

# Taylor Review 'Science for a new age of agriculture'

## Progress Report Summary

January 2011

### Summary

This report provides an overview of progress made so far towards implementing the recommendations of the Taylor Review. It highlights existing activities and identifies new developments and activities initiated by Government Departments in partnership with industry and interested parties since publication of the Review.

### Background

The Taylor Review 'Science for a new age of agriculture' is a pre election Conservative Party document. The final report was published in September 2010 and is reflected in Defra's Structural Reform Plan priorities, (published in the Department's Business Plan 2011-15), to develop British farming and encourage sustainable food production.

The report highlights the role of science in helping farmers increase production whilst reducing harmful emissions and conserving natural resources. Recognising constraints in public expenditure, it emphasises the importance of delivering value for money and encouraging greater private sector investment in research. Better translation of research findings into practice, including appropriate incentives within the research community, and higher skill levels throughout the supply chain are seen as key to achieving this.

The review sets out 18 recommendations that focus on;

- encouraging private sector investment,
- re-invigorating research,
- translation of research into practical benefits,
- equipping farmers and growers with the right skills and;
- driving progress across the world.

Defra is facilitating coordination of activity being taken forward across Government Departments, Research Councils, industry and other stakeholders to implement the recommendations of the review. Existing and ongoing activity to support these has been identified. Recommendations that require future action have also been identified and are being taken forward by relevant Departments and organisations. More details are included in the attached table.

Defra will continue to oversee stakeholders and departments progress in taking forward the recommendations of the Review, facilitating as necessary.

## Taylor Review Recommendations: assessment of existing activity and progress on implementation

Recommendations	What's been done so far	What more we plan to do
<p><b>1. We will look to remove key obstacles to scientific development in the UK and work to boost investment in high-tech innovation with input from the taskforce led by Sir James Dyson.</b></p>	<p>The Coalition Agreement sets out Government's commitment to refocusing the Research and Development Tax Credit on hi-tech companies, small firms and start ups as recommended by Sir James Dyson.</p> <p>The Treasury launched a consultation seeking views from businesses and industry on these issues on 29 November 2010.</p>	<p>The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Defra will actively seek to bring the consultation to the attention of businesses within the agricultural sector.</p> <p>The consultation will close on 22 February.</p>
<p><b>2. We will encourage private sector investment in research programmes by simplifying the application process for funding and securing IP arrangements which both encourage businesses to participate and enable the results to reach the widest possible audience.</b></p>	<p>The Technology Strategy Board Innovation Platform on agriculture and food (co-funded by BBSRC and Defra) is a key vehicle for engaging private sector investment in research programmes.</p> <p>The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council's (BBSRC) Crop Improvement Club provides industry with an opportunity to participate in the selection for innovative research which will underpin the development of improved crop production of Wheat, Barley and Oil-seed rape.</p>	<p>The Technology Strategy Board will review the lessons learned from the first research competition held on crop protection.</p> <p>Departments across Whitehall will continue to review procurement procedures and look at ways to simplify processes and encourage investment.</p>
<p><b>3. We will ensure effective representation from the agricultural and food</b></p>	<p>The Food Research Partnership (FRP), chaired by Sir John Beddington, is a strategic, industry wide stakeholder group.</p>	<p>Ongoing engagement.</p> <p>These issues are being addressed through the</p>

<p><b>industries on panels and committees taking decisions on funding and strategy for public-sector research.</b></p>	<p>Senior experts from the agriculture industry will be among the members of the Strategy Advisory Board of the TSB Innovation Platform and the proposed steering group for the cross-government Global Food Security Programme which brings together food-related research interests across government, the private sector and research.</p>	<p>FRP and its sub-groups and activities to deliver the Government Chief Scientific Advisor's UK Research and Innovation Strategy.</p>
<p><b>4. We will present the scientific community with the challenge of reflecting the importance of applied and translational activities in assessing research quality and in decisions on promotion and pay.</b></p>	<p>Activity to introduce the Research Excellence Framework (REF) will provide greater emphasis on the impact of research and the opportunity for greater recognition of the importance of successful translational activities within the science career framework.</p> <p>Research Councils are reviewing how effectively science is being translated in the current assessment of their institutes.</p> <p>Departments meet regularly with Research Councils to discuss capability and funding. BBSRC and Defra are co-sponsoring a study to develop a methodology that will enable an improved understanding of the process of knowledge exchange and the nature of translational research within the agriculture and food industry. The project will report in April 2011.</p>	<p>The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) will continue to develop an assessment framework that combines recognition of the highest levels of research excellence with reward for the past impact it has on the economy and society.</p>
<p><b>5. We will seek to provide greater certainty and</b></p>	<p>Where possible, and appropriate, projects of 3 years or longer are encouraged.</p>	<p>Government will continue to provide a stable investment climate for science and research</p>

