



# National Farmers Union

## *Director General*

# Message from NFU President

British farming is at a defining moment.

From the transition to sustainable land management, to the pursuit of shifting trade dynamics and growing public expectations around food, climate and nature – our sector is facing change on every front. At the same time, the role of farming in delivering national priorities – from food security to rural jobs, environmental stewardship to renewable energy – has never been more vital.

At the NFU, we are proud to represent 44,000 farming and growing businesses across England and Wales. Our members rely on us to be their voice at the highest levels of government and industry, and to support them through an increasingly complex and competitive operating environment. The stakes are high, and our mission has never mattered more.

We are now seeking a new Director General to lead the NFU into its next chapter. This is an extraordinary opportunity to shape the future of agriculture in England and Wales – to guide, advocate, influence, and deliver real outcomes for farmers and growers. It is a role that requires strategic clarity, outstanding leadership, and deep commitment to our members and the sector they serve.

Working closely with me, the Officeholder team and NFU Council, the Director General will lead a talented organisation, engage with the most senior decision-makers in the UK, and ensure the NFU remains a powerful and respected force for farming.

If you share our belief in the future of British agriculture and bring the insight, integrity and ambition to help lead it, we look forward to hearing from you.

**Tom Bradshaw**

President

National Farmers Union





# About the NFU

**The National Farmers Union is the voice of British farming, representing around 44,000 farming and growing businesses across England and Wales. As a powerful advocate for food production, environmental stewardship and rural communities, the NFU influences public policy, promotes sustainable farming, and supports the long-term resilience of the sector.**

**We campaign:** We lobby to make change where change is needed most. Our job as the voice of British farming is to ensure that our members' businesses can thrive in the years ahead.

**We champion:** From securing coverage in media to our work with schools and more, we champion and defend the British agriculture and horticulture industry.

**We connect:** We ensure our members have a sense of belonging in their area, hosting regional and national events and giving them the opportunity to make their voices heard.

## **We're here for British farmers and growers**

Whether it's through our first-class advice, guidance or business-specific technical expertise and our unmatched professional services and money-saving rewards, to how we're representing farmers and growers to governments in England and Wales, and decision makers at a regional level, the NFU is committed to representing its members brilliantly now and in the future.

Together, we're stronger – giving us the chance to ensure farming's future is brimming with opportunity and that food production gets the recognition it rightly deserves.

Our values: ***inclusive, professional, resourceful, and united***





# The Opportunity

**With the recent announcement of Terry Jones stepping down, the NFU is looking to recruit the next Director General, to shape the future of the organisation. This is a moment of profound change and opportunity for agriculture: from evolving environmental and land use policy to global trade pressures, net zero targets, and changing consumer expectations. The DG will lead the NFU through this complexity with clarity, credibility, and conviction.**

This is a pivotal role at the heart of the agricultural sector. Working in close partnership with elected Officeholders, NFU Council and Boards, you will set and deliver a bold strategic direction that ensures the NFU remains an influential, future-focused voice for farming. You will lead high-level engagement with government, the food industry, and wider stakeholders, representing our members' interests at all times.

You'll be an authentic, empathetic and strategic leader, someone who builds trusted relationships with our members and stakeholders alike.

Under your leadership, the NFU will continue to grow its impact, strengthen its financial sustainability, and deepen engagement with our members, driving meaningful change for farmers and growers across England and Wales. You'll be joining an organisation with passionate and dedicated people, united by a shared desire to make a real difference for our farming community every day.

Collaboration, professionalism, and a strong sense of purpose run through everything we do. You'll play a key role in nurturing a culture built on our core values of unity, professionalism, inclusivity, and resourcefulness, ensuring the NFU continues to thrive as a forward-looking, member-focused organisation





# Role Profile

*"Creating a better future for our farming members."*

## Key responsibilities for the role include:

### Strategic Leadership

- Shape and lead the strategic direction of the NFU driving the successful delivery of strategic priorities across the organisation and maintaining momentum in an evolving landscape.
- Work collaboratively with Officeholders, NFU Council and Boards to develop and communicate a compelling vision for the future of farming and the role of the NFU, grounded in industry insight and informed through meaningful engagement with members.
- Champion growth of the membership base, ensuring the NFU reflects the full diversity and strength of the agricultural community.
- Foster high-trust and influential relationships across the sector, bringing people together to deliver positive, lasting change for farming.

