

Charlie was awarded a Nuffield Scholarship in 2019. Through this, he explored '[The Circular Farm](#)', examining how the circular economy can minimise inputs and maximise outputs in farming systems.



What keeps you awake at night?

I sleep well, generally, but this year the sound of constant rain on the roof has kept me awake. Farming really is at the sharp end of climate change; doing our utmost to slow warming and build resilient businesses should keep us all up – at least occasionally, I believe.

What's been the best AgriLeader activity you've participated in?

The discussions among the members of the 'High Yielders' group prompted by a host of great speakers from inside and outside of agriculture.

What superpower would you choose?

I was going to say to be able to control the weather, but [Nicola Carr](#) had that, so I'll go a step further and say greenhouse gas removal!

[Find out more about Charlie and what makes him tick](#)

Leading self: What is regenerative agriculture?

“A lot of society is still dominated by a rational, reductive mindset, but when it comes to living systems and people, this can be very detrimental because we are not machines, nor are ecosystems – they are adaptive, emergent and self-organising.”

In an interview for the Winglewood podcast, Caroline Grindrod (pictured), founder of [Roots of Nature](#), Primal Meats and [Wilderculture](#), discusses the mindset-change shift to lead herself and others to work with complex systems, be it land, animals, people or organisations.

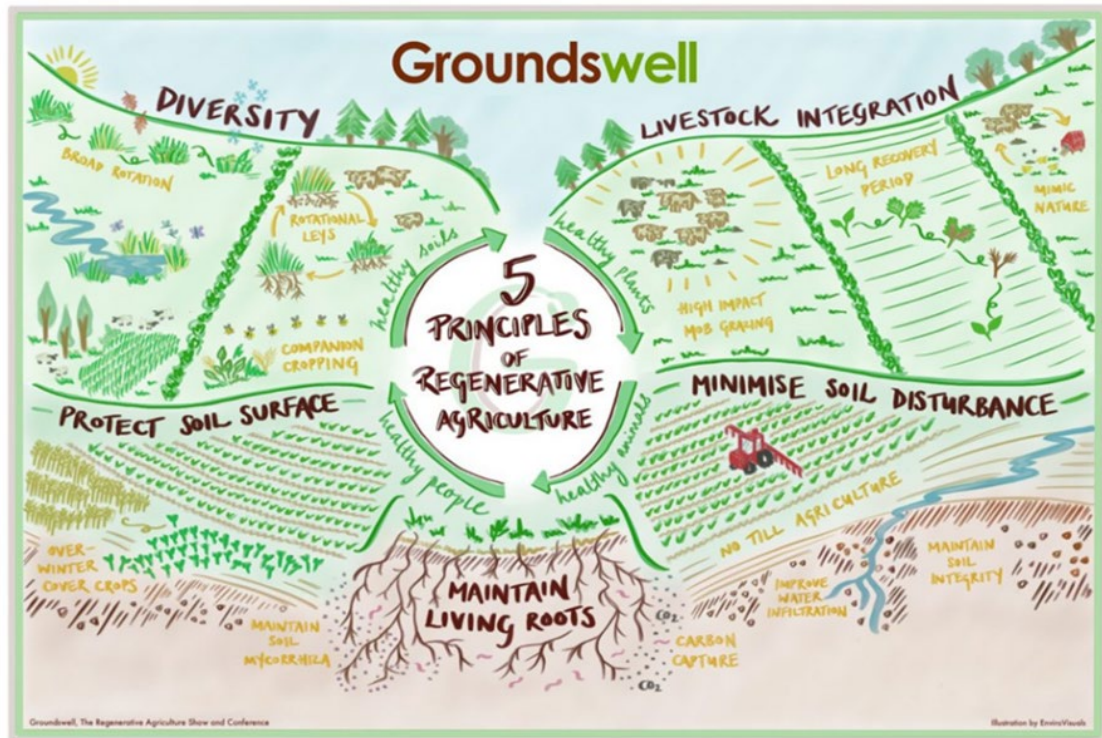


[Read Caroline's interview](#) or [listen to \(and watch\) it on YouTube](#)

Leading people: Embracing sustainable practices

Do you need to bring people with you on your regenerative journey but don't know how to explain the concept?