<p><b>stability to scientists and research centres by taking a long-term approach to funding, enabling investment in long-term, strategic projects.</b></p>	<p>Existing activity for recommendation 4 also applies</p>	<p>that will allow universities and research institutes to plan strategically, and give businesses, public services and charities the confidence to invest in the research base over the long-term.</p> <p>Science and Research programme funding will be maintained at £4.6b pa within a ring-fence for the period 2011-15.</p> <p>BBSRC will seek to improve the long term stability of their research institutes by replacing single core grants by a small number of targeted, large five-year institute strategic programme grants for each Institute.</p>
<p><b>6. We will work to develop a network of demonstration farms to allow new techniques, products and technologies to be tried, tested and showcased.</b></p>	<p>The Taylor Review proposes to make use of existing commercial farms rather than create new facilities.</p> <p>There are already a number of demonstration farms or sites funded by both the public and private sector, including retailers.</p> <p>Defra has discussed with research institutions, consultancies, the levy bodies, NGO's and industry how this activity may be better linked.</p>	<p>AHDB have agreed, to work together with other organisations (including the National Farmers Union), to take forward stakeholder proposals for increased recognition and coordination of these demonstration farms together with access to them by farmers themselves.</p>
<p><b>7. We will shift the balance of farm inspection effort away from pure enforcement and towards advice to</b></p>	<p>The independent Task Force on Farming Regulation seeks to support development of a more competitive farming sector that contributes to economic recovery.</p>	<p>The independent Task Force will publish its findings and recommendations in the Spring.</p> <p>Government will await these recommendations before developing its policy on farm</p>

<p><b>farmers about what is needed both to comply with regulations and to improve efficiency of production.</b></p>	<p>The Task Force will identify ways to reduce the regulatory burden on farmers and food processors through a review of relevant regulations and their implementation, and advise on how best to achieve a risk-based system of regulation in future whilst maintaining high environmental, welfare and safety standards.</p>	<p>inspections. In February 2011 Defra will launch a study looking at how to develop and deliver integrated advice to farmers on a range of policy objectives (including climate change mitigation, adaptation, nutrient management, water, soil and air quality and biodiversity).</p>
<p><b>8. We will establish a network of independent national crop and livestock sector specialists, drawn from industry, science community and advisory services.</b></p>	<p>Defra has discussed with a wide range of stakeholders what networks and mechanisms are already in place and how these may be linked.</p> <p>Stakeholders have demonstrated support for the growth of online resources to disseminate best practice and to explore further the potential and appetite for a network of national expertise.</p>	<p>Defra will take forward a small mapping exercise to inform options for further consideration.</p>
<p><b>9. We will promote the role of levy bodies, including the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), as hubs of knowledge transfer activities, building their outreach capacity for all sectors.</b></p>	<p>Existing AHDB initiatives include the agricultural industry's Greenhouse Gas Action Plan to encourage the industry to make best use of its expertise in the Plan's delivery.</p>	<p>The debate with industry stakeholders about options for AHDB will provide the opportunity to review its ability to provide advice and information to levy payers on the latest farming techniques, science and best practice.</p>
<p><b>10. We will encourage the growth of online resources such as</b></p>	<p>OpenFields, an on-line library and information resource, was demonstrated by Harper Adams to participants at a Defra-led meeting on 12</p>	<p>The Rural Broadband initiative will be key to the success of this approach.</p>

<p><b>OpenFields to disseminate best practice and support the development of land-based industries.</b></p>	<p>January.</p> <p>Defra's Whole Farm Approach (Farming Online) currently uses the document Library developed by the Agricultural research unit at the University of Hertfordshire.</p>	
<p><b>11. We will support the development of the AgriSkills Strategy and work with the agricultural and horticultural sectors to ensure our farmers and growers are equipped with the skills they need to raise production in harmony with the environment.</b></p>	<p>Defra initiated the development of the Agri-Skills Strategy, bringing together the key players in the agricultural and horticultural sectors to work together.</p> <p>In 2010 the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council Advanced Training Partnerships (ATP) scheme brought together key stakeholders from the agri-food industry and the academic research base to provide high-level skills training for those employed within the agri-food sector.</p> <p>The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council supports a large number of PhD students, a significant proportion of which are in agri-food areas.</p>	<p>Defra will continue to provide ongoing support to the work of the Agri-Skills Forum.</p> <p>The Advanced Training Partnerships will make awards for schemes in the agri-food area in Spring 2011.</p>
<p><b>12. We will offer a £2000 bonus for each apprenticeship at a small or medium-sized enterprise.</b></p>	<p>The Apprenticeships Programme is continuing to expand. Over 85,000 employers are involved, in over 130,000 workplaces. Provisional data for 2009/10 shows that a record number of 273,900 people started an Apprenticeship.</p> <p>The training of apprentices aged 16-18 is fully</p>	<p>BIS and the Department for Education will increase funding for Apprenticeships training to around £1.4bn in 2011/12.</p>