### Organisational Leadership

- Provide dynamic leadership for the day-to-day operations of the NFU, empowering the Executive Leadership Team to deliver with clarity, pace, and impact.
- Foster a high-performing, purpose driven culture, living the NFU's values, inclusive, professional, resourceful, and united and ensure these values are reflected in the work of employees.
- Ensure the organisation remains agile, financially sustainable, and continuously improving, ready to meet the needs of today while preparing for the challenges and opportunities of tomorrow.
- Champion collaboration, connection and creativity at all levels of the organisation, underpinned by transparent decision-making and effective policies and practices.
- Committed to creating an inclusive organisation and ensuring IDE strategies are delivering real and measurable impact for all employees, members, and stakeholders.
- Role model talent development across the organisation, identifying and nurturing future leaders, unlocking potential, and creating opportunities for growth for both employees and engaged members.



# Role Profile

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## **Financial Leadership**

- Provide strategic oversight of the NFU's financial health, ensuring the organisation remains robust, resilient, and well-positioned to deliver long-term value to members.
- Demonstrates strong commercial acumen by effectively managing and optimising diverse revenue streams, while proactively adapting to the evolving landscape of the farming industry.
- Drive a culture of commercial awareness across the organisation, ensuring resources are aligned with strategic priorities and used efficiently to maximise impact.
- Ensure financial strategy and decision-making reflect a commitment to delivering meaningful outcomes for members and the wider agricultural sector.

## **Representation & Influence**

- Act as a powerful and trusted voice for the NFU, playing a leading role in representing the organisation to government, the food industry, and other key stakeholders, ensuring our members' interests are clearly heard, well understood, and powerfully advocated for.
- Partner closely with the President to uphold and enhance the NFU's reputation as a respected, credible, and influential trade organisation across the agricultural sector and beyond.
- Build and sustain high-impact relationships at the most senior levels, with policymakers, industry leaders and regulators, commanding respect through expertise, integrity, and strategic insight.
- Bring strong political acumen and an ability to navigate complex policy landscapes, enabling the NFU to anticipate change, influence outcomes, and lead confidently in a fast-moving external environment.
- Ensure our representational work is aligned with member priorities, evidenced, and delivered with clarity and authority, whether behind closed doors or in the public arena.



# Desired Knowledge & Expertise

**We are interested in a breadth of experience, and welcome applications from individuals who meet many, but not necessarily all of the criteria.**

- Extensive knowledge and understanding of the agricultural industry either directly or through related activities with a sound understanding of the agriculture sector and the food supply chain.
- Understanding of membership models/trade bodies and how to operate in this operating model with empathy and appreciation for the members.
- Strong political acumen, with the ability to navigate complex stakeholder environments, build influence at senior levels, and operate effectively across formal and informal networks.
- Ability to develop a balanced and strategic view across a broad range of diverse issues.
- Depth of financial insight and understanding and a commitment to maintaining a secure and sustainable financial position for the NFU.
- Values driven and leads with integrity.
- Strong analytical skills, with the ability to distil key issues from a wide range, setting priorities and developing strategic positions.
- Resilience to deal with important and challenging situations which will require influence, persuasion and negotiation on matters which have a critical impact on the agri-food sector



# Desired Skills & Attributes

**We are interested in a breadth of experience, and welcome applications from individuals who meet many, but not necessarily all of the criteria.**

## Leadership

- Proven track record of leading large, senior teams with clarity, empathy, and impact.
- Inspires and empowers direct reports through strategic coaching, mentorship, and courageous performance conversations.
- A visionary leader who develops talent by building trust, driving collaboration, and bringing people together behind a shared purpose.
- Balances high expectations with high support, creating a culture of accountability, autonomy, and growth.
- Leads with emotional intelligence, curiosity, and the confidence to challenge and be challenged.
- Ability to manage interactions with large diverse groups of people.