Karl Ritz's explanation of the five principles of regenerative agriculture provides a clear roadmap for farmers aiming to improve their environmental impact while maintaining productivity. The principles include not disturbing the soil, keeping the soil covered, maintaining living roots, growing a diverse range of crops, and integrating grazing animals.



[Read more about the five principles so you can share them with your team](#)

Leading business: Grosvenor's sustainable practices

Grosvenor, one of the UK's foremost dairy and arable farms, is taking a lead in regenerative agriculture. They believe operating a truly sustainable farming system can only be achieved when all parts of the farm are playing their part towards the end goal.

Their farming philosophy is built on three core principles: reinforcing commercial and environmental sustainability, ensuring exceptional animal welfare, and supporting rural communities.



[Explore Grosvenor's environmental and regenerative ambitions](#)

[Listen to Mark Roach, Manging Director, and Charlie Steer, Arable Manager](#) (and this edition's Leader in the Limelight), explain their vision at the Oxford Farming Conference.

Leading industry: Strengthening British supply chains

Earlier this year, Love British Food's Public Sector Influencers event brought together key stakeholders to discuss strategies for bolstering British supply chains.

Tom Pearson, a Nuffield Scholar and panellist at Groundswell, highlighted the importance of supporting local agriculture for sustainability and resilience, and the meeting emphasised the need for collaboration among farmers, suppliers and public sector bodies.

Their report covers current challenges, potential solutions and the role of public sector procurement in promoting British food.



[Read the report](#)

Scientific insight: Regenerative agriculture

For a more in-depth debate on how regenerative practices can reshape farming, have a look at the scientific paper Regenerative agriculture: a potentially transformative storyline shared by nine discourses. The paper discusses the evidence supporting regenerative agriculture and its potential to transform food systems.

[Read the scientific paper](#)

Talking Leaders: Food2Lead the future

Prepare for an inspiring conversation on reshaping the future of food with Xander Beks.

During our next Talking Leaders broadcast on 15 August, we'll explore Xander's journey from agricultural engineering to pioneering initiatives aimed at transforming the food industry.

[Register for the broadcast](#)

Characteristics of top-performing farms 2024

The top 25% of beef and lamb, cereals and oilseeds, and dairy farmers typically make between £50,000 and £120,000 more than the bottom 50% of farmers.

Can farmers in the bottom 50% reach the level of the top performers? Yes, they can, and it is largely within their control.

We have updated our Characteristics of top-performing farms reports to show how the top- and bottom-performing farms compare.

[Explore the characteristics of top-performing beef and sheep farms in the UK](#)

[Explore the characteristics of top-performing cereal and oilseed farms in the UK](#)

[Explore the characteristics of top-performing dairy farms in the UK](#)

Listen, watch, read



Listen

Enhancing soil health

Listen to 'Think outside the fence', featuring Amy Hughes (AHDB) and Arron Nerbas (a Canadian regenerative cattle rancher), to hear about the importance of holistic management and how farmers can adapt and connect their practices for better environmental outcomes.

[Listen to the podcast](#)



Watch

AgriLeader Circle at Groundswell

Catch up with our AgriLeader Circle livestream from Groundswell 2024 as we share learnings from the event and discuss the ethos of regenerative agriculture.

[Watch the recording](#)



Read

Ravenous: How to get ourselves and our planet into shape

Henry Dimbleby's book *Ravenous* explores the interconnectedness of human health and environmental sustainability. It offers insights into how we can reshape our diets and farming practices to benefit both people and the planet.

[Buy the book on Amazon](#)

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