	funded by Government, at no cost to the employer. Training for apprentices aged 19+ is part funded, significantly reducing the cost to employers.	
<b>13. We will provide funding to make it easier for farmers to come together and form Group Training associations, to ensure their workforce has the skills it needs.</b>	<p>Support is available for eligible skills development activity under the Rural Development Programme (RDPE) across all of the English regions.</p> <p>An example is Livestock North West, providing funding to support the formation and running of local farmer groups to help improve farm competitiveness, animal health and welfare and the efficient use of farm resources.</p>	Activity under the Rural Development Programme will continue.
<b>14. We will remove funding bureaucracy and unnecessary inspection audits from FE colleges.</b>	<p>BIS is currently working closely with the further education sector to simplify the funding system</p> <p>This includes removing the bureaucratic central planning and regulatory controls from FE colleges and training providers, leaving them free to agree their priorities with their local partnerships,</p> <p>BIS is also introducing more proportionate performance management arrangements in which outstanding colleges and training providers will be exempt from Ofsted inspections unless performance drops.</p>	<p>BIS will continue working with the further education sector to create a more responsive Further Education and Skills system.</p> <p>From the 2011/12 academic year there will be a single Adult Skills Budget, replacing the previous separate budgets for Adult Learner Responsive, Train to Gain and Adult Apprenticeship provision.</p> <p>The second Education Bill will remove a raft of regulations imposed on colleges by central government.</p>
<b>15. We will fight to ensure that the UK has access to its share of available</b>	Defra is on the programme committee for the European Commission 7 <sup>th</sup> Framework Programme (FP7) that considers Food,	Defra, the Department for Energy and Climate Change, BIS and Research Council officials will continue to work together to influence the

<p><b>EU funding for agricultural research and that its benefits are shared with the developing world.</b></p>	<p>Agriculture &amp; Fisheries.</p> <p>Defra are UK representatives on the EU Standing Committee on Agriculture Research, which advises the Commission and member States on the co-ordination of agricultural research in Europe and on the Governing Board of the Food Security, Agriculture and Climate Change Joint Programming Initiative.</p>	<p>content of the 8<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme to ensure that the UK has access to its share of available funding EU funding for agricultural research.</p>
<p><b>16. We will redirect existing funding to increase the proportion of spending under the rural development programme on measures to help the farming industry meet future challenges.</b></p>	<p>Following the Spending Review 2010, the proportion of funding allocated to each of the Axes of the RDPE remains broadly unchanged.</p> <p>The Commission Communication on the future CAP was published in November 2010.</p> <p>Government will be able to continue to support improvements in farming competitiveness and support for the broader rural economy.</p>	<p>With the demise of RDAs Defra will take on the management of Axes 1, 3 and 4 of the RDPE, and will continue to prioritise competitiveness and skills with the remaining funds.</p>
<p><b>17. We will protect the International Development budget and ensure that the support we provide to farmers in the developing world promotes crops that are suitable to a changing climate.</b></p>	<p>The Department for International Development (DfID) (with BBSRC, the Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation and the Government of India), is supporting a 5-year, programme of research to enhance the resilience of staple crop production in developing countries.</p> <p>DfID is supporting a significant research programme to develop new agricultural products and technology including improved crop varieties, informing new policies and farming systems to ensure food security is</p>	<p>DfID will continue to contribute to the Consultative Group for International Agriculture Research to support development of new agriculture products and technology needed to address the challenge of sustainable intensification in an increasing resource constrained world.</p>



	resilient to climate change.	
<p><b>18. We will closely collaborate with international partners to share new knowledge, innovation and best practice and pool expertise.</b></p>	<p>Defra participated in the Global Research Alliance initiative looking at greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture.</p> <p>The Department for International Development (DfID) works closely with a range of international partners to ensure the sharing of new knowledge, innovation and best practice, including the co-funding of partnerships in the private sector to develop new research products and getting these into the hands of farmers.</p> <p>DfID co-funds two partnerships with the private sector in order to access existing Intellectual Property, to develop new research products and get these into the hands of farmers.</p> <p>DfID is conducting an external independent evaluation of the DFID funded Research into Use project. This project has developed a wealth of evidence on how to overcome the barriers to agriculture innovation in Africa and get research products into widespread use.</p>	<p>Defra officials will continue to engage in future Global Research Alliance meetings and workshops.</p> <p>Defra and DFID will continue to work closely with the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture in a UK-China initiative, the Sustainable Agriculture Innovation Network (SAIN), to advance joint research.</p>