## Communication

- Able to communicate and influence effectively and authentically into both the organisation, the members and the broader industry.
- Strong presentation and story-telling skills to share the vision and the direction of the NFU.
- Experience of developing compelling internal communication narratives to provide strategic direction.

## Decision Making and Problem Solving

- Strong analytical skills, with the ability to distil key issues.
- Ability to develop a balanced and strategic view across a broad range of diverse issues.
- Ability to interpret and make decisions about complex situations and to prioritise across a wide variety of difficult problems.
- Able to develop policies or strategies/vision over the short-, medium- and long-term.
- Able to manage through times of crisis and lead the business through periods of short-term and long-term sector headwinds.

## Personal qualities

- Energetic and authentic leader that empowers those around them.
- Can manage complexity and lead through accordingly.
- Demonstrates resilience and composure under pressure, maintaining focus and sound judgement in challenging or uncertain environments.
- Able to navigate ambiguity, setbacks, and high-stakes situations with confidence, adaptability, and a solutions-focused mindset.
- Leads with integrity and purpose, consistently role-modelling the NFU values of unity, professionalism, inclusivity and resourcefulness in all they do.



# Further Details

## Location

- This role is based at NFU's Stoneleigh office; however, regular travel is a key requirement of the role. The Director General will also spend time in NFU's Westminster office and other locations across England and Wales to support business needs.
- The ability to travel frequently within the UK, including occasional short-notice trips and extended overnight stays is essential. Flexibility and a willingness to be mobile are critical to successfully delivering in this senior leadership role.
- We are committed to supporting flexible working where possible, and we trust our senior leaders to manage their time and responsibilities while meeting the needs of the business.

## Diversity and inclusion

The NFU has a clearly held ambition to ensure that all members and colleagues irrespective of role, gender, race, age, disability, religion/belief, sexual orientation or farming type feel welcome. The organisation is committed to creating an inclusive culture for all members and colleagues alike and welcomes applications for this role from everyone.

**NFU President Tom Bradshaw:** *"A commitment to be an inclusive organisation is not something we do just because it is right, although it absolutely is. It's also crucial to our future as an organisation, and as an industry."*



# The Selection and Recruitment Process

The panel will assess your application to select those demonstrating the best fit with the role by considering the evidence you have provided against the essential criteria.

If you wish to speak with someone before submitting an application, please contact: [responses@russellreynolds.com](mailto:responses@russellreynolds.com) quoting reference number **2507-040L**.

*Please note that due diligence will be carried out on shortlisted candidates. Candidates should expect this to include searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information.*

The timeline below indicates the dates by which each stage and the final decisions are expected to be made. All shortlisted candidates will be advised of the outcome as soon as possible thereafter.

*please note this may be subject to change.*

Milestone	Date
Closing date for applications	07/09
Presentation of prospective candidates to agree longlist	w/c 15/09
RRA conducts in-depth interviews with longlisted candidates	22/09 – 10/10
Presentation of prospective candidates to agree shortlist	w/c 13/10
First Panel Interviews	w/c 20/10
Informal conversations with relevant stakeholders	27/10 – 07/11
Final Panel interviews	w/c 10/11



# How to apply

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Russell Reynolds Associates on behalf of the National Farmers Union. Please submit your full application by email to [responses@russellreynolds.com](mailto:responses@russellreynolds.com). Please quote the role title and assignment code **2507-040L** in the subject heading of the email. All applications will be acknowledged. **The closing date for applications is 23:59 on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2025.**

## Your submission should include:

- A **CV** setting out your career history, with key responsibilities and achievements. Please ensure you have provided reasons for any gaps within the last two years.
- A **Statement of Suitability** (no longer than two pages) explaining how you consider your personal skills, qualities and experience provide evidence of your suitability for the role, with particular reference to the criteria.
- A completed **Diversity Monitoring Form** [available here](#). Please note the information you provide will help support monitoring the National Farmers Union's recruitment processes to ensure they are fair to all and allow us to attract diverse and talented candidates. The diversity data in this section is collated in aggregate and will not be disclosed to anyone involved in assessing your application.



Russell  
Reynolds  
ASSOCIATES